

Young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living

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SUMMARY

Against the background of various challenges faced by young adult care leavers and ongoing debates on care leaving interventions in contemporary South Africa, the researcher aimed to explore five selected participants' experiences and related narratives of their transition from residential care to independent living. The working assumption was that the lived experiences of young adult care leavers who made the journey to independent living could be useful in developing guidelines for professionals in their facilitation of support for young care leavers who reside in residential care.

Methodologically, the study followed a qualitative instrumental case study research design, anchored in an interpretivist paradigm. The data for this study was collected in three phases. In the first phase of the study, the researcher conducted semi-structured telephonic interviews with eight prospective participants. Based on the data collected from these semi-structured telephonic interviews, the researcher purposively selected five primary participants to participate in the research study. During the second phase of the study, the researcher used multiple data collection methods with the five selected primary participants, such as semi-structured interviews, narrative case inquiries, post-modern data collection methods, and analysis of existing material and documents (archival research).

During the third phase of the research process, the researcher conducted reflective and dyad interviews with secondary participants. In addition, the researcher used observation (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999) throughout the sessions with primary and secondary participants. She documented her observations in a reflective diary and in the form of field notes. Furthermore, with regard to data documentation, she made audio-recordings of interviews and narrative case inquiries, and kept visual data of activities and media for the duration of the study (Mayan, 2001). Following an inductive thematic analysis, three main themes emerged: pre-transition phase, transition phase and post-transition phase.

The findings of the current study showed that young adult care leavers displayed distinctive and significant features during their transition to independent living. One of the findings was that care leavers experienced various challenges during the pre-transition, transition and post-transition phases to independent living. Care leavers identified their pre-transition needs for stable relationships, education, life skills, therapeutic support and self-determination. Related findings showed that care leavers were not prepared for the transition process during placement in care, and subsequently experienced feelings of uncertainty and anxiety upon departure from care. In the transition phase, participants experienced feelings of loneliness and isolation due to a lack of emotional support from places of care. Care leavers displayed difficulty in forming and maintaining relationships, and they felt vulnerable due to being stigmatized. They furthermore participated in harmful behaviour. During the post-transition phase, young adult care leavers demonstrated resilient processes as they mobilised

relationships, street-smarts, reflective learning, goals, life lessons and religion to ameliorate the impact of the transition process. Most importantly, young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living provided insight into potential ways that places of care could apply address transition challenges on an interpersonal and intrapersonal level, to facilitate care leavers' adjustment into independent living.

The study provides empirical evidence to broaden the current knowledge base on young adult care leavers' transition from residential care to independent living. The study contributes to the existing knowledge base by firstly highlighting young adult care leavers' experiences in the pre-transition, transition and post-transition phases. Secondly, the study introduces findings regarding young adult care leavers' mental health, educational attainment, employment, life skills and relationships. Thirdly, the study contributes to new insight into possible challenges that care leavers could encounter on a daily basis, as well as the various kinds of services that could be provided to address transition barriers. Finally the study conjectures the interconnectedness between the transition experiences of young adult care leavers and transition guidelines, in the sense that implementation of interventions could be based on the lived experiences of young adult care leavers who have transitioned to adulthood.

Within the context of the existing knowledge base on transition interventions, the findings suggest that care leavers could be prepared for the transition process by care-driven support initiatives. Firstly, the study brings greater insight into integrated transition initiatives that could be mobilised in the pre-transition, transition and post-transition phases. Secondly, the findings provide insight into potential ways in which places of care can address in-care and after-care services in support of young adult care leavers, possibly within diverse contexts. Thirdly, the study contributes to new insight into the development and expansion of independent living programmes that could be mobilised for transition support and the promotion of positive adult outcomes for care leavers. Finally the study provides insight into potential ways in which professionals, such as social workers, educators, counsellors, weekend carers and psychologists, who are involved at children's homes, could provide support, while youth are still in care, or in the form of aftercare services, which could facilitate the transition into independent living.

Key concepts

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| ▪ Young adults | ▪ Independent living |
| ▪ Care leaving | ▪ Psychosocial support |
| ▪ Residential care | ▪ Resilience |
| ▪ Transition experiences | ▪ Qualitative research |

OPSOMMING

Teen die agtergrond van verskeie uitdagings wat jong volwasse sorg verlaters in die gesig staar, en deurlopende diskoers oor intervensies by sorg-verlating in eietydse Suid-Afrika, het die navorser daarop gemik om vyf geselekteerde deelnemers se ervarings en verwante narratiewe van hul oorgang vanaf kinderhuise tot 'n selfstandige lewe, te verken. Die uitgangspunt was dat die praktiese ervarings van jong volwasse sorg verlaters wat die paadjie geloop het na 'n selfstandige lewe, nuttig kan wees by die ontwikkeling van riglyne vir professionele persone in hul fasilitering van ondersteuning vir jong sorg-verlaters wat in kinderhuise woon.

Metodologies het die studie 'n kwalitatiewe, instrumentele gevallestudie navorsingsontwerp, geanker in 'n interpretivistiese paradigma, gevolg. Die data vir hierdie studie is in drie fases ingesamel. In die eerste fase van die studie het die navorser semi-gestruktureerde telefoniese onderhoude met agt voornemende deelnemers gevoer. Gegronde op die data wat uit hierdie semi-gestruktureerde telefoniese onderhoude bekom is, het die navorser doelgerig vyf primêre deelnemers geselekteer om in die navorsingstudie deel te neem. Gedurende die tweede fase van die studie het die navorser veelvuldige data-insamelingsmetodes met die vyf geselekteerde primêre deelnemers aangewend, soos semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude, narratiewe gevalle-ondersoeke, post-moderne data-insamelingsmetodes, en analise van bestaande materiaal en dokumente (argief navorsing).

Gedurende die derde fase van die navorsings proses het die navorser reflektiewe en tweeledige onderhoude met sekondêre deelnemers gevoer. Verder het die navorser regdeur die sessies met primêre en sekondêre deelnemers van waarneming gebruik gemaak (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). Sy het haar waarnemings in 'n reflektiewe joernaal asook in die vorm van veld notas gedokumenteer. Wat betref die dokumentering van data, het sy oudio-opnames gemaak van die onderhoude en narratiewe gevalle-ondersoeke, en visuele data van aktiwiteite en media vir die duur van die studie bewaar (Mayan, 2001). Ná 'n induktiewe tematiese analise het drie hooftemas na vore getree, naamlik 'n pre-oorgangsfase, 'n oorgangsfase en 'n post-oorgangsfase.

Die bevindinge van die huidige studie bevestig dat jong volwasse sorg verlaters duidelike en belangrike kenmerke getoon het gedurende hul oorgang tot 'n selfstandige lewe. Een van die bevindinge was dat sorg-verlaters verskeie uitdagings ervaar het gedurende die pre-oorgangs-, oorgangs- en post-oorgangsfases tot 'n selfstandig lewe. Sorg-verlaters het hul pre-oorgangs behoeftes geïdentifiseer as stabiele verhoudings, opvoeding/onderwys, lewensvaardighede, terapeutiese ondersteuning en self-beskikking. Verwante bevindinge het getoon dat sorg-verlaters nie voorbereid was vir die oorgangs proses gedurende hul plasing in sorg nie, en by die verlating van daardie sorg gevoelens van onsekerheid en angstigheid ervaar het. In die oorgangsfase het deelnemers gevoelens van

eensaamheid en isolasie ervaar weens 'n gebrek aan emosionele ondersteuning vanaf plekke van sorg. Dit was klaarblyklik vir sorg-verlaters moeilik om verhoudings te vorm en in stand te hou, en hulle het weerloos gevoel omdat hulle gestigmatiseer is. Verder het hulle deelgeneem aan skadelike gedrag. Gedurende die post-oorgangsfase het jong volwasse sorg-verlaters veerkragtige prosesse gedemonstreer namate hulle verhoudings ontwikkel het, en sogenaamde “street-smarts”, reflektiewe leer, doelstellings, lewenslesse en godsdiens ingespan om die impak van die oorgangproses te versag. Die heel belangrikste is dat jong volwassenes se ervarings in hul oorgang vanaf residensiële sorg tot 'n selfstandige lewe insig gebied het in potensiële maniere waarop kinderhuise te werk kan gaan om oorgangs-uitdagings op interpersoonlike en intrapersoonlike vlak aan te spreek, ten einde sorg-verlaters se aanpassing by 'n selfstandige lewe te fasiliteer.

Die studie bied empiriese bewyse om die bestaande kennisbasis oor jong volwasse sorg-verlaters se oorgang vanaf residensiële sorg tot 'n selfstandige lewe te verbreed. Die studie dra by tot die bestaande kennisbasis deur eerstens die lig te laat val op jong volwasse sorg-verlaters se ervarings in die pre-oorgangs-, oorgangs- en post-oorgangsfases. Tweedens bring die studie bevindinge ten opsigte van jong volwassenesorg-verlaters se geestesgesondheid, opvoedkundige prestasie, asook hul werk, lewensvaardighede en verhoudings. Derdens lewer die studie 'n bydrae tot nuwe insig in moontlike uitdagings wat sorg-verlaters op 'n daaglikse basis mag teëkom, asook die verskillende soorte dienste wat gebied kan word om oorgangs hindernisse of -versperrings aan te spreek. Laastens laat die studie die vermoede ontstaan dat daar onderlinge verbande is tussen die oorgangservarings van jong volwasse sorg-verlaters en oorgangsriglyne, in die sin dat die implementering van intervensies gebaseer kan word op die praktiese ervarings van jong volwasse sorg-verlaters wat die oorgang tot volwassenheid bemeester het.

Binne die konteks van die bestaande kennisbasis oor oorgangsintervensies dui die bevindinge daarop dat sorg-verlaters voorberei kan word vir die oorgangproses deur sorg-gedrewe ondersteuningsinisiatiewe. Eerstens bring die studie groter insig in geïntegreerde oorgangsinisiatiewe wat in die pre-oorgangs-, oorgangs- en post-oorgangsfases gemobiliseer kan word. Tweedens bied die bevindinge insig in potensiële maniere waarop plekke van sorg dienste ter ondersteuning van jong volwasse sorg-verlaters, beide in-sorg en na-sorg, moontlik binne uiteenlopende kontekste kan aanbied. Derdens lewer die studie 'n bydrae tot nuwe insig in die ontwikkeling en uitbreiding van selfstandige leefprogramme wat gemobiliseer kan word vir oorgangsondersteuning en die bevordering van positiewe volwasse uitkomst vir sorg-verlaters. Laastens bied die studie insig in potensiële maniere waarop professionele persone soos maatskaplike werkers, opvoeders, beraders, naweek-versorgers en sielkundiges, wat by kindertehuise betrokke is, ondersteuning kan bied terwyl jong mense onder sorg is, of in die vorm van nasorg-dienste, wat die oorgang tot 'n selfstandige lewe sou kon fasiliteer.

Sleutelbegrippe

- Jong volwassenes
- Sorg-verlating
- Kinderhuise
- Oorgangservarings
- Selfstandige lewe
- Sielkundige ondersteuning
- Veerkragtigheid
- Kwalitatiewe navorsing

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Melanie Oelofsen, declare that the thesis titled:

***Young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care
to independent living***

is my own work and that all sources and citations from literature have been acknowledged
in-text and referenced in full.

.....
Signature

.....
Date

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"Experience is the hardest kind of teacher. It gives you the test first and the lesson afterward"

(Oscar Wild)

"Sometimes our lives have to be completely shaken up, changed and rearranged to relocate us to the place we were meant to be"

(pinterest.com)

"What I went through happened. Who I was existed. I needed my past and I needed my mistakes to get me where I am now"

(Author unknown)

"No one can tell what goes on in between the person you were and the person you become. No one can chart that blue and lonely section. There are no maps of the change. You just come out on the other side"

(Stephen King)

"Like a wild flower; she spent her days allowing herself to grow. Not many knew of her struggle but eventually all knew of her light"

(Niki Rowe)

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCING THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Young adults who were raised in children's homes are arguably one of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in society (Mendes, 2005). As such, their well-being has long been of great interest to child welfare practitioners and policy makers. However, in spite of this interest, very little is known about how these individuals fare when they make the transition to independence. Research seems limited regarding young adults who leave children's homes to undertake independent living. Documented studies regarding youth leaving care is still a developing field in South Africa and, as a result, very limited research has been published to date (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012). As these individuals comprise a small and hidden population, very little is furthermore known about the long-term outcomes for them, except that, anecdotally, they seem to have children early, and struggle to raise them without also coming to the notice of child welfare services (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012).

The journey to independence for young adults that leave residential care has been found to be unique as this population group display distinctive and significant features (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012; Kaminsky, 1998; Wurtele, Wilson & Prentice-Dunn, 1983; Schulman, 1975; Maluccio, 1974). These features can be related to such individuals residing in a less-than-ideal social environment where the provision of care accommodation often ceases abruptly once young people reach the age of 18 or when they complete secondary school (Meintjes, Moses, Berry & Mampane, 2007; Children's Act 38, 2005). Adolescent care leavers are expected to take responsibility for their own lives the moment they enter an often unfamiliar and intimidating world. In cases where these young individuals have the opportunity to return to their biological parents or families they are regularly still expected to take care of themselves as their families of origin may be, and often are, economically and socially disadvantaged. Others may not have a family structure to return to and are therefore deprived of close relatives who can support them to adapt to adult life (Stein & Wade, 2000).

This trend is indicated by various studies, such as the one conducted by Lips (2007) who documents that individuals who reside in children's homes will not have the same level of financial, emotional and social support that other young people receive from their families, friends and communities, as their social network before their release from care is often confined to the children's home. More specifically, after their release from the children's home they are immediately expected to live an independent life, with frighteningly little preparation, material possessions and support (Foster, 2002). Leaving care may mean that the young person will lose positive relationships (with staff and other residents), access to

activities and support, and also a certain standard and expectation of living. As such, care leavers' transition occurs at an earlier age and in a more abrupt manner than young people of the same age in the general population (Cashmore & Paxman, 1996).

Stein (2005) adds to this by recognising that, in comparison to their peers, care leavers have to deal with major changes in their lives at a far younger age, such as leaving care, setting up home and entering the workforce without the ongoing support that a good parent would be expected to provide for children (Avery & Freundlich, 2000). As such, these young adults usually do not cope with the pressures of everyday life as effectively as other young people (Gelling, 2009). In this regard Hayes (2002:18) notes that *"Care leavers are more likely to be unemployed, suffer mental health problems, fall into homelessness, serve a prison sentence and be a teenage parent"*. Other literature pertaining to this topic document that although some young adults who leave care are in stable situations and either move forward with their education or are employed in promising jobs, more of them are experiencing significant difficulties during their transition to independence.

Attar-Schwartz (2008) and Shin (2005) notes that a high rate of young adults who have been raised in children's homes experience psychiatric, academic, relationship and behavioural difficulties during their adult years. They further typically experience difficulties to develop secure and long lasting attachments due to them being exposed to multiple family difficulties, abuse, neglect, termination of relationships with their biological parents and disconnection from supportive adults. As such, compared to most young people, care leavers have been found to experience significant health, social and educational deficits including homelessness, substance abuse, involvement in juvenile crime and prostitution, mental and physical health problems, poor educational and employment outcomes, inadequate social support systems and early parenthood (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012).

The significant difficulties that care leavers experience as young adults can be attributed to a conflation of factors including a history of suboptimal care, repeated social dislocations as they move from one home to another, disruption during their time in care, accelerated transition into independent living, the instant loss of social support and inadequate aftercare services (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012). Notwithstanding these cumulative vulnerabilities, many care leavers succeed in making a successful transition out of care and establish themselves in the adult world. Others may not appear to be as successful, but may experience warm, supportive, genuine relationships that in turn result in satisfaction and meaning (Stein & Wade, 2000).

In spite of the evidence regarding the high rate of former children's homes residents who are experiencing transition difficulties during their adult years many young people are simply not ready or adequately prepared for this transition (Pinkerton, 2011). Well planned and managed preparation for leaving care, as well as on-going support after leaving care, are required to ensure a smooth transition

into adult life. However, children's homes generally do not provide programmes and interventions to sufficiently prepare youth for their transition to adulthood (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012; Heath, Toste & Zinck, 2008; Meintjes, Moses, Berry & Mampane, 2007). Therefore, this study is not only concerned with the transition of young adults, but also by implication with services or interventions that children's homes could provide, while these young people are still in care, or in the form of aftercare services, which could facilitate their transitioning into independent living.

A study by Heath, Toste and Zinck (2008) reports that when programmes and interventions are indeed offered to prevent transition difficulties, they are often presented as loose standing, separate, once-off programmes that do not take into consideration the complexity of both understanding and promoting healthy adult outcomes in youth residing in residential care. Other studies in this area affirms this finding by stating that the majority of children's homes generally do not succeed in transferring important life-skills to youth in care, consequently preventing them from being prepared to successfully manage themselves during adulthood (Meintjes, Moses, Berry & Mampane, 2007).

Although such programmes are valuable, the motives behind them can at times be one-sided. For an intervention to function optimally it needs to be tailored for the target group (Mash & Wolfe, 2005). Therefore, a need exists for individuals to participate in the design of interventions meant for them and to provide practical guidelines on how such integrated interventions might be implemented. It was the researcher's contention that in order to gain a deeper understanding regarding the design of interventions, she had to develop practical guidelines based on the experiences of young adults who had to deal with the challenge of entering into young adulthood without the necessary support.

The rationale for this study originates from three sources that comprise the researcher's identity: academic, professional and personal. On an academic and professional level, the researcher wishes to contribute to the emerging body of empirically based literature regarding individuals who resided in children's homes by locating and foregrounding the voices of adults who were raised within this discourse of adversity. On a professional level, as an educational psychologist working therapeutically with young children who reside in a place of safety, the researcher's interests lie in therapeutic interventions with young individuals who are experiencing adversities in their lives that will affect their long term well-being.

Finally, the researcher's motivation for this study is personal, based on her own interests and experiences: *"We notice what we notice in accordance with who we are"* (Cole, 1997:2). The researcher was raised in a children's home and during those 16 years of her life it came to her attention that the children she got to know over the years at the children's home reacted differently as young adults to adversity. Although some of them have adapted well to the challenges of adult life, others exhibit substance abuse, became involved in criminal activities or suffer from despair or depression,

live in poverty or experience inappropriate interpersonal relationships. Literature (Kaminsky, 1998; Wurtele, Wilson & Prentice-Dunn, 1983; Schulman, 1975; Maluccio, 1974) supports the fact that residing in a children's home might lead to such negative long-term consequences. Therefore, this study represents what the researcher cares about and reflects the social changes that she would like to promote.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this qualitative study is twofold; firstly, to investigate the co-constructed narratives of adults who resided in residential care and secondly, based on their experiences, develop guidelines for professionals to support young care leavers who reside in residential care. The researcher aimed to explore five selected participants' experiences and related narratives of their transition from residential care to independent living. She therefore focused on young adults' transition experiences, but also by implication on the services or interventions that children's homes could provide, while young people are still in care, or in the form of aftercare services, which could facilitate their transitioning into independent living.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study was guided by the following two primary research questions:

- **What do the co-constructed narratives of adults who resided in residential care encompass?**
- **Which principles can be developed to guide professionals in their facilitation of support for young care leavers who reside in residential care?**

In order to comprehensively explore the primary research questions, the following secondary questions are addressed:

- What constitutes young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living?
- How can the experiences and narratives of young adults contribute to both the understanding and promotion of healthy adult outcomes in youth residing in residential care?
- Which recurring patterns are revealed in the life experiences of young adults who resided in residential care?
- Which psychosocial characteristics and resilience factors can be identified among adults who resided in children's homes and have made a successful transition into independent living?

- What are the intervention needs in children's homes and how can these be addressed to promote healthy adult outcomes in youth residing in residential care?
- How can the members of children's home communities be equipped to contribute to the successful independence of care leavers?

1.4 THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the research is firstly to investigate young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living, and then based on their experiences; to secondly develop guiding principles for interventions at children's homes. These strategies could potentially be used to promote healthy adult outcomes in youth residing in residential care, facilitating their successful transition to independent living.

Considering the purpose and aim of the study the objectives of the research are:

- To explore and describe young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living.
- To investigate the experiences and narratives of young adults and how these contribute to both the understanding and promotion of healthy adult outcomes in youth residing in residential care.
- To investigate the recurring patterns revealed in the life experiences of young adults who have resided in residential care.
- To evaluate the psychosocial characteristics and resilience factors of adults who have resided in children's homes in terms of how these factors contributed to a successful transition into independent living.
- To explore the intervention needs in children's homes and how these can be addressed in support of healthy adult outcomes in youth residing in residential care.
- To explore principles that may guide professionals in their facilitation of support for young care leavers who reside in residential care.

1.5 ASSUMPTIONS

The researcher approached this study with the following assumptions:

- Young adults who have transitioned from residential care to independent living will experience certain negative transition processes.

- The experiences and narratives of young adults might contribute to both the understanding and promotion of healthy adult outcomes in youth residing in residential care.
- The recurring patterns revealed in the life experiences of young adult care leavers might provide insight into the development of principles that could guide professionals in their facilitation of support for young care leavers who reside in residential care.
- Experiences of transition from residential care to independent living constitute vulnerability in young adult care leavers.
- Young adults will experience certain psychosocial characteristics and resilience factors contributing to a successful transition into independent living.
- Children's homes will display the need for guidance on how to support young adults leaving care.
- The experiences and narratives of young adults might provide insight into the intervention needs in children's homes and how these can be addressed in support of healthy adult outcomes in youth residing in residential care.

1.6 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

In order to ensure a clear understanding of concepts, the researcher now provides definitions of the key concepts within the context of the study.

1.6.1 YOUNG ADULTS

To form a single, unifying definition of *young adults* is a difficult task. Diverse schools of thought exist, each having a different emphasis. Within the context of the researcher's study, young adults refer to individuals who are in their late adolescence and the period following up to 34 years of age. This developmental period have been noted as particularly important for setting the stage for continued development through the life span, as individuals engage in a variety of activities that are influential on the rest of their lives (Zarrett & Eccles, 2006). As such, the researcher concurs with Erikson (1963) who found that young adults are in the *Intimacy versus Isolation* stage of their psychosocial development. During this stage, individuals have to establish close, secure and committed relationships with other people in order to experience satisfying development (Erikson, 1963).

1.6.2 RESIDENTIAL CARE

Different types of residential care institutions exist in South Africa that have been incorporated in the amended Child Care Act of 2007 (Republic of South Africa, 2008), such as children's homes, children's

villages, places of safety, children's shelters and schools of industry (reform schools). In South Africa, residential care homes are established under section 30 of the South African Child Care Act of 1983 (Meintjes, Moses, Berry & Mampane, 2007) and provide fulltime room, board and watchful oversight to six or more children under the age of 18 (Berridge & Brodie, 1998) while they gain access to primary education. Children are placed in these facilities for short or long periods of time (Thoburn, 1994) and typically provide long-term placement and care to children without parental care and to children from vulnerable families.

Children's homes in South Africa resemble family flats, cottages or duplexes (Törrönen, 2006). Characteristically, different units are situated on one communal property with a central kitchen and an administration office. Care residents participate in cyclic and routine activities, such as daily breakfast, departure for school, homework, and weekend and holiday activities that aim to bring continuity to their everyday lives (Harvey, 1990). Even though the children are in the care and protection of a primary caregiver and a domestic helper, the overall guardianship of the children rests with the head of the children's home and social workers under the auspices of the children's home (Mohangi, 2008). As such, care residents' parents have to gain permission from the head of the children's home and/or social workers to visit over weekends. Alternatively, children may be placed with their parents, other relatives or acquaintances during weekends and school holidays.

1.6.3 CARE LEAVERS

Leaving Care Act (2000) of England state that *care leavers* refer to young adults who have resided in the care of local authorities for a period of 13 weeks or more. Care Leavers of Australian Network (2013) define care leavers as individuals who were raised in care but no longer qualify for government assistance. Similarly, Care Leavers Association (2013) describes care leavers as adults, who were looked after during their childhood years on a full-time or temporary basis by individuals other than their parents or extended family members.

Within the context of the researcher's study, *care leavers* refer to young adults aged 34 or under, who resided in places of care for at least five years and were disengaged from care after they completed secondary school and/or reached the age of 17 years. In addition, care leavers may experience a multitude of difficulties as young adults due to various factors, such as the sudden ending of care, a lack of skills for independent living and the shortage of ongoing financial and psychological support (Stein, 2006; 2005). Notwithstanding these cumulative vulnerabilities, many care leavers succeed in making a successful transition out of care and establish themselves in the adult world (Stein, 2006).

1.6.4 TRANSITION EXPERIENCES

The transition from late adolescence to young adulthood is a critical developmental stage for all individuals. Pertaining to this, the movement towards independent living generally involves a long transition period during which young people may leave and then return home on different occasions from time to time. As such, parents, grandparents and other relatives may occupy a central role in the different life stages of young adults who were raised in family settings until their early twenties, and may continue to receive social, practical, emotional and financial support (Stein, 2006).

Youth transitioning from residential care to self-sufficient and independent living, a process referred to in the literature as 'care leaving'; typically report on profound transition experiences (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012; Duncalf, 2009). Young adult care leavers transition experiences are exacerbated by their typically low educational achievement, learning disabilities and additional health, emotional and behavioural problems (Foster & Gifford, 2004). This may cause them to experience difficulties with educational attainment, relationships, mental health, employment and accommodation (Stein, 2005). As such, transitioning to independence can be an overwhelming and traumatic experience for care leavers as they are expected to rapidly transition from dependence to independence with very little social support.

1.6.5 INDEPENDENT LIVING

The transition period prior to independent living is often associated with changes and challenges, as youth acquire and consolidate their competencies, attitudes, values, and social capital necessary to make the transition into adulthood (Furstenberg, Rumbaut & Settersten, 2005). Eccles and Gootman (2002) elaborate on these tasks, identifying several more specific challenges. They state that young adults will experience a shift in their relationship with their parents from dependency and subordination to one that reflects the young adult's increasing maturity and responsibilities in their communities. During this developmental period young adults often explore their social and sexual roles whilst forming romantic relationships. They usually also attempt to form a sense of self on a social and personal level while they plan for their future (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). Individuals will furthermore pursue their plans and acquire a range of skills and values needed to make a successful transition into adulthood (including work, partnership, parenting and citizenship).

Young adults who have transitioned to independent living generally participate in a range of developmental tasks and reach a certain level of independence, fulfilling various adult roles and responsibilities. They are typically established in employment and involved in relationships outside the family home environment (Blome, 1997). Within the context of the researcher's study, *independent living* refers to a dynamic process where young adult care leavers continually change and evolve in

their physical, emotional and social environments. In addition, for the purpose of this study, young adult care leavers who have transitioned to independent living, are living autonomously in their communities and direct their own lives without the dependency created by places of care. Therefore, they experience self-determination as they are presented with opportunities to make decisions that affect their lives and are able to pursue activities of their own choosing.

1.7 INTRODUCTION TO CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Although the researcher presents the conceptual framework of her study in more detail in chapter 2, she provides a brief introduction to the theoretical perspectives that she followed in undertaking this study, in this section. Figure 1.1 illustrates the conceptual framework of the study.

Theoretical perspectives	Key constructs and concepts relevant to the understanding of this study
Psychosocial development theory (Erikson, 1963)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care leavers – Intimacy <i>versus</i> Isolation Psychosocial conflict - forming intimate and loving relationships Sense of self essential for maintaining relationships Care leavers who lack committed relationships – isolation, loneliness and depression
Cognitive stress theory (Stroebe, Van Vliet, Hewstone & Willis, 2002; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition itself = stressor = incapacitating Transition process = challenging and threatening Transition event - exceed care leaver's resources -stress = increasing negative adult outcomes Subjective interpretation of transition = determining outcome of experience
Well-being theory (Keyes, 2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotional well-being: Positive affect; Vowed quality of life; Self acceptance Psychological well-being: Personal growth; Purpose in life; Environmental mastery; Autonomy; Positive relations with others Social well-being: Social acceptance; Social contribution; Social coherence; Social integration
Resilience theory (Ungar, 2011, 2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care leavers - at risk Without risk - no resilience Ecological approach to care leavers' resilience Care leavers display individual capacities, behaviours and protective processes Care leavers well-being = variety in narratives Positive adult outcomes - despite exposure to multiple disadvantages of structural, familial and individual stressors Uniqueness of transition solutions may be invisible to outsiders

Complex interactive dynamics theory (Jörg, 2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reciprocal communicative interactions = influence transition process ▪ Human interaction = unexpected and unpredictable effects ▪ Dynamically evolving relationships = influence adult outcomes
Complex responsiveness theory (Stacey, 2003; 2000; 1996)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transition - process of relating ▪ Communicative interaction - influence on transition outcomes ▪ Ordinary everyday experience of relating - provide meaning during adulthood

Figure 1.1: An illustration of the conceptual framework

1.8 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVES

Although the researcher presents her selected paradigm in more detail in chapter 3, she provides a brief introduction with regard to the paradigmatic perspective that she followed in undertaking this study, in this section. Thereafter, she presents an overview of her selected research design and methodology, which are also discussed in more detail in chapter 3.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher followed a *qualitative methodological approach* that was epistemologically anchored in *Interpretivism*. The interpretivist paradigm suits the purpose of her study, since she aimed to comprehend the manner in which the participants, in their everyday, natural settings, construct meaning regarding the transition process that they had experienced. Furthermore, the researcher attempted to make sense of the participants' life-worlds by interacting with them, appreciating and clarifying their perceptions and accounts of their experiences, views and emotions regarding the transition. She wanted to interpret these emotions in human terms, rather than through quantification and measurement. In addition, she wanted to understand the participants' narratives and experiences. An interpretivist perspective enabled her to interact closely with the participants, making it a suitable choice for her study (De Vos, 2000).

1.9 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The researcher employed a *qualitative instrumental case study research design*, anchored in an *interpretivist paradigm*. This implies an investigation about a phenomenon within its real-life context and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 2009). The case in this study refers to young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living. The researcher believes that a qualitative research design is an appropriate design due to the emotional and sensitive nature of the study, taking into consideration the critical questions that guided the inquiry. This design further supported the researcher to investigate the complex processes, general phenomenon and

social issues of young adults' experiences that could then be used for explanatory and theory building purposes (Mark, 1998) which may in turn inform policy development regarding children's homes in the South African context.

The researcher selected five primary participants (young adults who transitioned to independent living by means of judgmental sampling, also known as *purposive sampling* (Creswell, 2003). In addition, the researcher selected social workers, houseparent's and other role-players who have been involved at different children's homes as secondary participants.

The data for this study was collected in three distinctive phases. In the first phase of the study, the researcher conducted semi-structured telephonic interviews with eight prospective participants. As the researcher is a qualified psychologist she is well trained to carry out *telephonic interviews*. Based on the data collected from these semi-structured telephonic interviews, the researcher purposively selected five primary participants to participate in the research study. The researcher proceeded to set up appointments and after obtaining their written informed consent, they became involved in the second phase of the study. During the second phase of the study, the researcher used multiple data collection methods with the primary participants, such as *semi-structured interviews*, *narrative case inquiries*, *post-modern data collection methods*, and *analysis of existing material and documents (archival research)*.

Various data collection methods were imposed (between one and nine sessions per participants) over a period of seven months to ensure that all key areas were covered with each informant. Some variation occurred in the data collection techniques that was used as well as in the quality of information obtained from each session as a number of the participants wanted to share more about specific subjects. Furthermore, in order to ensure the collection of rich data, each participant was requested to take part in different narrative activities depending on their individual preferences and interests.

During the third phase of the research process, the researcher conducted *reflective* and *dyad interviews* with secondary participants. The third phase of the study was felt to be important as it added rigour and credibility to the study's findings. In addition, the researcher used *observation* (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999) throughout the sessions with primary and secondary participants. She documented her observations in a *reflective diary* and in the form of *field notes*. Furthermore, with regard to data documentation, she made *audio-recordings* of interviews and narrative case inquiries, and kept *visual data* of activities and media for the duration of the study (Mayan, 2001).

1.10 ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

In selecting an interpretivist epistemological paradigm, the researcher's role entailed that of being an active participant, making her a vital part of the data collection process (Wimmer & Dominick, 2000). With regard to the nature of the research problem she was personally responsible for collecting data from the five primary participants, as well as for planning and implementing all data collection sessions. In addition, she planned and conducted interviews with the secondary participants. She had to fulfill an important data collection role and interact closely with the research participants to obtain the necessary data (Kotze, 2002; Flick, 1998).

The researcher had to critically consider and continuously reflect on her role, in order to conduct credible research. In fulfilling her various roles when working with the primary and secondary participants, she constantly remained aware of the fact that she also grew up in a children's home and that this fact might have impacted on her in fulfilling her role as researcher. In an attempt to constantly reflect on her various roles, she relied on her reflective diary, and made detailed field notes throughout the research process. Furthermore, due to her profession as educational psychologist, she had to also constantly keep in mind that her primary role was that of researcher, which entailed observing, participating, listening carefully and continuously abiding by the guidelines for conducting ethical research.

1.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In conducting this study, the researcher adhered to the professional ethical code for educational psychologists, as formulated by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (www.hpcs.co.za), at all times. In addition, she continuously conducted research according to the Ethics and Research Statement provided by the Faculty of Health Sciences of North-West University (www.nwu.ac.za). She developed a consent form that ensured the participants' confidentiality (Addendum A). Furthermore, she obtained permission from the research ethics committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences of North-West University.

The research did not entail exposing participants to physical risks, harm or harmful activities. The researcher continually emphasised that information and responses shared during the study will be kept private and confidential, and that results will be presented in an anonymous manner (Burns, 2000). She respected the wish of participants to withdraw from her study. Participants were also not subjected to any acts of deception or betrayal (Thompson & Rudolph, 2000). The ethical guidelines adhered to in this study are discussed in more detail in chapter 3.

1.12 RIGOUR OF THE STUDY

The researcher strove to produce findings that are believable and convincing, also presenting negative or inconsistent findings, in order to add to the rigour of the study. She aimed to enhance trustworthiness by making use of observations and field notes during the entire research process, also using concrete data in the form of visual images (Addendum F) and electronic recordings. Although transferability was not the aim of the study, rich, thick descriptions of the participants and their contexts, are included thereby providing a large amount of detailed information.

The researcher strove to base the findings of the study on the outcomes of the participants' involvement and on the conditions of the research, and not on her (or others') biases, motivations and perspectives. Through this, she aimed to meet the criterion of confirmability. Adding to this, she strove to meet the criterion of credibility by focusing on extensive descriptions of specific cases, in her study being five primary participants who transitioned to independent living. As interpretivist studies assume multiple realities, dependability was not relevant to her study. The researcher provides more detailed descriptions of the measures that she included in order to enhance the rigour of the study in chapter 3.

1.13 LAYOUT OF THE THESIS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the study and provides a general overview of the study, including the rationale. The researcher defines the aim and objectives of the research, and states the assumptions that she made at the onset of her study. She also briefly introduces the paradigmatic perspectives of the study. She defines key concepts, and provides an overview of her research design and methodology. She briefly reflects on her role as researcher and discusses the ethical considerations of the study.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND OVERVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Chapter 2 outlines the conceptual framework of the study that guided the researcher in undertaking this study. She explores existing literature on young adults, residential care, care leavers, transition experiences and independent living programmes.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research design by focusing on the research design, the selection of the research sites and participants, as well as the data collection, documentation analysis and interpretation procedures. The researcher motivates the methodological choices against the

background of the research questions and purpose. She also discusses the ethical guidelines that she adhered to and the procedures that she implemented to enhance rigour in more detail.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS ON THE PRE-TRANSITION PHASE (THEME 1)

Chapter 4 captures the results of the study, pertaining the pre-transition experiences of young adult care leavers prior to and during their placement in care (Theme 1). The researcher presents the results of Theme 1 in terms of the related sub-themes and categories that emerged. This is followed by her interpretation of the results in terms of existing literature, thereby presenting the findings that relate to Theme 1. She concludes the chapter by revisiting her conceptual framework in terms of the findings of Theme 1.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS ON THE TRANSITION PHASE (THEME 2)

Chapter 5 presents the results, pertaining the transition experiences of young adult care leavers immediately following their departure from care (Theme 2). The researcher presents the results in terms of the related sub-themes and categories that emerged. This is followed by her discussion of the findings, when she interprets the results in terms of existing literature. She concludes by linking the findings with her conceptual framework.

CHAPTER 6: RESULTS ON THE POST-TRANSITION PHASE (THEME 3)

In chapter 6 the researcher presents the results on the post-transition experiences of young adult care leavers following their transition to independent living (Theme 3). She presents the results in terms of related sub-themes and categories. She then interprets of the results in terms of existing literature, in order to provide the reader with the findings. As in the case of Themes 1 and 2, she concludes by revisiting her conceptual framework.

CHAPTER 7: GUIDELINES TO SUPPORT THE TRANSITION OF CARE LEAVERS

In this chapter the researcher discusses independent living programmes for youth leaving the care system. More specifically, the researcher describes a transition framework for youth leaving care in South Africa based on the findings of this study and studies related to this field.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 8 provides a summary of the study, followed by the researcher's conclusions in terms of the research questions. She also discusses the limitations and potential contributions of her study. She concludes by formulating recommendations for training, practice and additional research.

1.14 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher presented a general overview of the research problem and her rationale for undertaking the study. She stated the purpose of her study and briefly introduced her selected research design and methodology. She defined the key concepts in order to better orientate the reader regarding the meanings that she ascribed to these concepts for the purpose of this study.

In chapter 2 the researcher explores relevant literature on young adults' experiences of transition from residential care to independent living. She focuses on the background of children's homes in South Africa, resilient adaptation and independent living programmes for South African youth leaving the care system. She explains the conceptual framework that guided her in planning and conducting the empirical study, which she describes in chapter 3.

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CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW AS BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents a conceptual framework followed by an overview of pertinent literature that she believes is central to the relevance, and understanding of this study. She juxtaposes the functioning of children's homes in South Africa and discusses the psychological and behavioural outcomes for young adults who resided in children's homes. She further highlights empirically based research on the typical transition of individuals who have been raised in a family home when compared to the challenges experienced by young care leavers making their transition to independence. She also refers to the resilient adaptation of care leavers. Thereafter she explores literature on independent living programmes that might be utilised to support young adults during their transition from residential care to independent living.

The purpose of the next section is to offer a conceptual framework for integrating the critical theories and concepts that informed this study.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Edwards (in Van Vuuren, 1991:64) remarks that *"in practice the best research is done by those who have read about and examined theories about the phenomena they are investigating and deeply reflected on them."* The researcher approached the conceptual framework of this study based on this suggestion, and situates the study within six theoretical perspectives, which provided the conceptual and theoretical foundation for this research.

The theoretical perspectives that informed this study are namely **psychosocial development theory** (Erikson, 1963), **cognitive stress theory** (Stroebe, Van Vliet, Hewstone & Willis, 2002; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), **well-being theory** (Keyes, 2007), **resilience theory** (Ungar, 2008), **complex responsiveness theory** (Stacey, 2003; 2000; 1996) and **complex interactive dynamics theory** (Jörg, 2004). The researcher regards these theories as central to the relevance and understanding of this study. The theories were integrated in developing the conceptual framework, in order to provide a clear understanding of young adults' experiences of transition from residential care to independent living.

Erikson's **psychosocial development theory** (Erikson, 1963) portrays individuals as playing an active role in their psychological development through their attempts to understand, organize and integrate their everyday experiences. In his view development occurs as individuals successfully resolve a series of psychosocial crises. For each crisis, there is a desirable quality that can emerge and a corresponding unfavorable characteristic; although this does not imply that a healthy individual develops only positive qualities. Erikson emphasises that individuals are best able to adapt to their world when they possess both the positive and negative qualities of their psychosocial phase.

In applying **psychosocial development theory** to this study, the researcher viewed the participants as being in the *Intimacy versus Isolation (Young Adulthood)* stage of their psychosocial development. During this stage, individuals have to establish close, secure and committed relationships with other people in order to experience satisfying development. Failure to do so might lead to a sense of isolation, loneliness and depression (Erikson, 1963). In the experiences of young adults who left residential care it is often found that they resist intimacy, trust and openness, in turn influencing the relationships they attempt to establish as young adults. Thus, the researcher believes that Erikson's theory of psychosocial development is central to the relevance and understanding of this study.

Stroebe *et al.* (2002:151) states that individuals experiencing a severe stressor (relocation) and who lacks resources (social support), "...*would be unable to cope with the demands of the new situation....*", referring not only to work or study environment and demands, but also to social and psychological demands. This belief is in agreement with **cognitive stress theory**. Although the research of Stroebe *et al.* (2002) focused on children leaving a family home from one culture into another, this theory can also be applied to the experiences of young adults who have resided in residential care as they often experience their disengagement from care as rushed and very abrupt, especially because of the sudden ending of support (Stein, 2005). As such, these individuals typically do not cope with the pressures and demands of everyday life as effectively as other young people (Gelling, 2009).

Keyes (2007) **well-being theory** focuses on emotional, psychological and social dimensions that represent the underlying structure of well-being and indicate whether or not an individual is flourishing. Flourishing is characterised by high levels of personal well-being, goal attainment, physical health, resilience, intimacy, emotional vitality and positive feelings towards oneself (Keyes, 2005). Keyes (2007) also describe languishing, referring to lower levels of well-being generally characterised by stagnation, emptiness and helplessness, that can possibly occur with symptoms of depression (Keyes, 2002). Individuals who are neither flourishing nor languishing are described as moderately mentally healthy.

Well-being theory (Keyes, 2007) proposes and describes five *social* factors that constitute potential dimensions of well-being. *Social integration* involves the evaluation of the quality of one's relationships with society and community. Healthy individuals generally feel that they are part of society. *Social acceptance* refers to the character and qualities of individuals, who illustrate social acceptance, trust others, think that others are capable of kindness, and believe that people can be industrious. As such, socially accepting people hold favorable views of human nature and feel comfortable with others.

Social contribution entails the evaluation of one's social value. It includes the belief that one is a vital member of society, with something of value to give to the world. *Social actualization* implies a belief in the evolution of society and the sense that society has potential which is being realised through its institutions and citizens. In this regard healthier people are typically hopeful about the conditions and future of society, and they can recognise society's potential. *Social coherence* involves perceptions of the operation of the social world. Healthier people generally care about the kind of world they live in and they remain aware of what is happening around them (Keyes, 2007).

Keyes (2007) describes two components of *emotional* well-being namely *positive affect* and *vowed quality of life*. *Positive affect* is described as being regularly cheerful, being interested in life and being in good spirits. This affect may also be experienced as happiness, calmness and peacefulness. The second emotional well-being element is *vowed quality of life*. This element is reached when an individual is highly satisfied with life overall or with various domains of living.

Keyes (2007) proposes six *psychological* factors that constitute potential dimensions of well-being namely *self acceptance*, *positive relations with others*, *autonomy*, *environmental mastery*, *purpose in life* and *personal growth*. *Self acceptance* refers to a positive attitude towards the self, acknowledgement and acceptance of multiple aspects of self, including the good and bad qualities, and positive emotions about life. *Positive relations with others* entails warm, satisfying and trusting relationships with other individuals, concern about the welfare of others, empathy, affection, intimacy, and an understanding of reciprocal interaction of human relationships. *Autonomy* implies self-determining and independent behavior, resistance towards social pressures, regulation of behavior from within, and evaluation of the self by means of personal standards.

Another psychological well-being element is *environmental mastery* which is described as a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment, control over a complex array of external activities, effective use of surrounding opportunities and creation of contexts suitable to personal needs, and values. *Purpose in life* entails setting life goals, having a sense of directedness, finding meaning in the present and past life, believing that life has a purpose and having objectives and aims for living. Finally, *personal growth* entails feelings of continued development, seeing the self as growing

and expanding, being open to new experiences, experiencing a sense of realising the own potential, seeing improvement in the self and behavior over time as well as being aware of changes that reflect more self-knowledge and effectiveness (Keyes, 2007).

The researcher found limited evidence regarding the positive characteristics, well-being dimensions and social processes associated with care leavers, such as their contentment and happiness derived from life satisfaction which can manifest in hope, optimism and interplay between positive and negative emotions. However, negative psychosocial outcomes for care leavers seem to be an international phenomenon as several authors have identified challenges that care leavers may experience (Diener, Lucas & Oishi, 2005; Diener, 2000). The researcher therefore deemed it important to pay attention to the psychosocial outcomes of care leavers, especially the emotional, psychological and social characteristics of the participants that represent the underlying structure of well-being. Yet, the focus of this study was not only on the identification of well-being dimensions that contributed to the participants' successful transitions or adaptations during independent living, but also on recurring patterns that arose in the experiences of young adults who resided in residential care and which could potentially include the dimensions of well-being as identified by Keyes (2007).

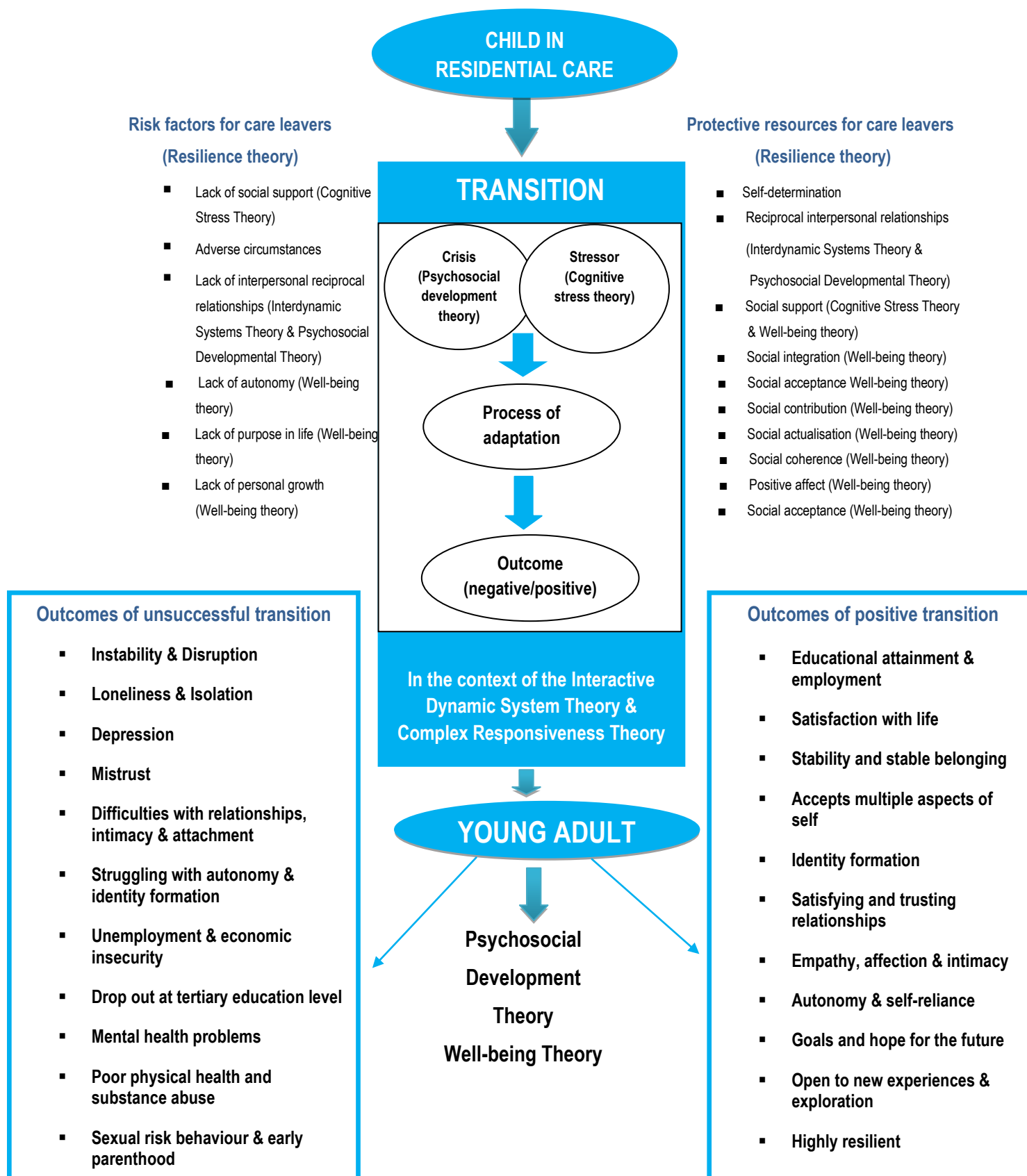
Unger's (2008) **resilience theory** shifts the focus from attributes of exposure to stressful environments, to the individual characteristics and social processes associated with either normal or unexpectedly positive psychosocial development. Crawford, Wright and Masten (2005) add to this idea by remarking that resilience theory focuses on the processes that could account for positive adaptation and development in the context of adversity. As this theory recognises the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to resources in order to sustain well-being (Unger, 2008), the researcher believe that this theory is relevant to the current study. More specifically, care leavers may display successful transitions despite their exposure to risk, which provides further insight into the particular constellation of protective processes, resources and opportunities present in young adults' lives and in their social environments. These processes might contribute to them flourishing in the context of adversity. Current trends in terms of research on resilience are described in more detail in section 2.6.

Stacey's (2003; 2000) **complex responsiveness theory** portrays individuals as interactive organisms that interconnect dynamically within their environments. These interactions influence the systems in which they function, and in turn, they are also being influenced by the different systems in which they interrelate. In applying the complex responsiveness theory to this study, the participants are regarded as being part of a system that is based on a set of norms. These norms require them to examine and respond to each other's actions in order to improve their behaviour (Stacey, 1996). As such, the way in which the participants respond in their environments emerges not only from their histories of interaction (Stacey, 2003) but also from their reflections about the information received from their environment.

They then choose what to make their own and/or reject information whilst trying to make sense of their transition experiences (Radford, 2006; Stacey, 2003; Shaw, 2002; Stacey, 2000; Badenhorst, 1995). As such, this theory can be useful to understand how young care leavers engage with the world around them in their efforts to establish themselves as adults.

The **complex interactive dynamic systems theory** (Jörg, 2009) was also applied in order to understand how the participants' narratives and patterns of behaviour arose. Keeping this theory's principles in mind, the participants were seen as intentional beings that co-created their narratives within their interpersonal and reciprocal relationships with other individuals. Their narratives and behaviour was seen as part of a complex system that is dependent on different conditions, where a small difference in variables, such as decisions and experiences can lead to huge differences in the research outcomes (Paley, 2010). Jörg's (2009) theory was at the core of the conceptual framework of this study, as indicated in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework for the study



2.3 CHILDREN'S HOMES IN SOUTH AFRICA

South African children's homes are registered with the Department of Social Development, but many operate independently and informally (Levin & Haines, 2007). It is estimated (Pinkerton, 2011) that over 10,000 children reside in around 180 residential units in South Africa, registered by the Department of Social Development as 'children's homes'. This is however likely to be a substantial underestimation. In addition, an unknown number of children reside in unregistered out of home settings (Meintjes, Moses, Berry & Mampane, 2007).

Different types of childcare institutions exist in South Africa that have been incorporated in the amended Child Care Act of 2007 (Republic of South Africa, 2008), such as children's homes, children's villages, places of safety, children's shelters and schools of industry (reform schools). This study focused on the transition experiences of five young adults who resided in children's homes although one of the male participants was raised in the SOS children's village in Port Elizabeth.

In South Africa, SOS children's villages are similar to children's homes as both are established under section 30 of the South African Childcare Act of 1983 (Meintjes, Moses, Berry & Mampane, 2007) and provide fulltime room, board and watchful oversight to six or more children under the age of 18 (Berridge & Brodie, 1998) while they gain access to primary education. SOS Children's Villages however differ from children's homes as they receive funds from private sponsors who form part of an international non-governmental social development organisation. As in the case of children's homes children are placed in these facilities for short or long periods of time (Thoburn, 1994) and typically provide long-term placement and care to children from vulnerable families.

Children's homes and children's villages in South Africa resemble family flats, cottages or duplexes (Törrönen, 2006). Characteristically, different units are situated on one communal property with a central kitchen and an administration office. Even though the children are in the care and protection of a primary caregiver and a domestic helper, the overall guardianship of the children rests with the head of the children's home and social workers under the auspices of the children's home (Mohangi, 2008). The atmosphere and relationships in the units may differ according to the residents' moods and behaviors as well as the living conditions and behavior of caregivers that reside with the children (Törrönen, 2006).

Children in children's homes and children's villages participate in cyclic and routine activities, such as daily breakfast, departure for school, homework, and weekend and holiday activities that aim to bring continuity to their everyday lives (Harvey, 1990). The structure is dictated by the daily schedule and routines of the staff at the children's home. Residents' biological parents, relatives and friends do not stay with them at the children's home. As the overall guardianship of the children rests with the head of

the children's home and the social worker under the auspices of the children's home, children's parents have to gain permission to visit children over weekends. Alternatively, children may be placed with their parents, other relatives or acquaintances during weekends and school holidays.

Children are placed in children's homes and children's villages for various reasons. Figure 2.2 provides a graphical representation of the main reasons for the admission of children to registered children's homes.

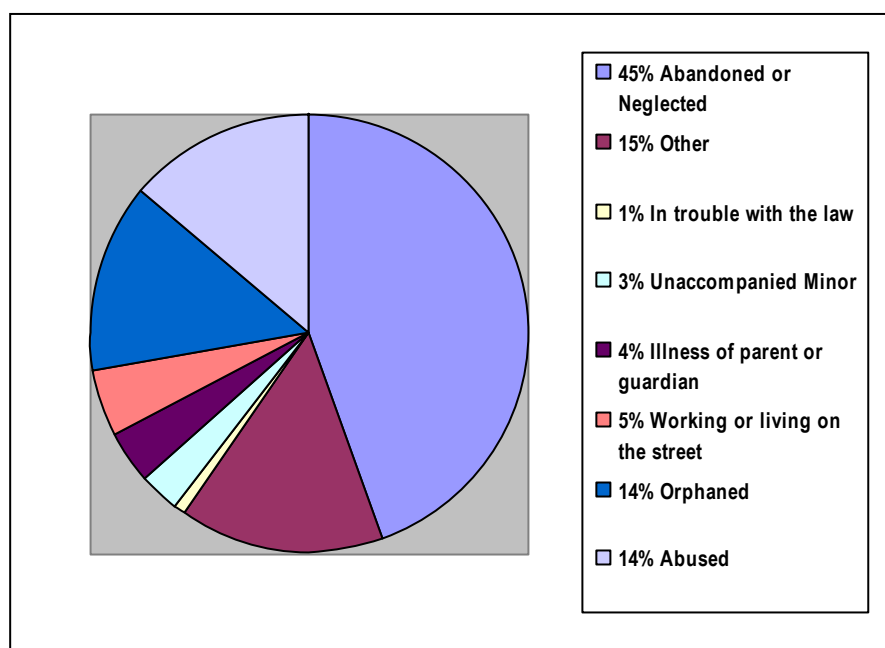


Figure 2.2: Main reasons for admission to registered children's homes (Adapted from UNICEF, 2010)

As children in children's homes and children's villages have typically suffered various traumatic experiences they often present with emotional, physical, learning and behavioral challenges while in institutional care. In 2005, the results of one of the most comprehensive studies of children and youth in residential care conducted in the United States of America, revealed a discouraging picture of mental health, behavioural and family-related problems prior to, during, and after care placement (Child Welfare League of America, 2005). Specifically, when the social emotional characteristics of 1,321 children across 19 residential facilities were evaluated, the authors found that 93% entered care with a psychiatric diagnosis (most frequently externalising in nature), over half (51%) reported previous placements in psychiatric hospitals, 38% reported suicidal ideation, and 40% were prescribed antipsychotic medication.

Significant numbers of these children (51%) revealed histories of involvement with crime prior to placement in care, and high rates of contact with the law post-discharge (20% were found guilty by a

court, 20% were on probation). With respect to family functioning, the parents or caregivers revealed high levels of maternal mental illness (30%) and psychiatric hospitalisations (27%), maternal drug (50%) and alcohol (38%) dependency, and domestic (34%), sexual (38%), and physical (57%) abuse (Child Welfare League of America, 2005).

Despite the evidence that children who are placed in residences of care present a vulnerable and disadvantaged group, the conditions of children's homes continues to be limiting in terms of providing nurturing environments for residents' healthy development (Federici, 2008). As such, contemporary researchers have found that these characteristics remain prevalent in children's homes, and that it often extends into adulthood where care leavers continue to be a largely troubled population (Handwerk *et al.*, 2006; Millward, Kennedy, Towlson, & Minnis, 2006; Child Welfare League of America, 2005).

2.4 TYPICAL TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE FOR YOUNG ADULTS RAISED IN A FAMILY SETTING

The transitional phase to adulthood usually coincides with either the final years of schooling, tertiary training or the beginning of attempts to gain employment (Blome, 1997). Late adolescence and the period following, often referred to as emerging adulthood, have been noted as particularly important for setting the stage for continued development through the life span as individuals begin to make choices and engage in a variety of activities that are influential on the rest of their lives (Zarrett & Eccles, 2006). However, this developmental period is often associated with changes and challenges, as youth acquire and consolidate the competencies, attitudes, values, and social capital necessary to make the transition into adulthood (Furstenberg, Kennedy, McLoyd, Rumbaut & Settersten, 2004).

As Erik Erikson (1963) outlines, the developmental tasks of late adolescence and young adulthood include identity formation, mastery and a sense of intimacy. Eccles and Gootman (2002) elaborate on these tasks, identifying several more specific challenges. They state that young adults experience a shift in their relationship with their parents from dependency and subordination to one that reflects the young adult's increasing maturity and responsibilities in the family and community. During this developmental period they often explore their social and sexual roles whilst forming romantic relationships. They also attempt to form a sense of self on a social and personal level while they plan for their future. During this developmental stage they furthermore pursue their plans and acquire a range of skills and values needed to make a successful transition into adulthood (including work, partnership, parenting and citizenship).

Individuals who are raised in a family setting are typically provided with the opportunity to negotiate these developmental tasks whilst they gradually transition into adulthood as they often have a range of support, including family members and community resources (Van Breda, 2011). Their parents,

grandparents and other relatives may occupy a central role in the different life stages as young adults who have been raised in a family setting often live at home until their early twenties, and may continue to receive social, practical, emotional and financial support. Therefore, their movement towards independence through leaving home generally involves a long transition period during which young people may leave and return home again on different occasions from time to time.

Typically, an intermediate or halfway stage occurs between dependence and independent living during which these young people may reside with extended family or in a supportive institution, such as a college or hostel (Maunder, Lidell & Green, 1999). The key factor here is the continued availability of most family homes as a safety net to which young people can return over a considerable period of time. However, they also experience challenges which include decisions about education or vocational training, entry into and transitions within the labour market, moving out of the family home, and sometimes marriage and parenthood (Zarrett & Eccles, 2006). These transitional challenges are discussed in the next section.

2.4.1 TERTIARY EDUCATION

At completion of high school, school leavers who are raised within a family home typically enrol for further education and training. Others move into a variety of work and non-work settings. This difference in transitional trajectories involves very different experiences and challenges for youth during their transition to adulthood. Individuals who enrol for further education and training at tertiary institutions often form part of social institutions that provide them with shelter, organised activities, adult and peer support, health care, and various forms of entertainment (Begley, 2000). Tertiary students usually discover new-found independence as the tertiary environment enables them to practice self-governance, individuation from parents, and freedom to direct their own lifestyle in a safe environment that delays many adult responsibilities (Zarrett & Eccles, 2006). As a result, individuals who attend further education and training have the opportunity to extend exploration of the self, develop new ideas, take advantage of multiple opportunities and try out various lifestyles. In essence, tertiary education facilities are social institutions that have become increasingly tailored to provide autonomy that will assist the transition into young adulthood.

Although a tertiary education is generally regarded as important for ensuring a bright future, the transition into and persistence in these institutions can be challenging and stressful. Factors, such as unfamiliar academic expectations, and changes in social support and norms might encourage high levels of risky behaviours for example alcohol use (Heckhausen, 1999). Therefore, along with the direct costs of tertiary institutions, other social and cognitive factors are important to consider (Zarrett & Eccles, 2006).

Most youth who do not enrol at further education and training institutions attempt to find employment which may result in what seems a haphazard entry into adulthood. Important needs, such as housing and medical insurance cannot be afforded at typical starting wages for high school students or graduates, and these young people cannot easily establish financial independence and their own households. Without further education and training it is often difficult to make a successful developmental transition to adulthood (Simmons & Blyth, 1987). Along with further education and training facilities, the family as institution typically provides youth with important assets during their transition to adulthood.

2.4.2 FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Sound parent-child relationships are related to youth well-being, and maintaining strong ties with one's family is therefore important for the emerging adulthood years. Families can give youth financial, emotional, and achievement-related support. They also provide social capital and act as important role models. Although families of origin function as a central safety net for many young adults, they can also be a risk for others where support is not provided (Eccles, Midgley, Buchanan, Wigfield, Reuman, & Maclver, 1993). During young adulthood, parent-child conflicts often increase as children's needs for autonomy and independence become more important and they show some resistance to family rules and roles. However, most of these do not concern core issues, such as education, politics, or spirituality, but rather focus on minor issues, such as appearance, chores and dating (Zarrett & Eccles, 2006).

Family relationships generally improve as youth move into the young adult years, although serious conflicts between youth and their parents during the adolescent years can result in them experiencing challenges during their transition to adulthood. Some youth are in family situations where parents are unavailable, unable, or unwilling to provide the support their children need to make a successful transition into adulthood. Furthermore, youth are often placed at high risk due to other factors, such as parent divorce, poverty, unemployment, death, or psychological estrangement of parents and children (Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 1997). However, youth often establish strong relationships with teachers, coaches, program organisers, spiritual leaders, and parents of friends, who can all serve as additional mentors who can help buffer the impact of poor relationships with parents, as well as provide further social capital for the successful transition to adulthood (Zarrett & Eccles, 2006).

2.4.3 FRIENDSHIPS AND ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

The peer group has been found to be a powerful place for identity formation and consolidation throughout the adolescent period. One of the most major changes during adolescence is youth's increasing focus on peer relationships as indicated by the time they spend with peers and their

engagement in activities done with peers. Peer acceptance and time spent doing activities with peers commonly take precedence over academic tasks during early adolescence and can result in an increase in behavioural challenges if the youth are subjected to excessive peer pressure to engage in such behaviours (Schnabel, Alfeld, Eccles, Köller & Baumert, 2002). This may ultimately compromise youth's successful transition to adulthood. However as youth make the journey towards independence and become more confident in their abilities, they often improve their social status, and establish their own goals and values. As such, they become less susceptible to peer pressure and the impact of peer relationships on behaviour further declines, as they establish romantic relationships (Zarrett & Eccles, 2006).

Romantic relationships play a role in identity formation during adolescence by connecting youth with their peers and providing them with a sense of belonging, and status in their peer groups. A sense of belonging also predicts how meaningful life is perceived to be (Lambert, Sillman, Hicks, Kamble, Baumeister & Fincham, 2013). In addition, dating and romantic relationships during late adolescence and early adulthood are positively related to high levels of self-worth as feeling competent in romantic relationships contributes largely to general feelings of competence (Zarrett & Eccles, 2006). Although the development of romantic relationships will support youth to develop their sense of self and to explore adult roles, romantic and sexual interests during adolescence are also accompanied by an increase in risks of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. As such, romantic and sexual relationships might have a negative influence on youth's achievement related roles, such as education opportunities and career aspirations which leads to challenges during the transition to independence (Lord, Eccles & McCarthy, 1994).

2.5 TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE FOR YOUNG ADULT CARE LEAVERS

Young people leaving care experience a multitude of difficulties when they are compared to peers who were raised in a family setting. This can be attributed to various factors, such as the sudden ending of care, a lack of independent living skills and the shortage of ongoing financial and social support, typically offered by most families of origin (Stein, 2006). As such, transitioning to independence can be an overwhelming and traumatic experience for care leavers as they are expected to rapidly transition from dependence to independence with very little social support. This often leaves them feeling lonely, scared and vulnerable as they are unable to cope with societal expectations (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012).

2.5.1 CARE LEAVING AS A PROCESS

The transition from late adolescence to young adulthood is a critical developmental stage for all individuals. For youth transitioning from residential care to self-sufficient and independent living, a

process referred to in the literature as 'care leaving', the transition can be even more profound (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012) as they have to rise to adulthood at an accelerated pace (Elsley, Backett-Milburn, & Jamieson, 2007).

Research studies completed between 1980 and 2002 consistently find that the majority of young people have to leave care at 17 or 18 years of age (Dixon and Stein, 2005, Biehal *et al.*, 1995; Stein and Carey, 1986). As such, they are expected to cope at a far younger age than young people living with their families. Stein (2005) describes care leavers as becoming '*instant adults*' who immediately after their release from the children's home are expected to live an independent life, with frighteningly little preparation, material possessions and support (Foster, 2002). Their abrupt exit from "the system", like their transition to adulthood, is often immediate as they and the facilities working to promote their development are generally forced to transition into adulthood without adequate resources and support. They subsequently face immense challenges and risks.

From the early 1970s small scale studies and surveys show how ill-equipped many former children's home residents are in dealing with life challenges when they leave care (Stein, 2005). Stein (2006) laments that present statistics about care leavers makes for '*depressing reading*' as many face a struggle-ridden existence. Foster and Gifford (2004) state that one possible reason for such negative outcomes can be that these young people are expected to transition from a highly structured living environment to a confusing and difficult world. Such experiences are often exacerbated by their typically low educational achievement, learning disabilities, limited life skills and additional health, emotional and behavioural problems (Foster & Gifford, 2004).

Studies completed over the past 30 years (Dixon & Stein, 2005; Sinclair, Baker, Wilson & Gibbs, 2005; Massinga & Pecora, 2004; Biehal, Clayden, Stein, & Wade, 1995; Stein & Carey, 1986) suggest that there are three outcome groups of care leavers. The first group, referring to young adults '*moving on*' successfully from care, achieves educational success before leaving care. Their preparation for independent living is gradual, they leave care later and their moving on is likely to have been planned. They are more likely to make sense of their family relationships, and experience stability and continuity in their lives, including a secure attachment relationship.

For this first group, participating in further or higher education, having a job they like or being a parent themselves plays a significant part in "feeling normal". As such, this group welcome the challenge of independent living and gaining more control over their lives. In general, their resilience is enhanced by their experiences whilst living in the children's home, leaving care and during their after care. They are also able to make good use of the help they have been offered, often maintaining contact and support from former carers.

The second group, the ‘*survivors*’, experiences more instability, movement and disruption while living in care than the ‘*moving on*’ group. They are likely to leave care at a younger age, with few or no qualifications. They might experience further movement and problems after leaving care, including periods of homelessness, low-paid casual or short-term, unfulfilling work and unemployment. They typically experience problems in their personal and professional relationships through patterns of detachment and dependency. Many in this group describe themselves as “*more tough*”, as having done things “*on my own*” and as “*survivors*” since leaving care. They believe that the many problems they face, and often are still coping with, has made them more mature and self-reliant although their view of themselves as independent is often contradicted by the reality of high degrees of dependency for assistance with accommodation, money and personal problems (Broad, 1998; Biehal *et al.*, 1995).

The third group of care leavers, that literature refers to as ‘*victims*’, is the most disadvantaged. They have the most damaging pre-care family experiences and places of care are unable to support them to overcome their past difficulties. Their lives in care are likely to include many different placements and associated disruption to their lives, especially in relation to their personal relationships and education. They are also likely to have a cluster of difficulties while in care that often began earlier, including emotional and behavioural difficulties.

This group is least likely to have a redeeming relationship with a family member or carer, and they tend to leave care at a younger age. At the time of leaving care they are likely to be unemployed, experience difficulties to maintain their accommodation and may as a result become homeless. They are likely to be lonely, isolated and experience psychiatric difficulties (Dixon & Stein, 2005; Sinclair, Baker, Wilson & Gibbs, 2005; Pecora *et al.*, 2004; Biehal *et al.*, 1995; Stein, 2000; Stein & Carey, 1986). One of the reasons for these negative outcomes might be that their transition into adulthood was compressed and accelerated, when compared to the experiences of their peers leaving a family home, which will be discussed in the next section.

2.5.2 CHALLENGES TYPICALLY FACED BY CARE LEAVERS

From the early 1970s, a body of small-scale surveys and qualitative research revealed how poorly equipped young care leavers are to cope with the practical, social and educational demands of society. A lack of these skills often causes them to experience difficulties with educational attainment, mental health, employment and accommodation (Stein, 2005). A study conducted by the Mamelani Projects (2009) found that young adults care leavers in South Africa also face similar challenges to youth leaving care as identified in other countries. Figure 2.3 provides a visual presentation of the major challenges young adults experience after leaving care.

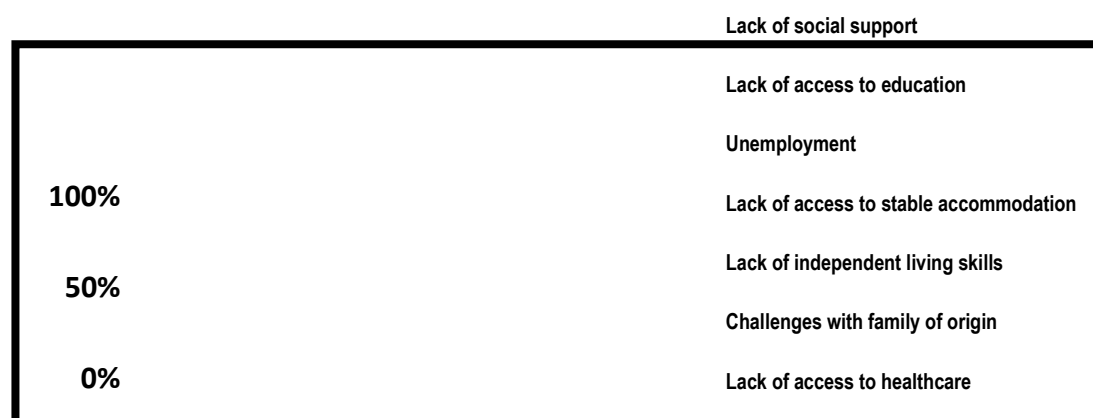


Figure 2.3: Major challenges young adults experience after leaving care (Adapted from Mamelani, 2013)

2.5.2.1 Lack of social support

Young adult care leavers often move into adulthood with very little social support from their families, places of care, communities and government. They are often estranged from their biological families due to their experiences of familial abuse, rejection, abandonment, disruption and loss in their lives (Jones, 2002; Biehal & Wade, 2000). These experiences make it difficult for them to establish healthy relationships, not only with their families of origin, but also with their peers. Moreover, in many cases, whilst the young care leaver resides at the children's home, their family remains unable to change its circumstances. As such, their family of origin is typically economically and socially disadvantaged, so the young adult is expected to take care of him/herself.

Research found that care leavers are often deprived from social support from the personnel at children's homes (Stein, 2005). These findings are supported by different studies, such as those conducted by Lips (2007) and Ward (2000) who found that care leavers frequently have to negotiate their transition to independence with minimal support and monitoring from their places of care. As such, young adult care leavers often do not have contact with the youth and caregivers with whom they were raised, leaving them vulnerable as they do not have anyone to turn to during times of uncertainty (Foster, 2002).

2.5.2.2 Lack of access to education

While the educational outcomes for adult care leavers are documented, relatively little is known about how they perceive educational participation and attainment. A gap in the literature seems to exist about how care leavers, who do achieve educational success, manage to complete their studies (Cameron, 2007). In this regard Mallon (2007) as well as Martin and Jackson (2002) found that central to care

leavers educational success, is their own motivation and initiative-taking as they often do not have the financial resources, independent living skills or family support to attain tertiary education. As such, care leavers who successfully complete their education have a considerable degree of interest, motivation and commitment to achieve academically, despite having limited practical support (Jones, 2002).

Explanations for the low level of educational attainment for young adult care leavers include many adverse factors, such as that children who enter care are highly likely to have had disrupted and impoverished early childhoods and once in care, they often experience numerous changes of placement, and school (Bebbington & Miles, 1998; Broad, 1998; Jackson *et al.*, 2005). In addition, children's home residents are often not encouraged to attain educational competence whilst they are in primary and secondary school. They may therefore lack the support and encouragement needed to excel academically, which will in turn limit their tertiary education opportunities (Atkinson, 2008). In this regard Atkinson (2008) report that youth who are raised in care is significantly less likely than their peers to graduate from high school and rarely obtain higher education. Gerber and Dicker (2006) added to this by reporting that children's home residents are twice as likely as their peers to drop out of high school. As such, literature suggests that care leavers often do not qualify for tertiary education as they do not meet the minimal academic requirements needed for acceptance into a tertiary education institute.

2.5.2.3 Unemployment

Literature suggests that many young adults leaving care do not complete school and as such they do not have the necessary skills to find employment (Atkinson, 2008; Courtney & Dworsky, 2006). Young care leavers are also often forced to search for employment on their own and, consequently, may have difficulty obtaining employment (Lenz-Rashid, 2006). To avoid unemployment for young adults leaving care, an increased emphasis has been placed on training youth whilst they are still living in children's home, on how to live and function independently in society (Atkinson, 2008; Rashid, 2004).

Atkinson (2008) found that young adult care leavers experience a lack of knowledge about employment applications, setting up a curriculum vitae and interview processes. They also lack part-time work experience, confidence and maturity that typically accompany employment (Atkinson, 2008). As such, employment training and support may also be needed before they leave the children's home and during their transitional years (Lenz-Rashid, 2006).

2.5.2.4 Lack of access to stable accommodation

Atkinson (2008) reports that young care leavers are at an increased risk of homelessness as they do not have the necessary financial resources to find stable accommodation. As they are expected to

leave care at a young age, they often experience a lack of education and skills that make it difficult for them to gain the financial resources to apply for stable accommodation (Atkinson, 2008).

Other challenges experienced by young care leavers seeking accommodation include high rental costs and the unwillingness of homeowners to rent out their housing to young tenants (Lenz-Rashid, 2006). The situation is often exacerbated as they do not have a parent or legal guardian that could assist them to secure accommodation (Maposa, 2010). As such, young care leavers often experience difficulties finding and maintaining suitable housing and this remains a major problem for youth during their transition to independence.

2.5.2.5 Lack of access to mental healthcare

Young adults who are raised in care are vulnerable due to various traumatic experiences, such as abuse, neglect, rejection, family dysfunction and abandonment. As such, they often present with unique psychological, behavioural and learning difficulties whilst they struggle to form positive and long-lasting relationships. If they do not receive therapeutic intervention during their time in care these challenges might recur during their transition to independence as this period might induce memories of previous trauma and separations (Coleman & Hendry, 1999).

Coupled with the negative impact of long-term care, low levels of education, unemployment, economic insecurity, lack of social support and unstable accommodation, this might cause ongoing mental health difficulties, such as depression, substance abuse, conduct disorders, insomnia and anxiety (Maposa, 2010, Lenz-Rashid, 2006). Providing mental health services for young adult care leavers is therefore imperative and cogent for several reasons. However, Atkinson (2008) reported that children's home residents often do not receive therapeutic intervention and that young adult care leavers report that they do not have financial resources to seek help for their mental health problems.

2.5.2.6 Lack of access to independent living skills

Young adults who have been raised in care often report that they experience a lack of skills necessary for independent living, such as time management, grocery shopping, managing a bank account and cooking (Atkinson, 2008). For the purpose of this study, specific life skills that are necessary for successful independent living in South Africa include money management, time management and planning, use of community resources, housing, food preparation, use of public transportation, social skills, employment skills, finding and maintaining employment, problem-solving and decision-making, self-care and building a support network as well as the young adults' capacity to build healthy relationships whilst accessing resources within the South African context, which is often referred to as a resource-constrained setting (Kroner, 2007; Mallon, 1998).

Studies report that within the current structure of most of the children's homes in South Africa the opportunities for developing independent living skills, whilst the children are still in care, are limited. This is largely due to the huge number of children that typically reside in children's homes and the limited resources of the places of care to present independent living skills programmes. Children are not provided with the opportunity to learn basic skills like doing their own washing, cooking their own meals or managing their own money as there are strict rules that has to be adhered to, for the practical running of the home (Mamelani, 2013; Tanur 2012; Massinga & Pecora, 2004).

2.6 PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG ADULT CARE LEAVERS DURING TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE

In the next section the researcher provides an overview of different emotional experiences and needs that young adults generally experience after leaving care.

2.6.1 LONELINESS

The challenges young adults experience after they leave care are portrayed as an uncomfortable mixture of anger, loneliness, confusion, excitement and fear (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012). This might be attributed to the numerous losses that occur when leaving residential care, including, but not limited to, the giving up of valued relationships with peers and staff. As such, young adult care leavers often experience loneliness when they are suddenly on their own and expected to live independently. Adding to this they have to negotiate their transition to independence with minimal support and monitoring that further exuberates their experiences of isolation and loneliness (Ward, 2000).

In 1984, Hart did a survey for the National Association of Young People in Care (London), titled "*I've never been so lonely: A survey of young people leaving care*". His findings are similar to those from Ward's (2000) study that illuminates the young age of an abrupt ending of support for care leavers. The author reports that young adult care leavers often feel abandoned and lonely at a time they yearn for support, advice and encouragement. Other studies (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012; Murray, Murphy, Branigan, Malone, 2009) concerning this issue, indicate that young adults who leave residential care often resist intimacy, trust and attachment which will in turn further exuberate their experiences of loneliness.

2.6.2 NEED FOR ATTACHMENT AND STABLE ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

Children's relationships with their parents are crucial to their development and sense of well-being, and will influence their adult personal relationships. A loving and nurturing relationship with at least one parent will promote the development of a sense of worthiness and self-esteem as well as appropriate

long-term social-emotional development, and mental health. This is a predominant message in attachment theory (Fonagy, 2001), which is a key theory for understanding the complexities of the relationships of young adults who resided in children's homes, as they often do not experience an affectionate relationship with an adult, such as a parent, in turn compromising their sense of worthiness, self-esteem, emotional development and relationships in later life especially concerning attachment.

Young adults who were raised in children's homes often lack the essential ingredients for developing healthy relationships later in life, such as trust, intimacy, security and personal boundary setting as they have not experienced a nurturing relationship with an adult, such as a parent (Elliott, 1994). Adding to these complexities they are also expected to leave the children's home, again experiencing the abrupt ending of relationships with their peers and caregivers. They might then experience, over their lifespan, conflicting emotions of abandonment *versus* safety, closeness *versus* distance and separation *versus* reunion (Fleming & Adolph, 1986).

Young adult care leavers often struggle to develop an internal working model of expectations for nurturing, supportive reactions from significant others, whom they can trust and use as a secure base during their transition into the social and physical worlds as adults. These experiences can cause tension between dependence and independence as they tend to rely on themselves and mistrust nurturing reactions and good intentions of individuals who attempt to support them. They can as a result withdraw and isolate, ultimately alienating them from community members who could have supported them to actualise their potential.

As such, without the early experience of a few warm, caring, socially-emotionally responsive adults, that is often the case with individuals who are placed in children's home at an early age, their long term development may be compromised. It is therefore not surprising that residential care placement will have negative consequences, especially for those placed in children's homes before the age of six years, viewed in the context of the attachment theory (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012).

Many authors define intimacy as a degree of self-disclosure and openness (Monsour in Fischer, *et al.*, 1996; Clark & Reis, 1988; Montgomery, 1984). Monsour (in Fischer, *et al.*, 1996) adds that intimacy refers to the capability of an individual to give and receive support, while Fischer *et al.* (1996) define intimacy as emotional closeness and experiences of being cared for. Craig (2003:490) describes intimacy as "*The union of two identities without losing meaning and touch with own identity*". According to this author, intimacy thus revolves around a mutual understanding shared between two individuals with no expectation for either to compromise who they are.

In the experiences of young adults who leave residential care it is often found that they resist intimacy, trust and openness. Research evidence (Lips, 2007; Ward, 2000) regarding this trend suggests that the lack of social support from care leavers during their stay at the children's home may have a detrimental effect on their development of intimacy, a sense of identity and trust. A study done by Marcia (in Craig, 2003) might also be of relevance here as this researcher found that when individuals experience ongoing conflict, either within themselves or with others, this might lead to a fear of intimacy and commitment as individuals fear a loss of their still developing identities.

Broderick and Blewitt (2003) argue that early attachment experiences can also influence intimacy with others later in life. These researchers report that early experiences have an influence on individuals' overall view of themselves, of others and of society in general. Erikson (as cited in Broderick & Blewitt, 2003) also indicates that early care giving experiences will have an influence on the development of intimacy and the ability to trust others later in life. He reports that when children experience their caregivers as loving, caring and warm, that this may result in the forming of romantic relationships later in life. However, if children do not experience a close bond with at least one caregiver, which is often the case with young adult care leavers, they might lack intimacy later in life (Broderick & Blewitt, 2003).

2.6.3 IDENTITY FORMATION

Forming a sense of self is an ongoing challenge for all young people, as society has become more complex in terms of industrial change, more consumerist in its ideals and less certain in class, gender, geographical and ethnic identities (Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1991). Despite these complexities, research in a number of countries has demonstrated the importance of developing a sense of self as a key factor that can facilitate a move towards independence for young people leaving care (Stein, 2006).

Stein (2005) argues that care leavers are generally denied the psychological opportunity – in their transition to adulthood – to focus on their identity development, in order to deal with problems and changes over time. He states that they need time to explore, reflect and do identity searching, “*space out*” time, as Stein (2005:18) calls it. These experiences are also highlighted in a study conducted by Yates (2001:155) who postulates that young care leavers are typically not “...*awarded the time for identity search, for freedom, reflection or exploration*”. As such, care leavers often experience a complexity of identity issues and concerns as adults, following their separation from their biological families and placement in children's homes, where treasured possessions, such as mementoes and photographs are often lost (Ward, 2011).

During their stay at children's homes, children will typically experience difficulties to understand their racial and ethnic identity, as well as their personal identity formation due to limited familial interaction with their biological families. When leaving the children's home they may experience premature,

compressed and accelerated transitions. They can therefore experience a disruption and instability before, during and after they leave the children's home which may in turn interrupt their search for a sense of self (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012).

Research in the field of young people leaving care indicates that one of the main barriers to helping this group of people achieve a secure sense of self is the failure of those entrusted with their care to help them understand why their parents had abused or neglected them or was unable to care for them. They should be supported to understand how these experiences influenced subsequent events in their lives and they should be made aware of their feelings of rejection, and resentment (Biehal *et al.*, 1995). As such, forming a sense of self could be seen as connected to the capacity to reframe adversities so that the beneficial as well as the damaging effects can be recognised (Newman & Blackburn, 2002; Rutter *et al.*, 1998).

Therefore, helping care leavers to develop a sense of self will be linked, first of all, to their knowledge and understanding of their background and personal history, and second to the quality of care and attachments experienced by looked-after young people. It can also be linked to their experience of how other people perceive and respond to them; and, finally, to how they see themselves, and the opportunities they have to influence and shape their own biographies. Supporting care leavers in this manner can help them develop a positive sense of identity, broaden their self-knowledge, rebuild their self-esteem and improve their levels of self-efficacy. All these areas can in turn promote their resilience, and support them during their transition to adulthood (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012).

2.6.4 SENSE OF AUTONOMY

Greenberger (in Fischer, *et al.*, 1996) defines the developmental task of *autonomy* as self-reliance, and self-reliance as being the most basic concept of autonomy. Self-reliance entails the absence of excessive dependence on others, a sense of control over one's life, and an action orientation or sense of initiative. For many young people entering care, their experiences of autonomy and self-reliance is very low as their lives are seemingly controlled by others. After they have experienced difficulties with their birth family, adult figures, such as social workers decide to place them in a children's home, typically without discussing the placement with them. During their stay at the children's home residents are often not allowed to take initiative or make independent choices as decisions are made for them on a daily basis by the staff and management of the children's home.

During their stay in the children's home, residents are thus not generally involved in decision making processes. They participate in cyclic and repeated activities, such as daily breakfast, departure for school, homework, weekends and holidays (Harvey, 1990) that are dictated by the daily schedule and routines of the staff at the children's home. Different services, such as providing food, accommodation

and schooling lead to the creation of a context where everything is “done for” them rather than being “done with” them. As such, their childhood is often characterised by dependency on adults as they receive limited opportunities to make independent choices. They are not seen as completely independent subjects and receive limited freedom of choice (Törrönen, 2006).

Adding to this, these children are generally not awarded the opportunity to illustrate who they really are and to express how they feel. They may become over-dependent on adult guidance as they are not seen as independent human beings. Limited activity, encouragement and freedom of choice are a substantial part of their everyday lives (Törrönen, 2006). As such, they are not allowed to make choices and often do not have a voice, which in turn can prevent them from developing an identity, self-reliance and autonomy.

As adolescents, after completing secondary school, these children are expected to depart from the children’s home, plan for their own futures and make independent choices. Adding to this they are expected to take care of their own physical well-being, earn a living, make provision for food and clothes, and find housing, and transport. They have to cope entirely on their own with limited financial support whilst negotiating the social expectations, responsibilities and challenges of adulthood much too early in their lives (Stein, 2005). When they leave care the young adults are expected to thus develop a sense of self in multiple contexts and take into consideration societal expectations of independence, and autonomy. However, they often do not experience such sense of autonomy and when they are confronted with everyday decisions, they can feel overwhelmed and confused, displaying a need for others to make decisions for them (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012).

Although this is the case for a number of care leavers, others may develop an excessive sense of autonomy and self-reliance to compensate for their experiences in care where they were not allowed to make any decisions for themselves. As a result, as young adults, they often do not take into consideration the decisions, guidance and advice from others who are trying to support them as they are attempting to gain a sense of control over their lives (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012). The researcher would like to argue that although the achievement of autonomy and self-reliance are important for young adults’ successful transition from residential care to independent living, vigilant self-reliance can also facilitate the very connections for supportive relationships that research suggests may produce positive and resilient outcomes in adulthood.

2.6.5 BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS FOR YOUNG ADULT CARE LEAVERS

An array of research studies report on the adjustment of care leavers (also termed care ‘graduates’ or ‘alumni’) after leaving care (Stein, 2006; Dixon & Stein, 2005; Yates, 2001; Bilson, Armstrong, Buist, Caulfield-Dow & Lindsay, 2000; Kelleher, Kelleher & Corbett, 2000 and Biehal, Clayden, Stein & Wade,

1995). Some researchers make explicit comparisons with young people who were not previously in care. Other studies adopt a pathogenic lens, seeking out deficits and failures among care leavers, but some point out the high rates of employment, stable housing and secure relationships (Courtney, Dworsky, Ruth, Havlicek & Bost, 2005).

Stein (2006) and Barnardo (1996) note that although care leavers account for less than one per cent of their age group in England, they are massively over-represented among those who are disadvantaged. Barnardo (1996) found that more than 75% of care leavers in the study had no academic qualifications and that between 50% and 80% of care leavers were unemployed. He also found that one in seven young women leaving care was pregnant or already mothers and that 23% of adult prisoners, and 38% of young prisoners have been in care. The study also states that 10% of 16 year old claimants of unemployment payments have been in care (Barnardo, 1996).

These negative outcomes for care leavers seems to be an international phenomenon (Stein, 2006; Courtney, Dworsky, Ruth, Havlicek & Bost, 2005; Dixon & Stein, 2005; Yates, 2001; Bilson, Armstrong, Buist, Caulfield-Dow & Lindsay, 2000; Kelleher, Kelleher & Corbett, 2000, Biehal, Clayden, Stein & Wade, 1995). Several authors have identified the types of challenges care leavers may experience including homelessness, poor health, poverty, substance abuse, early parenthood, and involvement in criminality (Broad, 2005; Dixon & Stein, 2005; Effective Interventions Unit, 2003; Biehal & Wade, 2000).

An array of studies (Stein, 2006; Dixon & Stein, 2005; Yates, 2001; Kelleher, Kelleher & Corbett, 2000; Biehal, Clayden, Stein & Wade, 1995) has documented how the negative outcomes for care leavers can be attributed to a range of factors. After their departure from the children's home many young adults are still recovering from the physical, sexual or emotional abuse as well as the neglect that they experienced prior to entering care as more often than not, they did not receive therapeutic support during their time in care. In addition to this, they are often sent to their biological families for weekend and holiday visits where they experience further adversity, such as abuse and neglect. More often than not, these visits are allowed as social workers are not aware of these unfavourable circumstances. As such, youth might be fearful that if they inform the children's home staff, they will be prevented from visiting their families.

Adding to these experiences many young people are exposed to inadequacies in state care, including poor-quality caregivers and constant shifts of placement, carers, schools and helpers. Some also experience overt abuse, including sexual and physical assaults, and emotional maltreatment. They might experience a lack of strong, healthy, and stable relationships, which are pivotal for young adults' successful transition to adulthood. In addition to these major disadvantages, many young adults experience an abrupt end to the formal support networks of care at the age of 16-18 years as they are expected to transition directly from childhood dependence to adult self-sufficiency (Propp *et al.*, 2003).

This lack of stability, continuity and consistency may undermine their psychosocial development and hinder their capacity to make a successful transition towards independence following discharge from care (Casey Family Programs, 2001; Cashmore & Paxman, 1996).

As the conceptual framework for this study integrates aspects of resilience, the conceptualisation of resilient adaptation from the field of positive psychology bears relevance.

2.7 RESILIENT ADAPTATION

Increasingly, researchers (Ungar, 2008; Rutter, 1985) are shifting their professional paradigm away from a narrow focus on pathology, victimology, and mental illness (Rutter, 1985) to positive emotion (Fredrickson, 2001), resilience and strength (Masten, Hubbard, Gest, Garmezy & Ramirez, 1999), academic resilience (Finn & Rock, 1997), and positive youth development (Theokas & Lerner, 2005). Earlier studies on resilience (Anthony & Choler, 1987; Werner & Smith, 1982) posit that resilient young people are "vulnerable, but invincible" (Werner, 1996) or even "invulnerable" (Anthony & Cohler, 1987). As such, the assertion was earlier made that young people are indestructible, despite being placed at risk by adversities, such as poverty, marginalisation, or pathologically ill parents. One great danger in this conceptualisation is that individuals who do not display resilient behaviour can be mistakenly blamed for their vulnerability. Simultaneously, their ecologies are not held responsible for contributing to processes of positive adjustment (Ungar, 2011, 2008).

In time, researchers recognised that human beings are psychosocial beings embedded in ecosystemic ecologies (Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2010). Resilience researchers went on to report that resilience resulted from a triad of protective processes (Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000), found in the individual, his/her family, and his/her environment, from the perspective of a systems theory (Donald *et al.*, 2010). Later, researchers added cultural protective processes to this triad (Wright & Masten, 2006).

As such, over the past 30 years the study of resilience has progressed from the notion of "unbreakable" young people to a bidirectional transaction between young people and their ecologies. The significance of this more recent transactional ecosystemic understanding of resilience has direct implications for research studies conducted in South Africa regarding the conceptualisation and promotion of protective processes necessary to support changes in life trajectories from risk to adaptation (Theron & Theron, 2011).

2.7.1 DEFINING RESILIENCE

Different streams of thinking about resilience mark the current literature base (Mohangi, 2008). A lack of consensus seemingly exists regarding the age domain covered by the construct, the circumstances

in which it occurs, its definition and the adaptive behaviours it describes (Mandleco & Peery, 2000). Overall, theoretical frameworks guiding the development of resilience research have included the three-level (community, family and child) 'protective' and 'risk' factor model, ecological perspectives identifying the influence of different contexts (culture, neighbourhood and family) varying in proximity to the individual, and a structural organisational perspective, which views individual choice and self-organisation as critical factors to the development of competence over time (Luthar *et al.*, 2000).

Fergus and Zimmerman (2005) describe resilience as the process of overcoming the negative effects of risk exposure, coping successfully with traumatic experiences and avoiding the negative trajectories that are usually associated with risk (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). Initially resilience was thought to be an extraordinary and special gift that only few individuals possessed. However, Masten (2001: 235) defined resilience as the *"The everyday magic of the ordinary human resources that has profound implications for promoting competence and human capital in individuals and society"*. As such, Masten (2001) describes resilience in terms of a variable-focused and person-focused approach. Luthar, Cicchetti and Becker (2000) notes that resilience is a dynamic process, dependent on environmental interaction, rather than being an individual trait. Van Breda (2011:34) states that, *"Resilience has come to be regarded less as a static trait and more as a process that is expressed over time"*. He adds that *"An individual's resilience at any moment is calculated by the ratio between the presence of protective processes and the presence of hazardous circumstances."* As such, recent research in this area extends resilience to not merely reside in a person, but also in his/her circumstances as it arises from protective processes and mechanisms operating in the life of the individual (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012).

Masten (2004, 2001), Rutter (1999) and Schofield (2001) define resilience as the quality that enables individuals to find fulfilment in their lives despite experiencing adversity and disadvantaged backgrounds. As such, resilience is about overcoming the odds, coping and recovery. It is likely to develop over time (Masten, 2004; Rutter, 1999; Schofield, 2001) and can be promoted in an inter-relationship between culture, neighbourhood and family (Chaskin, 2008; Rhodes & Lowe, 2008; Luther, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000).

In the United Kingdom, the resilience of young people from disadvantaged family backgrounds, such as the primary participants who took part in this study, has been found to be associated with a secure attachment to at least one unconditionally supportive parent or parent substitute, positive school experiences, feeling able to plan and be in control, being given the chance of a "turning point", such as a new opportunity or break from a high-risk area, higher childhood intelligence scores, lower rates of temperamental risk and having positive peer influences (Rutter, Giller & Hagell, 1998).

A research review of the international literature on resilience factors in relation to the key transitions made by young people during their lifecycle has added to this picture (Newman, 2004; Newman & Blackburn, 2002). In addition to the factors identified above, the authors conclude that young people who are best equipped to overcome adversities will have strong social support networks, committed mentors or persons from outside the family who support them, participation in a range of extra-curricular activities that promote the learning of competencies and emotional maturity, the capacity to re-frame adversities so that the beneficial as well as the damaging effects are recognised, the ability or opportunity to make a difference, for example, by helping others through volunteering, or undertaking part-time work and exposure to challenging situations that provide opportunities to develop both problem-solving abilities and emotional coping skills (Newman, 2004; Newman & Blackburn, 2002).

A gap seemingly exists in the literature regarding the resilience of young adults who were raised in care (Stein, 2005). Various studies found that when young adults experience stable placements providing good quality care they are more likely to have positive outcomes than those who have experienced further movement and disruption during their time in care (Sinclair, Baker, Wilson, & Gibbs, 2005; Biehal, Clayden, Stein, & Wade, 1995). Stability has the potential to promote resilience in two respects, first by providing the young care resident with a warm and redeeming relationship with a carer (Rutter *et al.*, 1998; Howe, 1995), and second not necessarily dependent on the first, stability may provide continuity of care in young people's lives, which may give them security and contribute to positive educational and career outcomes (Ajayi & Quigley, 2006; Jackson, 2002). Adding to stability in care, protective processes can potentially promote resilience. These are discussed in the next section.

2.7.2 PROTECTIVE RESOURCES THAT COULD POTENTIALLY PROMOTE RESILIENCE

Although many of the studies that describe the protective and risk factors of resilience have been criticised for imperfect methodologies, most studies point to the same intra- and interpersonal protective processes (Cicchetti, 2010; Masten & Wright, 2010; Theron & Theron, 2010), as captured in Table 2.1 and 2.2.

Table 2.1: Examples of intrapersonal protective resources

Skills	Temperament	Genetic qualities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Problem-solving skills ❖ Assertiveness ❖ Autonomy ❖ Good interpersonal skills ❖ Internal locus of control ❖ Impulse control ❖ Emotional regulation ❖ Planning skills ❖ Social maturity ❖ Flexibility ❖ Positive meaning making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Sense of humour ❖ Sunny temperament ❖ Tenacity ❖ Positive self-concept ❖ Positive attitude ❖ Positive emotion ❖ Drive ❖ Enthusiasm ❖ Hopefulness ❖ Future orientation ❖ Affectionate ❖ Achievement orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Attractiveness ❖ Good health ❖ Intelligence ❖ Birth order ❖ Special talents

(Source: Theron & Theron, 2011; Masten, Cutuli, Herbers & Reed, 2009; Wright & Masten, 2006; Kumpfer, 1999)

Table 2.2: Examples of interpersonal protective resources

Family	Community	Culture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Small families ❖ Socio-economically advantaged families ❖ Competent mothers ❖ Positive attachments ❖ Supportive grandparents ❖ Supportive siblings ❖ Consistent and positive parenting ❖ Parental harmony ❖ Ordered home atmosphere ❖ Educated parents ❖ Interested parents ❖ Family traditions ❖ Security and sense of belonging experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Supportive teacher practices ❖ Effective schools ❖ Effective public health values ❖ Effective social services ❖ Positive school practices ❖ Mentors (elders) ❖ Pro-social organisation (for example, sports clubs, youth groups) ❖ Safe neighbourhoods ❖ Cohesive neighbourhoods systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Cultural belonging ❖ Religious and spiritual practices ❖ Positive values and believe systems

(Source: Theron & Theron, 2011; Masten *et al.*, 2009; Kumpfer, 1999)

A description of protective resources such as these does however not offer an explanation for *how* resilience occurs or of its complex, dynamic nature. Rutter (1989) states that some young people will not adjust positively to adversity, despite the presence of protective resources. The same gap (that is, a limited understanding of resilience as a process) can be noted for South African studies of resilience between 1990 and 2008 (Theron & Theron, 2010). In the absence of understanding of, and respect for,

the complexity of the process of resilience, researchers continue in their pursuit of an understanding of the processes and mechanisms of resilience.

Given the controversies and debate that surround a common description of the multidimensional nature of resilience, the researcher submits that for the purposes of this study, she views resilience in terms of young adults' positive adaptation in the face of risk rather than to advocate resilience as a flawless construct. The researcher is actively interested in identifying processes of resilience, as she expects to gain insight through the location of success factors not only existing within young adults, but also as presented in their interaction with the social environment. As such, she focuses on the social processes of resilience, which she wants to elicit through exploration of the young adults' narratives, following a resilience paradigm which serves as a conscious stand of the study.

The researcher also argues that promoting the resilience of young people leaving care requires comprehensive services throughout the transitional period and beyond. If youth are to be assisted during the transition to independence, professionals from a variety of youth-focused disciplines (teachers, houseparent's, psychologists, social workers) and communities need to develop insight into, and commitment towards, promoting the successful transition to adulthood for care leavers.

In the following section the researcher reviews current care leaving programmes and best practices for young adults transitioning out of care to independence. In reviewing published studies of South African care leaving programmes, this research might fill a noticeable gap in the literature by providing a summary of what has been reported to inform care leaving programmes, which might be useful to role-players at children's homes as well as to other researchers, academics and practitioners in the Social and Health Sciences.

2.8 INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMMES FOR SOUTH AFRICAN YOUNG ADULTS LEAVING THE CARE SYSTEM

South African legislation, in particular the Children's Act of South Africa 1983, calls on children's homes to offer transitional support to youth leaving care. Section 191(3) (e) states that children's homes should offer programmes either for children in their care or children living at home that include *"transitional programmes to assist children leaving the facility after they reach the age of 18"*. Regulations 69_71 of this act also states that children's homes should promote the best interests of children in their care through the provision of prescribed types of services, specifically services that *"assist a young person with the transition when leaving care after reaching the age of 18"*. It is important to note that the Children's Act mentions preparation and support for transition from care but does not mention the specific services that will provide adequate after-care support once youth have exited care. As such, although preparation for transition and after-care support is mentioned in the

legislation, these represent underdeveloped areas of work in South Africa (Mamelani Projects Annual Report, 2009) implying that young people who transition out of children's homes are often unprepared for the realities of life's challenges (Williams, 2011; Atkinson, 2008; Tweddle, 2007).

A range of studies indicate that the pathways care leavers take in early adulthood are strongly influenced by the nature of their transition from care, and the support they receive after they leave. After-care programmes are therefore vital to ensure improved outcomes for youth leaving care, both in preparing youth to exit care and in providing post care support (Atkinson, 2008; Mallon, 1998; Barth, 1990). In this regard, Pinkerton (2011) suggests that a planned and properly managed preparation process for leaving care is needed. He also suggests that the process is introduced as early as possible, with direct involvement of the young person in the process.

In South Africa limited examples of well-established independent living programmes can be found, and very few children's homes focus on preparation for leaving care. In addition, children's homes workers nationwide are not trained to facilitate programmes that meet the specific needs of young people transitioning out of care, as training for this specific need does not exist (Tanur, 2012). However, an array of studies describes care leaving programmes and activities for best practices, and positive outcomes for young adults transitioning out of care to independence. The most commonly reported best practice activities are independent living programmes and the continuity of care throughout young adults' transitions to independence (Duncalf & McGhee 2013; Stein, 2006; Broad, 2005; Wade, 1997). Although such programmes thus do exist, support for this target group is neither a well-established nor adequately funded service in South Africa at this stage (Tanur, 2012). Regardless of the level of implementation and success of these possibilities, I describe current programmes in the following paragraphs.

The Mamelani Project (Mamelani Projects Annual Report, 2009) provides one example of a well-established programme that offers support to young adults to become independent, responsible and contributing members of society. This project has been active in this area of work for several years, providing transitional support and responding to what was identified as a severe lack of options for young people exiting care. The programme focuses on consolidating existing practices as well as discovering and implementing new ways of ensuring that more care leaving youth make a successful transition out of care.

The Mamelani Project conducted a mixed methods study during 2012 and found that 35% of the children's homes that participated had well-established independent living programmes but that the programmes did not include all vital skills needed to support young adults during their transition to adulthood. Research participants reported that although children's homes acknowledge the importance of independent living programmes they are not prioritised, as the main focus remains attending to the

daily needs of the children in care. Participants further stated that independent living programmes are often difficult to implement as children's homes have limited human and financial resources (Mamelani, 2013). The study indicates that organisations and programmes, as summarised in Table 2.5, are working in partnerships with children's homes in South Africa to provide different areas of support for young adults after leaving care.

Table 2.3: Organisations and partnerships in South Africa that provide services for care leavers

Psycho-social support	Support with accessing accommodation	Educational Support	Mentoring	Post 18 Residential Care	Skills Training	Job Placement
Eastern Province Child and Youth Centre	Eastern Province Child and Youth Care Centre	Eastern Province Child and Youth Care Centre	I-am somebody	Umicare	Eastern Province Child and Care Youth Centre	Eastern Province Child and Youth Care Centre
Badisa	Beth Uriel	Best Centre	SA-Yes	The Homestead	Cape College	Mamelani Projects
University of Stellenbosch (Psychology Department)	Mamelani Projects (if in the community)	Beth Uriel	Project Lungisela	Mamelani Projects	False Bay	Livemag
Child Welfare	Jakaranda Children's home	City Mission	Umicare	Beth Uriel	Fountain of Hope	Project Lungisela
Educo Africa	Project Lungisela	Lady Joan Pettigrew Bursary Fund		My Life Foundation	Mamelani Projects	Umicare
Forest Riding Club	Umicare	Mamelani Projects		Oasis	Northlink	
Mamelani Projects	Oasis	Northlink			Cape College	
Sinethemba Drop In Centre	My Life Foundation	School of Hope			Project Lungisela	
Umicare		SOS Children's Villages			Yabonga	
Empilweni		Jakaranda Children's home			Jobstart	
Cape Town Drug Counselling Center		Umicare			Learn to Earn	
Matrix		School of Hope			Zenzele	
Educo Africa		Multi Service Center			Montrose Foundation	
Outward Bound		BEST			Project Phakama	
Project Lungisela		Shiloh			Umicare	
					Amandla EduFootball	

Another well-established care leaving programme in South Africa, also mentioned in Table 2.3, is Project Lungisela. This programme was initiated in 2007 in response to the need for care leaving support services for young men between the ages of 16 and 17 years who reside at the Khayelitsha's Homestead Children's Home (Tanur, 2012). Project Lungisela is presented over eighteen months. The first phase is presented one year before the youth leave the children's home and the second phase focuses on offering continued support to youth after they have left care (Maposa, 2010).

The first phase of Project Lungisela includes life-skills workshops, money management skills and a communication course. This phase also includes prevention of drug and alcohol abuse sessions. Young care leavers also conduct career visits to ensure that they understand their career options. Another skill that is deemed important is employment seeking development which includes the compilation of a curriculum vitae. Other activities focus on relationship building and establishing family bonds. Youth are also encouraged to participate in community projects at least once a month (Maposa, 2010).

During the second phase of this programme (the last six months of the 18 month programme), youth invested in the project do part time internships at host companies. After recruitment, programme staff monitors the development of youth in their new role, by enquiring about their experiences and whether or not they are capable of taking on employment on a full time basis. They are also supported if they are recruited for contract or permanent employment by the host companies (Maposa, 2010).

Mentorship is offered to youth over the 18 month period of the programme. Programme staff, former graduates and other role models within the community is identified to provide emotional and practical support whilst the youth resides at the children's home. Role models conduct one-on-one sessions with the youth, discussing topics, such as dealing with peer pressure, overcoming frustrations of not being able to find employment, uncertainty about the future, and low self-esteem. Mentorship has been identified in different studies as a potential method to meet young care leavers' needs for supportive connections (Daining & DePanfilis, 2007; Clayden & Stein, 2005; Massinga & Pecora, 2004). Furthermore, an accommodation activity is implemented during the last six months of the 18 month programme, where youth unable to return to their families are assisted by Project Lungisela staff to find suitable accommodation prior to leaving care. The young adults are either provided with funds to rent a room or are placed in a hostel where they reside until they are employed. In other instances, the youth are provided with funds to build a house in an informal settlement (Maposa, 2010).

Well-established independent care leaving programmes, such as Project Mamelani include the development of self-care skills (personal hygiene, diet and health, including sexual health), practical skills (budgeting, shopping cooking and learning), and inter-personal skills (managing a range of formal and informal relationships). As such, the preparation for transition is holistic in attaching equal

importance to practical, financial and psychological skills. It does not just, as in the past, involve practical independence training for young people to manage on their own at 16 (Stein & Wade, 2000, Stein & Carey, 1986). These programmes should however also include education bursaries, financial support, academic support, mentoring, therapeutic programmes, educational planning, financial management, employment support, vocational skills training and future accommodation planning (Mamelani, 2013).

For an independent care leaving programme to function optimally it needs to be tailored for the target group (Mash & Wolfe, 2005). A need exists for individuals to participate in the design of interventions meant for them and to provide practical guidelines on how such integrated interventions might be implemented. It was the researcher's contention that, in order to gain an understanding of the design of interventions, she set out to develop practical guidelines based on the experiences of young adults who had to deal with the challenge of entering into young adulthood without the necessary support.

2.9 CONCLUSION

The aim of chapter 2 of this study was to review relevant literature, which led to the researcher's understanding of the key concepts that formed the basis of the study. The researcher began this chapter by describing children's homes in South Africa and she related this discussion to the outcomes for adults who reside in children's homes. She then described the typical transition to independence for young adults who are raised in a family setting. The literature review specifically included a discussion on the challenges generally experienced by young adults leaving care during the transition to independence. She also provided a literature overview of the psychological and social experiences of young adult care leavers during transition to adulthood.

The researcher went on to explore resilience and its relatedness to resilient adaptation. By integrating aspects of resilience studies, the researcher attempted to explore the assumption that young care leavers may thrive during their transition to independence even though they experience adversity. She concluded this chapter by reviewing independent care leaving programmes for young adult care leavers, in the South African context. In chapter 3 the researcher discusses her choice of research methodology and strategies applied in the current study.

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CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND STRATEGIES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the researcher provided a comprehensive literature review, as backdrop to the empirical study that was conducted. She explored literature regarding theoretical perspectives that informed her study and the different types of childcare institutions which exist in South Africa. The researcher then discussed the typical transition to independence for young adults raised in traditional family settings and explored the transition to independence for young adult care leavers. She further described the challenges faced by care leavers' and the typical psychological and social experiences of young adult care leavers during the transition to independence. She also identified some behavioural problems of young adult care leavers and explored resilience in terms of resilient adaptation. She further identified and discussed independent living programmes for South African young adults leaving the care system, in order to provide the necessary background with regard to the theory that she considered in planning and conducting empirical research.

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the research design and the methodology of the study. She also explains the ethical considerations of the study, as well as the quality criteria that she strove to adhere to. In doing so, she hopes that the reader will be able to gain insight into the methodological lenses through which she conducted her study. She commence her discussion by explaining the paradigmatic perspective upon which she relied in planning and conducting her study.

3.2 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

For the purpose of this study, the researcher followed a qualitative approach, anchored in an interpretivist paradigm.

3.2.1 METHODOLOGICAL PARADIGM

The methodological approach that the researcher adopted for the research in this study is the qualitative approach. Parker, Dalrympie and Durden (2000) describe qualitative research as research concerned with trying to understand meaning and impact in a multifaceted way. As such, the researcher studied a specific research theme, namely young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living. She therefore conducted the research in the participants' natural settings, in an attempt to understand and explain the said phenomenon in terms of the meanings the participating adults attach to their lived-experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In this manner, she

focused on understanding human behaviour and experience (Van der Merwe, 1996). Thus the researcher's emphasis was on process and meaning, which cannot be measured in terms of quantity, intensity or frequency (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Adding to these authors, Morse (1994) states that qualitative research focuses on the analysis of a problem within the local and situational framework, with the research participants' points of view and experiences as points of departure. Therefore, the researcher followed an inquiry process of understanding the participants' points of view and experiences. Thereafter, she aimed to build a holistic image of findings; analysing words and reports on the views of the participants in detail (Skinner, 2002; Cresswell, 1998).

In this study, the researcher not only strove to acknowledge the values, views and experiences expressed by the participants and the authors that she consulted, but also used these for understanding and interpreting meanings. For this reason, the researcher did not limit discussions and post-modern data collection techniques by using predetermined, closed questions. As a result, she was able to identify unanticipated information and use it while understanding and interpreting meanings. This inductive approach supported her in acquiring information about how the participants thought, felt and acted, as well as what they believed (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

In conducting qualitative research, the researcher could rely on the strengths of the qualitative approach. She could namely gain insight into the manner in which the participants experienced and gave meaning to their transition processes in terms of their lived-experiences. Secondly, following a qualitative approach enabled the researcher to gain an understanding of the participants' contexts, situations and environments. Lastly, she was able to understand the process, and the manner in which the research events influenced one another (Paker *et al.*, 2000).

Although it is the researcher's assumption that a qualitative research approach was an appropriate choice for the study, she also aimed to address the challenges of this approach. She considered the possibility that the approach is conversational, and that during data analysis she might attempt to preserve the integrity of the collected data (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006). In an attempt to address this challenge, she gained permission from the participants, in the form of informed consent, to use all the data that she had collected. In addition, she audio-recorded and transcribed interviews and data collection sessions, after which she applied a rigorous data analysis process to ensure that trustworthy conclusions were drawn. Another possible limitation of using a qualitative approach is that the results may not be generalisable (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). However, the aim of this study was not to generalise, but rather to provide elaborate descriptions of the participants' perceptions of their life-worlds and experiences.

3.2.2 META-THEORETICAL PARADIGM

Terre Blanche and Kelly (2002) state that an interpretivist paradigm presumes that people's subjective experiences are real (ontology), that others' experiences can be understood by interacting with them and listening to what they say (epistemology), and that qualitative research techniques are best suited to this task (methodology). In this regard, the researcher aimed to acquire knowledge through the interpretivist lens by means of relative observation and interpretation, and by interpreting reality in a concrete manner, without being predicted or controlled (Schurink, 1998).

In conducting this study, she adhered to Schwandt's (2000) identification of three assumptions that are characteristic of the Interpretivist tradition. Firstly, in accordance with Interpretivism, she assumed human action to be meaningful. Secondly, she assumed that an ethical commitment, to respect and be faithful to the participants' life-worlds, exists. Furthermore, in line with Interpretivism, the researcher aimed to emphasise the contribution of human subjectivity to knowledge. Applying these assumptions to her study implied that she perceived participants' actions during interviews as meaningful. In addition, she had an ethical commitment to respect the participants and their actions. Finally, during the researcher's study she took subjective decisions whilst continuously reflecting in her researcher journal and with her supervisors, on her role as researcher and her relationships with the participants. Adding to this, she strove to formulate findings which are based on the outcomes of the participants' involvement and on the conditions of the research, and not of her (or others') subjective biases, motivations and perspectives.

Cohen *et al.* (2000) add to these assumptions by describing the essential elements of the interpretivist approach to research. Firstly, interpretivist research is done on a small scale, where human interaction creates the social context. In this study, the researcher conducted research on a small scale by collecting data from five primary participants and ten secondary participants. During the interviews and post-modern data collection sessions, human interaction between the participants and the researcher created a social context. Secondly, these authors assume that interpretivist research is a non-statistical approach that allows subjective interactions. In this study the researcher made use of a non-statistical approach as she followed a qualitative interpretivist approach that allowed subjective interactions during interviews and data collection sessions. Therefore, she (as the researcher) was personally involved and tried to understand actions and meanings. In this manner, she strove to interpret and to investigate what appeared to be evident. Finally, in line with interpretivist research, the study included elements like personal perspective, personal construct and negotiated meaning.

Schwandt (2000) elaborates on these elements by stating that the future of interpretivist perceptions rests on individuals being comfortable with the blurring of lines between science and the art of interpretation. As the intention of the researcher's study was to understand and interpret meanings as

they were revealed during interviews, she had to be comfortable with the blurring of lines between interpretation and science. This understanding of understanding, or *Verstehen*, is best understood in context. In other words, not only did she have to interpret the participants' meanings, but also the context in which they expressed these meanings. Schwandt (2000) identifies this process as "empathic identification", when, for example, the researcher attempts to understand the intentions of the author of a text, or of a speaking participant during an assessment, as was the case in this study.

Although the researcher is of the opinion that an interpretivist paradigm was an appropriate choice for her study, she also faced certain challenges based on her selected paradigm. She considered the possibility that she might be selective, biased, partial and subjective (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). She tried to address this potential limitation by collecting diverse data in the form of written field notes, observations, audio-recordings of interviews, visual media, and photographs of the post-modern media and activities that she employed during assessments. In addition, she continuously reflected in her researcher journal, and had discussions with her supervisors regarding her subjective decisions and collected data.

3.2.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The researcher employed a qualitative instrumental case study research design. This implies an investigation about a phenomenon within its real-life context and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 2009). The researcher believes that a qualitative research design is an appropriate design due to the emotional and sensitive nature of the study, taking into consideration the critical questions that guided the inquiry. This design further supported the researcher to investigate the complex processes, general phenomenon and social issues of young adults' experiences that could then be used for explanatory and theory building purposes (Mark, 1998) which may in turn inform policy development regarding children's homes in the South African context.

During the initial conceptualisation of this study, the researcher understood that her decision to explore the experiences of a group of young adults during their transition from residential care to independent living required the use of a research design that would support her in establishing relationships and interactions whilst generating data in a complex setting. A qualitative research design, anchored in an interpretivist paradigm suited the aim of this study as it allowed the researcher to interact closely with the participants and to establish relationships with them whilst making sense of their life-worlds, appreciating and clarifying the perceptions they ascribed to their experiences, views, and emotions (Charmaz, 2006).

Patton (1990) proposes a number of "*strategic ideals*" in qualitative research which served to guide this qualitative research process. Firstly, he recommends that a natural setting be used as a source of data.

During the data collection phase of this study, the researcher acted as a *'human instrument'* when collecting data in natural settings, whilst keeping objectivity in mind. Charmaz (2006) states that researchers are not objective, neutral and non-influencing players in research as they bring their own assumptions and world views into the research situation, to bear not only on the analysis, but also the collection of data and subsequent theory generation. The researcher is aware that she thus contributed to the shaping of the data herself. In this regard she tried to lessen subjectivity by sharing the transcriptions with her research supervisors who also analysed the data, thereby supporting the credibility of the findings of this study.

According to Patton (1990) qualitative research provides rich descriptive accounts, integrating expressive language (voices of participants) in the research text. Qualitative research is concerned with discovering how individuals experience and attach meaning to certain events. As such, the researcher conducted the study with the belief the participants had been actively engaged in shaping their own lives and that they could make sense of their lives through processes of interaction with each other. These processes draw on action and language.

In Table 1.1 the researcher summarises the strengths and potential challenges of a qualitative research case study design, as applicable to this research (Berg, 2001; Stake, 2000; Cohen *et al.*, 2000; Donmoyer, 2000; Worchel, 2000). During the study she remained aware of the strengths and potential challenges of using an instrumental case study research design which includes the generalisation possibilities of the findings. Data was gathered from a specific group of young adults who are bounded by situational factors, such as their environment, culture and society. Rather than generalisability, the research findings may promote complex and multilayered conceptions of transition experiences. As such, the possibility exists that other groups of young adults who resided in children's homes may express other experiences.

Table 3.1: Strengths and potential challenges of an instrumental case study research design

Strengths	Potential challenges and attempts to address them
In-depth insights - enabling rapport with the participants.	Results are not generalisable. <i>Not an aim of interpretivist studies. The aim of this qualitative study was not to generalise, but rather to provide rich descriptions of the participants' perceptions of their life-worlds and experiences.</i>
Refinement of theory and encouragement of hypotheses and later studies.	
Accessibility to unique situations.	
Allow the researcher's (and different) perspectives.	Prone to the potential of observer bias. <i>Freedom from bias does not support the interpretivist paradigm. However, the researcher attempted to address this potential challenge by continuously</i>
Bridge the gap between preliminary studies and practice.	
Immediately intelligible (speak for themselves).	

Captures unique features that may have otherwise been lost in larger scale data.	<i>reflecting on her role as researcher and her relationships with the participants in her researcher journal. In addition, she constantly had to remind herself that she was conducting interviews for research purposes and not as an educational psychologist. She believes that her motives and values did form an integral part of the research process but she strove to formulate findings which are based on the outcomes of the participants' involvement during the study and on the conditions of the research, and not of her (and others') biases, motivations and perspectives.</i>
Allows for the participants to be studied in a natural setting.	
Recognise the complexity of social truths.	
Insights can be directly interpreted and applied.	Contributions may be selective and personal. <i>Multiple perspectives on reality are in line with the basic principles of Interpretivism. The researcher attempted to address this potential challenge by providing rich and thick descriptions (for multiple perspectives). She furthermore conducted interviews with professional role players to obtain their perspectives.</i>
Involve a single researcher without needing a full research team undertaking research.	Objective results and findings cannot be made. <i>This does not apply as a challenge in this study, as it is an interpretivist study and did not aim for objectivity but rather for individualised accounts of experiences.</i>

As the present study is fundamentally interested in the life journeys of young adults, from care to independence, over a period of approximately six to 15 years, the study was also informed by elements of narrative research. Narrative research is located within the broader tradition of phenomenology, but while phenomenology tends to focus on the essence of an experience, narrative analysis focuses on sequences of experiences, involving character and plot, and inevitably time (Squire, Andre & Tamboukou, 2008; Moen, 2006; Jones, 2004). Although narrative theory and research originally focused predominantly on textual narratives (written stories), there has been a growing trend over the past several years to analyse 'personal stories' – the life stories or brief story excerpts of individuals as told to another (Riessman, 2008). The narratives that were used to collect the data for this study was made up of various episodes that could provide insight into the processes that had facilitated (or not) transitioning into independent living after leaving care facilities.

3.2.4 RESEARCH PROCESS

The research process of this study comprised of three phases. During the first phase the researcher did an initial screening and selection of participants by contacting them telephonically to enquire whether or not they met all the selection criteria for participation in the study and to establish whether or not they would be willing to participate in the study. In phase two, the researcher conducted in-depth narrative case inquiries, in combination with post-modern data collection techniques, with the participants who

were selected during phase one. In phase three the researcher conducted reflective and dyad interviews with secondary participants including a social worker, counsellor and housemothers who work with care leavers.

3.2.4.1 Selection of participants

The researcher used purposive sampling (Patton, 2002) as this allowed her to choose participants that could potentially best describe the characteristics of the population she was interested, in more specifically young adults who resided in residential care and have transitioned to independent living. This sampling procedure ensured the selection of information-rich cases as the researcher was able to select participants based on the following criteria:

- The primary participants had to be between the ages of 24-34 years (young adults).
- The minimum interval since their disengagement from the children's home had to be six years.
- They had to have resided in children's homes until they completed secondary school and/or reached the age of 17 years.
- They had to have resided in a children's home for at least five years.
- They had to understand and speak Afrikaans or English as the researcher cannot speak another language and opted not to use a translator.
- They had to be available and willing to participate in the interviews and narrative activities.
- They had to give their verbal and written consent to participate in the study.

The ages of the five participants of this study ranged from 24 to 34 years. Participants had resided in children's homes for at least five years and were disengaged from care after they completed secondary school and/or reached the age of 17 years. The population comprised of both males and females. The minimum six year interval since their disengagement from the children's home would, the researcher believed, have provided participants with an extended time to reflect and gain insight into their lived experiences as care leavers, in order for them to be able to provide rich and in-depth accounts of their journeys.

In practice, recruiting the sample that met the particular criteria, proved to be challenging. One of the primary participants who participated in this study was recruited by approaching a staff member at a children's home who had contact with care leavers. Further recruitment in this manner was unsuccessful as most of the staff members who were employed at children's homes six years earlier

were replaced by new staff members who could only provide the contact details of younger care leavers who left more recently (two years previously). Such care leavers did thus not meet the age criteria for this specific study's purposes.

Other contact details for care leavers who met the age criteria were mostly out dated. This is most probably as a result of children's homes limited provision of aftercare services where, once the youth disengage from children's homes, contact is not maintained and contact details may become out-dated. As a result, only one participant was recruited through contacting different children's homes in the Gauteng province. Two more primary participants were recruited by approaching the first participant as she had contact with other care leavers through social media. She provided the researcher with five other care leavers' contact details, of which one did not meet the age criteria for this study and two others were not willing to participate in the study.

The fourth participant was located while the researcher was supervising an honours student's practical work. The student had to conduct a career assessment with an adolescent boy, whose mother mentioned during an intake interview, that she was raised in a children's home. After the student had completed the assessment the researcher contacted the adolescent's mother and asked whether she would be willing to participate in the study as she met all the sampling criteria. The fifth participant was recruited through a care leaver who often visited the researcher during holidays, as the latter acted as a holiday parent to her. The researcher asked this care leaver whether she could provide the contact details of other care leavers that were older than 24 years. She referred the researcher to a male participant who resides in the Eastern Cape. The researcher travelled to this province to conduct data collection sessions with him.

3.2.4.2 Primary participants¹

- Dakota is a 32 year old, single white female. She holds a DPhil and is currently employed at a tertiary education institution. She owns a home and she lives alone.
- Troy is a 24 year old male of mixed racial descent. His biological mother is coloured and his father is Indian. He is living with another care leaver who also resided in the children's village with him. He has a five month old baby and is not married. His baby is living with the baby's mother and grandmother. A long term employment at a clothing company ended when Troy was accused of stealing. He is currently employed at a retail business that wholesales different products to smaller businesses.

¹Pseudonyms are used, in order to protect the participants' and other role-players' identities.

- Jake is a 30 year old, white male who was living with his pregnant wife and eight year old daughter at the time of data collection. He has been employed at a computer company for several months and he does computer programming in his leisure time to earn a second income.
- Skylar is a 28 year old, coloured female. She left school after completing grade 10 in a school for children with special learning needs and she has been working ever since. She resides with her two daughters and her boyfriend in a one bedroom apartment. Her oldest daughter is eight years old and her youngest daughter five years old. They have different fathers. She works at a company that does dept collection.
- Harmony is a 34 year old, white female. She has an adolescent son from her first marriage. After her divorce she remarried and has a nine year old daughter from this marriage. She is currently residing with her second husband and her two children in an office space as their home was damaged by a storm. She works full time for her second husband who owns a carpentry business.

The secondary participants that participated in the third phase of the study (reflective and dyad interviews) included professionals, such as social workers, houseparent's and other role-players who have been involved at different children's homes. These participants were invited to participate in the study and they were purposively selected based on the following criteria:

- Secondary participants had to be at least 18 years of age.
- They had to be involved at children's homes in a professional capacity for at least two years.
- They had to understand and speak Afrikaans or English.
- They had to be available and willing to participate in the dyad- and reflective interviewing activities.
- They had to give their verbal and written permission to participate in the study.

3.2.4.3 Data collection and documentation

The data for this study was collected in three distinctive phases that will be discussed separately. In the first phase of the study, the researcher conducted semi-structured telephonic interviews with eight prospective participants. As the researcher is a qualified psychologist she is well trained to carry out **telephonic interviews**. During these interviews the researcher explained the purpose of the study and she asked the participants whether or not they would be willing to participate in the study. She also enquired whether or not they met all the criteria requirements of the study. One of the prospective

participants did not meet the age criteria and two others mentioned that they did not want to participate in the study.

Based on the data collected from these semi-structured telephonic interviews, the researcher purposively selected five primary participants to participate in the research study. The researcher proceeded to set up appointments and after obtaining their written informed consent, they became involved in the second phase of the study. During the second phase of the study, the researcher used multiple data collection methods, such as **semi-structured interviews, narrative case inquiries, post-modern data collection methods, analysis of existing material and documents (archival research), observations, auditory data capturing, field notes, reflective diary** and **visual data** of post-modern data collection activities.

It has to be mentioned that the number of primary participants that took part in this study was relatively small. As such, various data collection methods were imposed (between one and nine sessions) with each individual participant over a period of seven months to ensure that all key areas were covered with each informant. Data collection sessions took place in the participants' homes, at the researcher's home or at public eateries where privacy and confidentiality could be ensured. Some variation occurred in the data collection techniques that were used as well as in the quality of information obtained from each session as some of the participants wanted to share more about specific subjects. Furthermore, to ensure the collection of rich data, each participant was requested to take part in different narrative activities depending on their individual preferences and interests. All the sessions were audio-taped and transcribed, and then analysed, interpreted, and integrated by the researcher, and her two supervisors.

During the second phase of the study, the researcher conducted **individual interviews** with the primary participants. During the first qualitative session, the goal was to establish a trusting relationship with the participants, to explain the research process and to gain demographical information. She mentioned that she was interested in their reasons for being placed in care and she encouraged the participants to tell their stories from birth, up to their current life phase. She also asked participants to collect artefacts that represented their experiences in the children's home as well as from their transition phase. The second qualitative session typically involved open-ended questions to explore their family, care, career and life experiences. The participants were also asked for their personal advice and recommendations on how care practice could be improved in order to enhance care leavers' transition to independence.

Following each initial semi-structured interviews, the researcher and the participant commenced with the **narrative case inquiry** and **post-modern data collection techniques**. Three of the participants were asked to draw a lifeline where they had to recall the milestones and experiences of significance in

their lives and record these chronologically. This process entailed the drawing of a horizontal line on a piece of paper where they were asked to place a dot higher on the sheet to the extent that it was positive or lower on the sheet to the extent that it was negative. Each dot was then labelled to identify the event. After all the dots and labels were filled in, the dots were connected to graphically represent the flow of the participant's life.

Participants were also requested to share artefacts, such as poems and letters that might provide additional data regarding their transition to adulthood and could inform the support of other children's home residents, both during their time at the children's home, and in adult life. One of the participants shared poems that she wrote some years back, during her time at the children's home and during the years after she left the children's home. One of these was dedicated to the children's home, as she displayed gratitude for the support they had given her during her time in care. Besides one of the participants being asked to write her life story, the participants were requested to provide guidelines and advice that they would like to share with youth currently residing in children's homes.

The participants were then requested to report on some of their earlier recollections (memories). Adler (1956:352) regards early recollections as *"beginning crystallizations or kernel plots for the story of one's life. These early stories are used to warn, inspire and direct. Their worth and meaning, however, cannot be rightly estimated until we relate them to the total style of life of the individual in question, and recognize their unity with his main line of striving towards a goal of superiority"*. Like Adler (1956) Watkins and Savickas (1990) found early recollections to be extraordinarily rich, but difficult to interpret outside of a life history.

In this study, participants were asked to share about their favorite quotes, life mottos and role models. According to Savickas (1989) a person's role model identifies a central life goal, articulates and labels the individual's central concerns, and reveals what an individual thinks it will take to overcome a challenge. The researcher asked the participants who they admired when growing up. It was of further value for data collection to find out what the participants' lives were like at the time that such a figure became a role model.

Some of the participants were requested to complete a rosebush activity during which they had to imagine that they are a rosebush. This data collection technique required a lot of questions, prompting, suggestions and possibilities. This was followed by a drawing to create their rosebush (Thompson & Rudolph, 2000; Oaklander, 1988) as well as a discussion of the drawing, painting or creation, and how this creation related to their lives.

In an attempt to gain further rich descriptions the participants were requested to share their photo albums and memory boxes with the researcher. They shared information about photographs, personal

belongings and documents that had personal value to them, investigating their history and revisiting the information in the memory boxes (Viljoen, 2004). Participants were also provided with an opportunity to create a collage about their lives or about themselves, by using paint, writing, drawing or cutting out and pasting pictures, and words from magazines. Thereafter, their collages were discussed with them, guided by questions (Thompson & Rudolph, 2000; Oaklander, 1988) relating to their roles, goals and hobbies. The researcher asked them to explain their reasons for using specific pictures to illustrate their life situations, how they felt about certain pictures and what particular pictures symbolised or meant to them (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006).

As such, data pertaining to transition processes and the related outcomes were obtained from each of the participants through the use of a variety of data collection methods. These methods drew upon a wide range of information sources. The reason for this is twofold, firstly to enable the study to comment upon as many different aspects of the young adults' lives as possible, and thereby enhance its value; and secondly, to promote rigour and trustworthiness of the findings by utilising different data sources. Table 3.2 provides a summary of the data collection activities, as described in the previous paragraphs, which were employed with the primary participants.

Table 3.2: Data collection methods used with primary participants

	Individual Interviews	Rosebush	Lifeline	Memory Box	Poems	Life-story	Photo Albums & Archives	Collage	Quotations, life mottos & role models	Early memories
Dakota	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Troy	✓								✓	✓
Jake	✓		✓				✓		✓	✓
Skylar	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓
Harmony	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

Secondary data, such as existing material and documents (archival research) in the form of personal records, poems, drawings, letters sent to the individuals from family members, official correspondence about the individual, photographs and other personal family-social artefacts was also collected and analysed. However, some of the participants preferred not to hand these over to the researcher, as they had sentimental value. The researcher made copies of these documents with the participants' permission, and handed them back to them directly afterwards.

The researcher kept some of the **visual data** that the participants created, such as their poems, rosebushes, lifestories, collages and lifelines, after making them aware of their anonymity and obtaining

their consent to keep the visual data. Data was documented and analysed by means of verbatim transcriptions of audio-recordings. Pseudonyms were used in order to protect the participants' identities and audio-visual material was kept confidential throughout the study. The transcribed sessions were returned to the participants for their review (member checking) and the use of direct quotations was verified by them before inclusion of these as part of the research report.

The researcher furthermore used **observations** as a data collection strategy as it supported her in becoming actively involved in the research setting in an attempt to provide detailed descriptions of events as they unfolded and to note the participants' actions as well as their gestures, nonverbal body language and facial expressions (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006). Observations were implemented throughout all sessions with the participants. Simple observations were done whilst the researcher observed the participants when sharing their narratives. This supported her while interpreting verbal data and noting patterns of behaviour (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). In this manner, the researcher was able to continuously gather and verify information, supporting the qualitative and interpretivist nature of the research (Patton, 2002; McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). By employing observation as data collection technique, the researcher had to be more than a passive spectator. She had to constantly remain focused on the research questions and data collection activities, whilst being open to unexpected nonverbal information (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006).

The researcher also used a **reflective diary** for the duration of the study, in order to critically monitor her study's progress and draw attention to new insights that was required of her. Her diary logged professional activities which gave clear information about her work patterns (Burns, 2000), containing ideas and thoughts as well as reflections on her experiences and observations. She reflected on the research process in order to make the necessary changes when applicable and she used this data collection strategy to interrogate her assumptions, note reflections and experiments with interpretations. This aided her during the noting of perspectives that occurred whilst she was 'working alongside' the participants. Finally, she used her diary to reflect on her abilities as a researcher, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness of the study.

During the third phase of the research process, the researcher conducted **reflective** and **dyad interviews** with ten secondary participants at their homes, places of work and in public eateries. Only one of the secondary participants had previous contact with two of the primary participants as she worked at a children's home that they resided in. The secondary participants that took part in the **reflective interviews** included the manager of a centre for young care leavers where they learn various skills, such as needlework, hairdressing and catering. The second participant was a member of the public who supports care leavers. The third participant was a counsellor employed at a children's home who provides psychological support to care leavers. Fourthly, the researcher interviewed a

director that established and is managing a care leaver home that provides financial support, boarding and counselling to care leavers.

The participants who took part in the **dyad interviews** included a social worker, a care leaver who did not meet the age criteria for this study, two housemothers working at a place a safety as well as two housemothers who are employed at children's homes. The third phase of the study was felt to be important as it added rigour and credibility to the study's findings. As the experiences of the secondary participants varied, they provided a wealth of practical knowledge and rich data that provided unique insight into important factors regarding care leavers' transition to adulthood. They also provided useful advice on potential ways to improve children's homes and enhance the opportunities of looked-after children.

The researcher started dyad interviews with a broad and less structured set of questions, with the objective to gain insight into the participants' general perspectives, and to ease them into a process where they could actively debate issues. Thereafter, the researcher became more structured, asking the participants to partake in discussions on the topics pertinent to the study. She focused on questions, such as what the participants thought could make a difference whilst children are in care and their recommendations on how to support youth in children's homes during their transition into adulthood. The purpose of these questions was to generate as many views and perceptions as possible from the group (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

Dyad interviews therefore focused on collecting in-depth qualitative data on a particular topic (perceptions, attitudes and experiences regarding the well-being of children residing in care that might have an influence on their transition when they leave children's home). Participants engaged in discussions with each other and did not direct the comments solely to the researcher. The researcher found this to be insightful for this study as it widened the range of responses and released inhibitions that might have otherwise discouraged participants from disclosing information. This provided the participants with the opportunity to build on each other's ideas and comments, providing an in-depth view that seemed valuable for this study (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

The fieldwork for the study was carried out on a part-time basis between November 2013 and June 2014. Thus, the researcher collected data over an extended period of time. In the researcher's view, the research was done thoroughly as it included primary participants in the evaluation, along with secondary informants that described and defined transition for care leavers in a wider sense, in terms of the aspects related to leaving care and also being raised in a children's home.

3.2.4.4 Data management and analysis

Data collection sessions ranged from 30 minutes to 120 minutes each. All sessions were digitally recorded. Some of the recordings were transcribed by the researcher herself and others were sent to a third-party (professional transcriber). The researcher reviewed the transcripts against the original audio-recordings, making corrections to the transcripts as required (in places where the transcriber could not hear what was said). Data analysis was done in MS Word documents and the transcripts are not included with this report, but application to have access to them can be made to Dr. Ansie Kitching or Prof. Ronél Ferreira (contact details on the front page).

The researcher employed inductive thematic analysis as described by Kostere and Percy (2008), Braun and Clarke (2006), Charmaz (2006) and Patton (2002). Data was analysed inductively case by case, without prejudgment or preconceived notions about the subject matter (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). As the researcher collected the data independently in the field (data generation, photography of images and analysis of textual evidence), she was familiar with the material when data analysis commenced. She further kept the conceptual framework of this study in mind whilst attempting to generate categories that could possibly align with key concepts in the conceptual framework, adding new or different insights to existing theories. For data analysis the researcher followed the steps described below.

❖ Initial coding

The researcher conducted line-by-line coding, as described by Charmaz (2006:42-57) whilst she read the transcripts several times to get an overview of the whole narrative, and to allow themes to take form in her mind. She attempted to code the transcripts by following Charmaz' guideline to do this quickly – "*speed and spontaneity*" – without being anxious about getting it 'right'. She kept in mind that she could go back at a later stage to edit and refine. This facilitated a 'close reading' of the text – considering carefully what the participants had said, without yet thinking theoretically or abstractly about the text. She then focused on themes and topics (which is in line with regular qualitative research) and where appropriate, also highlighted (using MS Word's highlighter pen) key phrases or words in the actual transcript.

❖ Focused coding

Following the initial coding process the researcher read through her lists of initial themes, which were rather specific and situated within the participants' narratives. She then identified themes that occurred frequently or seemed significant. She continually returned to the goals of the study which was to describe the experiences of young adults' transition from residential care to independent living. Next, the researcher wrote summaries on all the focused themes, incorporating both narratives about the themes and her understanding of the themes in her own words (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012). She

then compared these focused themes with the other focused themes and with the data from other data collection sessions, considering possible relationships between them.

All transcripts were circulated to the researcher's supervisor and co-supervisor for peer reviewed analysis. They added their own themes and comments where appropriate. As such, the researcher and her two supervisors continued with constant comparison, noting the similarities and differences between the various transcripts. The annotated transcripts were returned to the researcher, who integrated the feedback into one document which endeavoured to identify commonalities across the themes. By repeatedly going back to the original data, the researcher attempted to ensure that the themes were thoroughly grounded in the data and not just a construction of her invention based on prior unacknowledged assumptions (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012).

❖ **Member checking**

The researcher employed member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to verify the accuracy of the research findings. In this regard she sent transcriptions of data collection sessions to participants and therefore gained an additional source of data that provided further elaboration, clarification and correction as the researcher negotiated the meaning of the narrative data with the participants, adding a validity check to the analysis process (Hoyt, Warbasse & Chu, 2006; Creswell & Miller, 2000). Ezzy (2002) concurs with this stance and states that it is important to consider how evolving interpretations of the data can be checked with participants.

Data analysis was thus conducted by a team of three researchers, including the principal researcher and her two supervisors. They reflected critically on the entire research process from design to report writing, not only to divide the workload, but also to reduce researcher bias, to bring to light the researcher's unacknowledged assumptions or paradigms, and to challenge and critique ways of thinking about or making sense of the data (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012).

3.3 RIGOUR OF THE STUDY

Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain that rigour, which is generally taken for granted with quantitative methods, has to be attended to differently in qualitative research. They term this 'trustworthiness', which refers to the degree to which a reader can have confidence in the integrity and value of a qualitative study. They advance various procedures for ensuring rigour and trustworthiness, of which the researcher attended to the following.

3.3.1 CREDIBILITY

Durheim and Wassenaar (2002) refer to credibility as the assurance that the researcher's conclusions stem from the data. As such, the first concern of most qualitative researchers lies with the factual accuracy of their research and account of events – that is that they are not making up or distorting things that they saw and heard (Huberman & Miles, 2002). In its broadest sense, credibility refers to the degree to which the research conclusions are sound (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). Therefore, credibility is related to whether or not the research findings capture what really occurred in the research context and whether or not the researcher is learning what was intended (Pitney, 2004; Babbie & Mouton, 2001; McMillann & Schumacher, 2001; Merriam, 1998).

The researcher attempted to raise the credibility of her study by prolonged engagement with the topic, immersing herself in the data and the experience of care-leaving. This process was supported by her two supervisors who reviewed her work. Furthermore, the researcher used multiple theories, specifically the **psychosocial development theory** (Erikson, 1963), **cognitive stress theory** (Stroebe, Van Vliet, Hewstone, & Willis, 2002), **well-being theory** (Keyes, 2007), **resilience theory** (Ungar, 2008), **self-determination theory** (Deci & Ryan, 2008), **complex responsiveness theory** (Radford, 2006; Stacey, 2003; Shaw, 2002; Stacey, 2000; Badenhorst, 1995) and **complex interactive dynamics theory** (Jörg, 2004), which supported her in continuously looking at the data from multiple perspectives.

The researcher furthermore strove to produce findings that are believable and convincing, by also presenting negative or inconsistent findings. She employed crystallisation by using a variety of data sources (Seale, Gobo, Gubrium & Silverman, 2004; Patton, 2002) and she applied member checking by sharing the transcriptions of interviews with the primary participants, in order to receive their feedback and further input. In addition, as a qualitative researcher, she continuously checked the credibility of her research by asking the following: *How can I be wrong?* As such, she searched for negative instances to challenge emerging hypotheses. Finally, her study was restricted to a specific phenomenon in a specified environment (Seale *et al.*, 2004; Patton, 2002). Therefore, in keeping with the underlying principles of interpretivist studies, she focused on extensive descriptions of the selected cases, being five young adults who have left care facilities.

3.3.2 TRANSFERABILITY

According to Durrheim and Wassenaar (2002), transferability refers to the degree to which generalisations can be made from the data and context of the research study to the wider population and settings. In this manner, transferability is regarded as the degree to which the reader is able to take the findings and transfer them to other contexts. Transferability is based on the idea of social

representativeness, where the aim is to extensively observe the relations between variables (Seale *et al.*, 2004). This implies the provision of detailed, rich, descriptive information of the research context and participants (Pitney, 2004; Patton, 2002; Mouton, 2001; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).

The researcher provided rich, thick descriptions of the research participants and research contexts, supplying detailed information, in an attempt to enhance transferability. Furthermore, she attained different inferences of the various data sources. Therefore, each piece of information obtained its own interpretation of what was discovered. As such, this study could provide readers with sufficient information to judge the applicability of the findings to other settings (Seale *et al.*, 2004; Patton, 2002).

3.3.3 CONFIRMABILITY

Babbie and Mouton (2001) describe confirmability as the degree to which the findings of a study are the product of the focus of inquiry, and not of the biases of the researcher. Freedom from bias, however, is not characteristic of interpretivist studies, according to which the researchers' motives and values do form an integral part of the research process. To this end, the researcher strove to formulate findings which are based on the outcomes of the participants' involvement and conditions of the research, and not her (or others') biases, motivations and perspectives. In this manner, the researcher believes that her influence on this study was not prejudiced to the point of making the findings and conclusions unacceptable, as she aimed to understand and interpret the meanings and intentions that cause different actions.

The researcher was constantly aware of the potential influence of her own values and biases on the final outcome of the study (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). She subsequently continuously reflected in her researcher journal, in order to provide a methodologically self-critical account of the research events (Seale *et al.*, 2004; Patton, 2002). Finally, the confirmability of this study was enhanced by careful records that established an audit trail. The researcher continuously returned to the original data and ensured that all insights and formulations were clearly linked to the data. She kept close track of the steps of the data analysis to show the process by which she progressed from the original interviews to the final report.

3.3.4 DEPENDABILITY

Dependability refers to the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings of a study did indeed occur as the researcher says they did (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). In this manner, dependability depends on whether or not the findings will be the same if the study was replicated with the same participants or in a similar context (Pitney, 2004; Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Cohen *et al.*, 2000; Merriam, 1998). Dependability is achieved through rich and detailed descriptions that show how certain

actions and questions are rooted in, and developed from contextual interactions (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).

The researcher believes that these indicators apply to the outcome of her study as a whole. She addressed this criterion by making use of observations and field notes during the entire research process, using concrete data in the form of photographs and electronic recordings of the information gathered during interviews, post-modern techniques and dyad interviews. In addition, she transcribed recordings to enhance dependable identification of the themes and sub-themes that emerged during data analysis. Furthermore, she constantly reflected on the research process and conclusions with regard to the study, in her researcher journal (Seale *et al.*, 2004; Patton, 2002).

3.3.5 AUTHENTICITY

Authenticity entails a reflective consciousness regarding one's own perspective, appreciation for the perspectives of others, and fairness in depicting constructions in the values that undergird them. As such, authenticity is the faithful reconstruction of participants' multiple perceptions (Patton, 2002; McMillan & Schumacher, 2001; Cohen *et al.*, 2000). In an attempt to adhere to this criterion, the researcher had to be conscious of her own perspectives and appreciate the perspectives of the participants in conducting this study. She had to be fair and conscientious in taking account of the participants' multiple perspectives, multiple interests and multiple realities (Patton, 2002). Therefore, she aimed to provide a balanced representation of the multiple realities of the participants. In presenting the study, she continually valued the act of reporting a range of different realities.

3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Coetzee (2003) defines the term "research ethics" as moral and legal principles regulating the conduct of research in relationship with the resource provider, the research participant(s), the public and the researcher. Strydom (2002) adds that anyone who is involved in research needs to be aware of research ethics and the general agreements about what is proper and improper in scientific research.

As this study included semi-structured interviews, narrative case inquiries and post-modern data collection methods, the researcher firstly adhered to the professional ethical code for educational psychologists, as formulated by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (www.hpcs.co.za). In addition, she continuously conducted her research according to the Ethics and Research Statement provided by the Faculty of Psychology of the University of the North West (www.nwu.ac.za).

3.4.1 INFORMED CONSENT

Before commencing with any data collection activities, the researcher discussed the purpose and procedures of the study with the participants obtaining their informed consent without providing suggestive information that could have led to contamination of the data. In addition, they were informed that the data was going to be analysed by the researcher and her two supervisors. She answered questions that participants asked during these discussions.

The researcher had appropriate procedures in place for gaining permission from the research participants before commencing with data collection (Thompson & Rudolph, 2000). For this purpose, she developed consent forms that ensured the participants' confidentiality and anonymity, which were handed to the primary and secondary participants before commencing with data collection (Cohen *et al.*, 2000; Merriam, 1998). Refer to Addendum A for an example of the consent forms signed by the participants.

3.4.2 SAFETY IN PARTICIPATION

This research did not imply the exposure of participants to physical risks or harmful activities. However, as already stated, the selected participants participated in semi-structured interviews, narrative case inquiries and post-modern data collection methods which might imply the possibility of psychological harm, especially against the background of the nature of the phenomenon on which the data collection sessions focused. The potential risk of psychological harm was countered by 1) the researcher's training in Educational Psychology, 2) the fact that the participants could withdraw from the process at any time, and 3) that participants were seen in a venue of their own choice, either at the researcher's home, at their homes or at a public venue, to allow them to dictate the setting of the data collection sessions. In this regard, the researcher strove to be honest, respectful and empathetic towards the participants at all times (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006; Patton, 2002; Thompson & Rudolph, 2000). Even though it was not required in any case, the researcher had a list of psychologists at hand, that she could have referred the participants to if they experienced emotional discomfort at any stage.

3.4.3 PRIVACY, CONFIDENTIALITY, ANONYMITY AND THE USE OF VISUAL DATA

According to Burns (2000), both the researcher and the participants must have a clear understanding regarding the privacy of data collection sessions and the confidentiality of results prior to data collection. Before the researcher commenced with the data collection sessions she considered the privacy of the setting in which data was to be collected. She was aware that the chosen location could influence the way in which participants respond and she discussed the preferred setting with the primary and secondary participants. Two of the primary participants stated that they preferred a quiet

public eatery and/or the researcher's private home as they felt uncomfortable discussing sensitive issues in their homes whilst their children or other residents were within hearing distance. The researcher conducted the majority of the sessions with these two participants in a private room at her private practice. Some of the data collection sessions took place at a public eatery that were located closer to these two participants homes but the researcher kept these public data collection sessions to a minimum as she was concerned that these settings might feel intrusive or be disruptive. To prevent this, the researcher also chose a quiet public eatery setting with very little disruptions.

The other three primary participants mentioned that they preferred to be at their homes during the data collection sessions. Mahon, Glendinning, Clarke and Craig (1996) are of the opinion that it is desirable to interview research participants at their homes as this might provide important observational data for the researcher. The researcher concurs with Punch (2002) who states that interviewing participants in their own setting supported them to feel more comfortable and less anxious. In this regard the researcher ensured confidentiality by conducting interviews during times when participants were alone in their home settings. When this was not possible the researcher requested other residents at participants' home settings to provide the participant with privacy whilst conducting data collection sessions.

The researcher further gave the participants the undertaking that information and responses that had been shared during the research would be kept private, and that results would be presented in an anonymous manner, in order to protect their identities (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001; Burns, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Consent forms (Addendum A) included permission to take and display visual images of the post-modern data collection methods as well as existing material and documents (archival research) where appropriate. However, the information obtained from the participants (including visual data) was managed in confidence, and with their consent.

3.4.4 WITHDRAWAL FROM RESEARCH

The researcher explained to the primary and secondary participants that their participation in the study was voluntary. She further explained to them that she would respect the wish to withdraw from the study, if they wished to do so at any stage (Mouton, 2001).

3.4.5 TRUST

Participants were not exposed to any acts of deception or betrayal. The researcher strove towards maintaining an honest and trustworthy relationship with the participants (Thompson & Rudolph, 2000). She always kept in mind that, if this trust did not exist, the collected data might be of less value in

comparison with data that had been received from a trusting participant (Cohen *et al.*, 2000; Merriam, 1998).

3.5 CONCLUSION

The researcher commenced chapter 1 of the study by describing and explaining the rationale, problem statement, purpose, aim and objectives of the study. Thereafter the conceptual framework that led to the researcher's understanding of the constructs that form the basis of the study, was presented. The researcher namely suggested a conceptual framework that is anchored in the context of young adults facing a myriad of challenges and adversities after leaving care facilities. The researcher then discussed the research design and methodology that steered this study.

In the next section, consisting of Chapters 4 to 6, the researcher present integrated reports on the results of the current study and relate the results of the study to existing literature. She presents this section in three different chapters focusing on a different theme that emerged during the thematic analysis and interpretation phase of this study. The following main themes emerged: pre-transition experiences that influenced young adult care leavers' transition to independence (see Chapter 4); experiences associated with the process of transition to independence (see Chapter 5); and post-transition experiences associated with young adult care leavers' transition to independent living (see Chapter 6). The researcher authenticates, substantiates and enriches the results of this study with participants' verbatim quotations. Thereafter, she reflects on the emerged themes in terms of existing literature, to present findings in line with the research purpose. During this meaning-making process, she expounds congruent as well as contradictory findings between the current study and the existing literature.

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CHAPTER 4

THEME 1: PRE-TRANSITION EXPERIENCES THAT INFLUENCED YOUNG ADULT CARE LEAVERS' TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 3, the researcher explained and elaborated on the research methodology and strategies used in the current study. In the next three chapters, she reports on the findings of the current study. She presents each of the three main themes that emerged during the thematic analysis and interpretation phase in a separate chapter. The main themes are as follows:

- ❖ Pre-transition experiences that influenced young adult care leavers' transition to independence (Chapter 4).
- ❖ Experiences associated with the process of transition to independence (Chapter 5).
- ❖ Post-transition experiences of young adult care leavers' transitioning to independent living (Chapter 6).

In each of these chapters, the researcher provides sub-themes and categories (Charmaz, 2000; Merriam, 1998). She authenticates and enriches the findings of the current study through participants' verbatim quotations and she also reflects on the emerged themes in terms of the literature, to present findings in line with her research purpose. She expands on congruent findings as well as contradictory findings between the current study and existing literature.

4.2 INTRODUCING THE PRIMARY PARTICIPANTS WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE PRE-TRANSITION PHASE

In this section the researcher provides the narrative accounts of each of the primary participants, compiled from all data sources described in chapter 3 of the study. She specifically focuses on the pre-transition journeys of the young adult care leavers, capturing their experiences prior to and during placement in care.

4.2.1 DAKOTA²

Dakota was born in July 1982. Following her birth she resided with her mother, father and later two younger brothers. Her father was diagnosed with schizophrenia and her mother displayed suicidal

² Pseudonyms are used, in order to protect the participants' and other role-players' identities.

tendencies. She could recollect very few memories of her childhood but what she could remember told a story of neglect, physical abuse, parental alcohol addiction, poverty and family violence. When Dakota was eight years old her mother left their family to be with her boyfriend. The following year Dakota's mother and father were divorced. Dakota and her two younger brothers were placed in their father's custody. During Dakota's residency with her father she experienced physical, sexual and emotional abuse. One of her close relatives also suffered a brutal attack and he died in her arms, whilst they were waiting for an ambulance to arrive.

At the age of 12 years Dakota saw an advertisement on television for child line and she contacted them in an attempt to escape adverse family circumstances. A social worker then placed her with a compassionate foster mother whom provided her with a sense of safety and care. This was a temporary living arrangement as she was placed in a children's home a couple of months later. At first she experienced that she did not belong at the children's home as she struggled to build friendships with residents. Her peer group reportedly rejected and bullied her as she focused more on her academic work than socialising with them. However, she reported that overall she was happy at the children's home as they provided her with a sense of safety, shelter, food, clothes and educational opportunities. She also had a considerate housemother who encouraged her to perform academically. She reported that the children's home rescued her and provided her with opportunities to reach her academic potential.

Dakota performed well academically and she was selected as a headgirl at the children's home. Despite her achievements she experienced a need for acknowledgment and acceptance. She mentioned that being raised in a children's home was an exhausting experience as she experienced that she had to "earn" the acceptance of others. In this regard she reportedly did not feel valuable and as a result she continually accomplished career success to feel worthy of people's respect. As a young adult she continued to struggle with her sense of self and often used her academic achievements to define herself.

4.2.2 HARMONY

Harmony was born in July 1978 and she was adopted three days after her birth. Following her adoption she resided with her mother, father and older brother. Her father was reportedly addicted to alcohol and he displayed violent tendencies. Her mother was seemingly depressed and she often attempted to commit suicide. As her father struggled with an alcohol addiction he frequently lost employment. As a result Harmony's family often had to move in search of employment for him. Although Harmony found it difficult to adapt following relocation, her father apparently made new friends with ease. Whilst her father was socialising he left her with the responsibility of taking care of her mother who also abused alcohol and prescription medication. During her childhood years she often experienced sleep difficulties

as she seemingly feared that her father might commit family murder. She frequently hid firearms in their home to prevent her father from committing family murder. During this time she also had to endure sexual abuse from a cousin.

Soon after Harmony's eighth birthday her adoptive mother attempted suicide and due to this her mother was placed in a psychiatric hospital. Harmony was sent to live with her aunt who told her that her adoptive father was in fact her biological father. Her father seemingly had an extra marital affair with her biological mother. She felt ashamed as she perceived herself to be a child born out of infidelity. Soon after this her father was arrested for attempting to commit family violence. Whilst Harmony visited him in jail a police officer contacted a social worker. Harmony asked the social worker to place her in a children's home as she did not want to live in poverty, fear and despair. At the age of 13 years Harmony was placed in children's home and a few weeks later her adoptive mother died. Harmony continues to believe that if she resided with her family, her adoptive mother would not have passed away.

Harmony reported that she experienced the children's home as a safe haven that provided her with opportunities to participate in various school, social and sport activities. However, she seemingly experienced stigma and discrimination at school due to her care residency. During these experiences she attempted to focus on her academic and sport performances, in an attempt to avoid despair and depression. As a young adult she continues to display hope and optimism, despite experiencing adverse life experiences.

4.2.3 SKYLAR

Skylar was born in February 1987. Following her birth she resided with her mother, aunt and two older sisters in poverty. They lived in an economically disadvantaged neighbourhood and slept on cardboard boxes. Although her basic needs for food and clothes were not met, her mother often purchased and abused alcohol. Due to adverse experiences her older sister contacted a social worker. Skylar was eight years old at the time and she remembers the day that she was placed in a children's home. She recalled memories of her mother bathing her and her two siblings, and then packing their clothes in a single suitcase. After spending a day in court, her mother greeted her and she left Skylar and her two older siblings at the courtroom. Thereafter they were taken to a children's home and Skylar seemingly believed that this was a temporary living arrangement.

On the day that Skylar arrived at the children's home she seemingly experienced safety and care as she received food, clothes, a bed and an opportunity to bathe. She spent most of her childhood in care as she did not have weekend carers to visit during weekends and holidays. Her mother apparently did not visit her during placement in care. Skylar reportedly experienced loneliness and sadness during

weekends, and holidays. She however had a devoted housemother who provided her with opportunities to participate in everyday activities during which she occasionally felt like an “ordinary” child.

During Skylar’s grade six year the children’s home placed her in a school for learners with special needs. She seemingly pleaded with them to avoid this placement but her housemother apparently said that she will be placed back with her biological mother to live in poverty, should she not agree to the placement. Skylar obeyed their request in an attempt to avoid placement with her biological mother. The children’s home allegedly did not provide an explanation for the school placement and she continued to believe that she had the necessary academic potential to succeed successfully in a mainstream school.

Skylar performed well academically at the school for learners with special needs, as she believed that this might lead to her placement back in a mainstream school. Although she passed all her subjects with distinction and was chosen as headgirl at her school, she was not placed back in a mainstream school. She reportedly felt angry at the children’s home for making this decision as this had a harmful influence on her as a young adult. Apart from this educational experience she seemingly enjoyed her stay at the children’s home.

4.2.4 TROY

Troy was born in June 1989. He is the only child of his mother and father, but his father reportedly had other children as well. Following his birth Troy lived in poverty with his biological mother. Due to this, his grandmother allegedly contacted a social worker and at the age of two years he was placed in a children’s village. Although he recalled limited memories of his first years at the children’s village he mentioned that he received an abundance of food and clothes. He also reported on participating in chores, such as cooking and cleaning. The children’s village seemingly had boundaries and rules, and he believed that this supported him as a young adult to build a life based on respect and responsibility.

Troy reported that the children’s village provided him with material and social support. During his placement in care he allegedly did not receive sufficient psychological support. He further mentioned that the children’s village did not celebrate his birthday and he reported on incidences of physical abuse. Troy seemingly experienced anger towards the children’s village as they treated boys and girls differently. In this regard he reported that female residents received more privileges in comparison to their male counterparts. However, circumstances seemingly changed on a regular basis as his housemothers were frequently replaced with new personnel. As a result he struggled to build relationships with housemothers as their employment at the children’s home was often temporary.

During school holidays Troy frequently visited his biological mother. At the age of 13 years his mother passed away and although he experienced despair following her death, the children's village allegedly did not provide him with therapeutic intervention as this service was seemingly only presented to children with special learning needs. Despite his feelings of despondency, Troy continued to have dreams for the future.

During Troy's placement in care he perceived himself as a responsible and well-behaved resident. He formed close relationships with care residents and apparently enjoyed his residency at the children's village. As he performed well academically he was awarded with a tertiary education bursary. Upon completion of grade 12 the children's home requested Troy to live with his grandmother in a different city whilst he completed his tertiary studies. He was supposedly left with no choice but to leave the children's village and city in which he resided for 16 years. Regardless of this sudden end of care, Troy continued to display gratitude towards the children's village as they provided him with accommodation, financial resources, social support and educational opportunities.

4.2.5 JAKE

Jake was born in a catholic hospital in September 1985. As his mother apparently struggled with an alcohol addiction he was placed in foster care. Following removal from his mother's care, he resided with three foster families but placements were seemingly unsuccessful. At the age of three years he was sent to live in a children's home. He reportedly suffered from epileptic attacks and was diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactive disorder. Although he could not recall many memories of his childhood, he did mention that his first housemother at the children's home was more concerned about fulfilling his basic needs than his emotional and academic needs.

During his placement in care Jake longed to be part of a family but he was uninformed about his biological relatives. Soon after his seventh birthday a social worker at the children's home allegedly told him that his biological brother and sister were living with him at the children's home. Although he found it difficult to build a relationship with his older sister he often socialised with his older brother. He reportedly also visited his biological mother but he recalled instances of abandonment and neglect during holiday visits. Moreover, he was supposedly bullied by older care residents at the children's home and in an attempt to stop victimisation he physically abused younger care residents. During this time, he reportedly did not attend school on a regular basis as he was socialising, drinking and smoking cannabis with older care residents. Due to this behaviour he was expelled from school and he failed grade five.

Following Jake's expulsion from school he was placed with a compassionate housemother who exposed him to social activities outside the children's home. His housemother apparently encouraged

residents in her care to treat each other like family members. Moreover, Jake reportedly visited weekend carers who encouraged him to focus on academic achievements. He seemingly experienced a sense of belonging with his weekend father who took him for therapeutic intervention. He was then placed on medication for attention difficulties. He apparently avoided his old group of friends and attended school on a more regular basis. Following this Jake displayed academic potential and as a result he was placed back in a mainstream school. He was selected to be a leader in high school and he completed grade 12 successfully.

4.3 RESULTS ON PRE-TRANSITION EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG ADULT CARE LEAVERS

In the next section the researcher presents the results of the study by discussing the first main theme. She describes two sub-themes and related categories that emerged during thematic analysis of raw data, in terms of the pre-transition experiences of young adult care leavers prior to and during their placement in care. She also discusses the influence of pre-care and in-care experiences on young adult care leavers' transition to independent living. The discussion of sub-themes and categories is enhanced and enriched by direct quotations and vignettes. Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the emerged sub-themes and categories.



THEME 1: PRE-TRANSITION PHASE	
Sub-theme 1.1: Pre-transition phase 	Sub-theme 1.2: Preparation for transition 
Category (a): Reasons for being placed in care Category (b): Experiences during placement in care Category (c): Need for therapeutic support Category (d): Need for education Category (e): Central role of housemother	Category (a): Acquiring skills for independent living Category (b): Need for a sense of autonomy

Figure 4.1: Overview of emerged sub-themes and categories for Theme 1

4.3.1 SUB-THEME 1.1: PRE-TRANSITION PHASE

In the next section the researcher presents the results of the study that relate to the pre-transition phase (Theme 1) by discussing the three sub-themes and related categories that emerged during thematic analysis of the raw data. The discussion is enhanced and enriched by means of direct quotations and vignettes. Figure 6.1 provides an overview of the emerged sub-themes and categories.

4.3.1.1 Category a: Reasons for being placed in care

The primary participants had some recollection of their families of origin and the reasons that precipitated placement in care. Reports included poverty, parental illiteracy, abuse, deprivation, neglect, parental alcohol abuse, family breakdown and mental health problems of one or both parents. In this regard Skylar reported that she was placed in care due to poverty exacerbated by parental illiteracy and parental alcohol abuse. Pertaining to this Skylar stated³: *"Then we lived with my mother and my mother's sister, in a small place. I think that's why they took us away, because my mother's sister had a room where we all slept on the floor"* (Session 1: 3)⁴; *"We had no food, my mother's drunk the whole time and there's no one who looks after us. We were alone. Then the social worker came and saw us sleeping on the floor. I can remember we slept on boxes behind a sofa. My mother struggled to feed us or get us to school. Wore torn clothes, we suffered"* (Session 1: 5)⁵. As such, Skylar was placed in care due to poverty, parental alcohol abuse, deprivation and neglect. Skylar furthermore reported that she was not prepared or informed about removal from her parental home although she was old enough to recall parts of the incident. She said: *"I sat in court and my mother greeted us, but I didn't understand because I mean there was a suitcase and we were in court"* (Session 1: 3)⁶.

Troy and Jake reported that they were not aware that they were being placed in care as they were two and three years old at the time. Jake reported that he was placed in foster care shortly following his birth as his mother allegedly struggled with an alcohol addiction, rendering her incapable of taking care of him. In this regard Jake reported: *"Immediately after I was born I was taken away from my mother. Then I bounced around between many people, but the only reason I bounced around is they wanted to adopt me and my mother said no and then they said okay, that's fine, we're not going to walk around with this child if it can't be ours"* (Session 1: 99)⁷. Following three failed foster care attempts Jake was placed in a children's home. He speculated on the reasons for the failed foster care attempts as he seemingly had limited memories of his foster parents due to his developmental level at the time. Troy was also placed in care at a young age following an intervention from a family member who was concerned about his well-being as he was reportedly living in poverty with his biological mother.

³All quotations in Afrikaans were translated to English for the sake of international readers.

⁴ "Toe het ons by my ma gebly saam met my ma se suster, in 'n klein plekkie. Ek dink dis hoekom hulle ons weggevat het, want my ma se suster het 'n kamer gehad waar ons almal op die vloer geslaap het".

⁵ "Ons het nie kos nie, my ma bly dronk en daar's niemand wat na ons kyk nie. Ons is baie alleen. Toe kom kyk die welsynwerker ons slaap op die grond. Ek kan onthou ons het op bokse geslaap agter 'n bank. Ma het gesukkel laat ons moet eet of skool toe te gaan. Stukkende klere gedra, ons het swaar gekry".

⁶ "Ek't in die hof gesit en my ma het ons gegroet, maar ek het nie verstaan, want ek meen daar was 'n tas en ons was in die hof".

⁷ "Toe ek gebore was dadelik weg gevat by my ma. Toe het ek rond gehop tussen mense maar die enigste rede hoekom ek rond gehop het, hulle my wou aangeneem het en my ma het gesê nee en dan sê hulle ok nee dis fine, weet jy ons gaan nie verder rondloop met die kind as dit nie ons sin kan wees nie".

Harmony and Dakota were placed in care following realisation in primary school that their family circumstances were not conducive to their development. Both participants were placed in care due to poverty, deprivation, neglect, parental alcohol abuse, family breakdown and parental mental health problems. In this regard Harmony stated: *“I was physically and emotionally abused by my stepmother and brother”* (Session 1: 248)⁸; *“She said we should go kneel in front of her then she is going to shoot me, then she is going to shoot my brother and then shoot herself”* (Session 1: 249)⁹; *“My father was a total alcoholic”* (Session 1: 251)¹⁰; *“I couldn’t sleep, out of fear. I didn’t want to stay up because I was afraid to see my own death and I didn’t want to sleep because I was afraid I couldn’t defend myself when I’m sleeping”* (Session 1: 253)¹¹. Harmony and Dakota reportedly sought help from the Department of Social Development at a young age in an attempt to break away from adverse childhood experiences. Related to this, Skylar’s older sister, who was also in primary school at the time, requested an intervention from the Department of Social Development, which led to Skylar’s placement in a children’s home.

In relating participants’ pre-transition experiences to their transitions to adulthood, Harmony and Dakota reported incidences of sexual and physical abuse prior to their placement in care. Both participants seemingly found it difficult to initiate and maintain stable relationships as young adults and they supposedly participated in promiscuous behaviour. They also reported on experiencing difficulties with boundary setting in relationships as they feared rejection and experienced a need for acceptance. Troy and Jake, who did not report incidences of sexual and/or physical abuse, seemingly experienced fewer difficulties in social and romantic relationships.

4.3.1.2 Category b: Experiences during placement in care

The primary participants shared ambivalent emotions regarding their experiences of placement in care. Positive experiences included being *“rescued”* from dysfunctional family circumstances, gaining protection from the *“outside world”* and placement in a *“safe haven”*. In this regard Dakota noted¹²: *“It was my rescue. I was happy in the children’s home”* (Session 1: 371)¹³. Moreover, primary participants reported that places of care provided them with support to develop their potential and they enjoyed participating in activities offered by housemothers. These activities included camping and day trips, sport performances and after-school activities. In this regard Jake mentioned that he enjoyed the

⁸ “Ek was fisies en emosioneel baie geabuse deur my stiefma en my broer”.

⁹ “Sy het gesê ons moet nou kom kniel hier voor haar, en dan gaan sy nou vir my skiet en dan gaan sy my boetie skiet, en dan gaan sy haarself skiet”.

¹⁰ “My pa was ‘n totaal en al ‘n alkoholis gewees”.

¹¹ “Ek kon nie slaap nie, uit vrees. Ek wou nie wakker bly nie, want ek is bang om te sien hoe gaan ek dood, en ek wou nie slaap nie, want ek’s te bang ek kan nie myself defend as ek slaap nie”.

¹² “Dit was my redding gewees. Ek was happy in die kinderhuis”.

¹³ “Jy het so uitgesien na hierdie trip. Dit was mal lekker”.

freedom of occasionally being a child and he spoke with an exciting tone when he referred to social activities: *"You really looked forward to this trip. It was really nice"* (Session 4:207)¹⁴.

Reportedly, housemothers had to initiate and organise extramural activities as places of care had restrictions in terms of routine, resources and discipline. The restrictions seemingly made it difficult for care residents to participate in activities that were not presented at children's homes. In this regard primary and secondary participants reported on experiencing limited opportunities to meet peers outside of the children's home as most leisure activities involved socialising with care residents. Pertaining to this a housemother reported that this may have a harmful effect on young adult care leaver's identity formation. She said: *"They can't develop on their own. They always have to be in a group of thirteen and the leader, who automatically is the stronger person, takes lead, so the other children don't receive opportunities to develop on their own. To build their own identity"* (Dyad interview: 51)¹⁵.

Skylar and Troy, who were reportedly placed in care due to poverty, mentioned that receiving food, accommodation and schooling at children's homes, were highly significant for them, as it was apparently the means through which they experienced nurturing and care. As such, material support often came to the forefront with Skylar and Troy as they seemingly appreciated the financial support that they received from children's homes. On the other hand, the relationships that Jake, Dakota and Harmony built with housemothers during placement in care were significant and helpful for them. Jake expressed a sense of gratitude towards his housemother for providing him with a home that reflected traditional family rituals. He stated: *"She made one long table so that we could sit together as a family"* (Session 1: 109)¹⁶. Similarly, Dakota reported that her housemother supported her to reach her full academic potential and that she encouraged her to further her education. Harmony also enjoyed spending time with her housemother and she reported on experiencing a sense of accomplishment after her housemother entrusted her with leadership roles. This apparently provided Harmony with a sense of meaning and purpose during placement in care.

According to Skylar, her overall experience at the children's home was positive. In this regard she reported: *"I think it was actually a very nice life. I mean, it wasn't a bad life, they treated us well"* (Session 1: 5)¹⁷. She seemingly only felt pessimistic regarding her placement in a school for learners with special needs. In this regard she reported that she was mistakenly placed in a school for learners with special needs as she perceived herself to be a strong leader and academic achiever. Moreover,

¹⁵ "Hulle kan ook nooit op hulle eie ontwikkel nie. Hulle moet altyd in 'n groep van dertien alles saam doen en die leier in die huis, wat outomaties die sterker persoon is, hy vat die leiding so die ander kinders kry nie kans om op hulle eie te ontwikkel nie, hulle eie identiteit op te bou nie".

¹⁶ "Een lang tafel gemaak laat almal bymekaar as 'n familie saam sit".

¹⁷ "Ek dink dit was eintlik 'n baie lekker lewe. Ek meen was nie 'n slegte lewe nie, hulle het ons goed hanteer".

she experienced that the decision to place her in a school for learners with special needs limited her opportunities for a successful career and future. Harmony also reported on school experiences, apparently feeling self-conscious at school. In this regard she mentioned: *"There were children who thought that children's home means that you have a disease that is contagious"* (Session 2: 286)¹⁸. As such, Harmony thus did not always have positive experiences at school as learners in high school, who were not in care, discriminated against her due to her status as a *"children's home child"*.

According to the results of the study, negative experiences reported by primary participants included a perceived lack of emotional nurturing and constant change of housemothers. In this regard Troy reported that his housemothers often treated him with a lack of encouragement, respect and emotional nurturing. In addition, he mentioned that it was not possible for him to maintain relationships with housemothers as they were often replaced with new staff members. Troy furthermore reported on limited celebrations of special occasions, harsh disciplinary measures and physical abuse. In this regard he said: *"Some house parents were beating the children"* (Session 1: 233); *"Now and then they forget your birthday. Imagine you wake up. When you are small they will buy you gifts and they will throw you a party but as you get older it's an out thing"* (Session 1: 234). Similar negative reports were made by a housemother pertaining victimisation and sexual abuse: *"Small children arrive, innocent, who haven't been exposed to sexual things, who now gets abused by older children"* (Dyad interview: 53)¹⁹; *"Now they get exposed to sexual activities, bullies"* (Dyad interview: 55)²⁰; *"The older children rape the younger children"* (Dyad interview: 58)²¹. In addition, another housemother reported on alcohol and drug abuse in children's homes: *"Had weed. I had drugs. I had alcohol"* (Dyad interview: 58)²².

Similar reports regarding physical abuse amongst child care residents as well as drug use and alcohol abuse were made by Jake: *"What the older children did was take younger children under their wings. Then they get told to hit other children or fight. Then if you don't hit them you get hit. We were very violent, fought a lot and bullied the young ones"* (Session 1: 110)²³. A housemother also expressed her concern regarding physical abuse at children's homes: *"Boys sort each other out. They fight, they bully"* (Dyad interview: 16)²⁴. In addition Jake stated: *"I got caught drunk a lot of times or also caught us smoking weed"* (Session 1: 111)²⁵. Closely aligned, Dakota reported that she abused alcohol and drugs

¹⁸ "Daar was kinders, wat dink, kinderhuis beteken jy het n "disease" wat aansteekbaar is".

¹⁹ "Daar kom kleintjies in soos hierdie wat onskuldig is, wat nie aan seksuele goed blootgestel is nie, nou word hulle deur groter kinders misbruik".

²⁰ "Nou word hulle blootgestel aan seksuele aktiwiteite, bullies. Kinders wat groter en ouer is".

²¹ "Die grotes verkrag die kleintjies".

²² "Dagga gehad. Ek het dwelms gehad. Ek het drank gehad".

²³ "Wat die groot kinders gedoen het, is die klein kinders gekies om onder hulle vlerke te vat en dit. Dan word hulle opgesteek om ander kinders te slaan of te baklei. Dan as jy hulle nie slaan nie word jy geslaan. Ons was baie violent, baie baklei en ons het ook kleintjies geboelie".

²⁴ "Seuns sort mekaar so bietjie uit. Hulle fight, hulle bully".

²⁵ "My ook al so baie gevang waar ek papdronk by die huis aankom of jy weet sy't ons al gevang weed rook".

during placement in care: *"They found out I raved and used drugs"* (Session 3:413)²⁶. As such, according to the results of this study drug use, alcohol abuse and physical abuse seems to be prevalent in places of care.

4.3.1.3 Category c: Need for therapeutic support

According to the results of the study, young adult care leavers experienced numerous instances of abuse, neglect, rejection and abandonment prior to and during placement in care. As such, the primary participants emphasised a need for therapeutic intervention during placement in care. In this regard Harmony stated: *"They feel used and abused, like a chappie chewed and spat out aside, shoved, and it's not like its one child amongst many normal children. We're all not okay. They all need help, you know. One child has Tourette's syndrome, another kleptomaniac, multiple personalities"* (Session 2: 291)²⁷. Similar reports were made by a housemother: *"Ninety percent has been raped, abused or exposed to porn, but hundred percent of them suffer from rejection. The biggest emotional problem in children's home children is rejection, they all suffer from rejection. There's autism, ADHD, disabilities and down-syndrome"* (Dyad interview: 52)²⁸.

In many cases primary participants supposedly developed psychological, behavioural and learning difficulties prior to and during placement in care, yet all primary participants, but one did reportedly not receive therapeutic interventions for these. This was confirmed by a housemother: *"Not everyone gets exposed to therapy, because there are no funds. A small boy who got molested recently and he sits with all those emotions and urges and anger inside him, he gets no therapy"* (Dyad interview: 53)²⁹; *"They have to receive intense therapy but there's no money"* (Dyad interview: 54)³⁰. As such, according to the results of the study care residents often experience a lack of therapy during placement in care, possibly due to financial constraints at children's homes.

Another possible reason for the lack of therapeutic intervention can be found in statements made by the primary participants, mentioning that only care residents who displayed overt problems, such as inappropriate behaviour and academic challenges received therapy. This was clearly indicated in a report by Dakota: *"Never had behaviour problems or anything. Yes, they found out I raved and used drugs. Other than that they thought I was fine, because she performed well academically. So there was*

²⁶ "Hulle het uitgevind ek het bietjie gaan rave en dwelmpies gebruik".

²⁷ "Hulle voel used, abused, soos 'n chappie gekou en uit gespoeg eenkant toe geshove en dit is nie asof dit een kind is, tussen 'n klomp normale kinders nie. Ons is almal nie lekker nie. Hulle het almal hulp nodig, jy weet. Nou die een ly aan tourette sindroom, en die ander een is 'n kleptomaniac, multiple persoonlikhede".

²⁸ "Negentig persent is verkrag, mishandel of aan porno blootgestel, maar honderd persent van hulle ly aan verwerping. Die grootste emosionele probleem in kinderhuis kinders is verwerping, al daai kinders ly aan verwerping. Daar is outisme, ADHD, gestremdhede en down-sindroom".

²⁹ "Nie almal word blootgestel aan terapie nie, want daar is nie fondse nie. 'n Klein seuntjie wat nou gemolesteer is en hy sit met al daai emosies en drange en woede in hom, hy kry geen mate van terapie nie".

³⁰ "Hulle moet intense terapie kry maar daar is nie geld nie".

never a worry about me. I didn't really receive therapy" (Session 3:416)³¹. Similarly, Troy reported that only care residents who displayed learning difficulties at his children's village received counselling. He said: *"I think they focused with that on the special kids at SOS and only the special kids that do that, that goes to those social workers"* (Session 1: 234).

Contrary to these reports, Jake however reported on receiving therapy. He explained that his weekend father arranged and paid for counselling sessions for him. Receiving therapeutic intervention apparently supported him mainly on an emotional and academic level. As such, the results of this study indicated that although young adult care leavers experienced negative emotions during placement in care, they did not receive therapeutic intervention for these at the places of care they were placed.

In an attempt to heal emotionally Harmony and Dakota participated in self-reflective activities. In this regard Harmony stated: *"That's how I released it, unpacked"* (Session 5:334)³². Both participants wrote poems, drew and kept journals during placement in care, in an attempt to gain a better self-knowledge and to restore emotional health. Despite such efforts, the negative emotions that the primary participants experienced prior to and during placement in care, seemingly continued to influence their lives negatively whilst they were making the transition to independent living. In this regard, young adult care leavers presented with a multitude of psychological difficulties, such as bipolar depression, insomnia, suicidal attempts, promiscuous sexual behaviour and anxiety, which may have had a harmful influence on their transition to independence.

4.3.1.4 Category d: Need for education

According to the results of the study the primary participants often received encouragement and interest from staff members at residential homes regarding educational attainment. These positive experiences seemingly encouraged participants to reach educational success during their placement in care. However, this was apparently not the case for residents who attended schools for learners with special needs. In this regard both Skylar and Jake noted that housemothers had low educational expectations for them due to their placement in schools for learners with special needs. Jake stated: *"Few people had confidence in me that time, especially since I was in the special needs school"* (Session 3:183)³³. Similar reports were made by Skylar: *"They did not care about the children who were*

³¹ "Nooit gedragsprobleme of iets gehad nie. Ja, hulle het uitgevind ek het bietjie gaan rave en dwelmpies gebruik. Anders as dit het hulle gedink eks fine, want sy presteer so goed. So daar was nooit 'n worry oor my nie. Ek het nie regtig terapie gekry nie".

³² "Dis hoe ek my uitlating, soos uitgepak het".

³³ "Baie min mense het vertroue in my gehad daai tyd, veral omdat ek nou in die spesiale skool was".

in Magalies. If you were in FH you received many opportunities and responsibilities” (Session 2: 29)³⁴. Moreover, participants did not report that places of care celebrated their educational achievements.

During data collection, spontaneous comments were made regarding educators’ and weekend carers’ involvement in education. Skylar reported that her educator supported her to select a vocational course and that her college lecturer encouraged her to attain employment following completion of short-term vocational courses. She explained: *“At school the teacher gave me a page for personal assistant, secretarial courses” (Session 2: 12)³⁵. As such, the results of the study indicate that educators seemingly have an important role in the educational success of young adult care leavers. Related to this, Jake and Dakota reported that their weekend parents encouraged them to achieve academically and provided an environment in which educational participation and success was valued. Jake reported: “When I went there weekends, they actually made an effort and checked my schoolwork and helped me where they could. He also paid himself for extra classes for me and those types of things. He also took me for maths classes after school” (Session 1: 102)³⁶. As such, Jake’s weekend carers seemingly made practical, remedial and financial resources available to encourage him to reach academic success.*

Jake furthermore reported that he was supported throughout his final stages of schooling by weekend carers. With their encouragement he was placed back in a mainstream school following his attendance at a school for learners with special needs. Pertaining to this Jake said: *“Then I was transferred from a normal school to a special school, there I carried on until these people took me, my weekend parents. They helped me and fought that I get taken out of there. The children’s home throw you in there and forget about you. Then they helped me get my academics on track and I was on pills” (Session 1: 100)³⁷. As such, there is evidence in the results, that a positive relationship with a significant role model can encourage care residents to attend school on a more regular basis and to complete schooling in a mainstream school. This in turn may have a helpful effect on young adult care leavers’ career options and their transition to independent living.*

4.3.1.5 Category e: Central role of housemother

According to the results of this study, stable trusting and nurturing relationships with housemothers were very important, as this supported them to develop a sense of attachment and identity, which in

³⁴ “Die kinders wat in Magalies was het hulle nie geworry oor nie. Jy wat in FH was kry baie oppurtunities en baie verantwoordelikheid”.

³⁵ “By die skool toe het daai juffrou vir my sulke bladsy gegee van hierdie PA, sekretaresse kursusse”.

³⁶ “As ek naweke gegaan het, het hulle actually moeite gedoen en gekyk na my skool werk en gehelp waar hulle kan. Hy’t ook self betaal vir ekstra klasse en al daai goeters. Hy’t my ook gevat na jy weet wiskunde klasse toe naskool”.

³⁷ “Toe is ek uit ‘n normale skool in ‘n spesiale skool gesit en daar het ek aangegaan tot ek hierdie mense my gevat het, my vakansie mense. Hulle het my gehelp en baklei daarvoor dat ek daar uit gevat word. Die kinderhuis gooi mens daar en hulle los jou. Toe het hulle my gehelp om my akademie reg te kry en ek was op pille”.

turn assisted them during the transition to independent living. All primary participants, with the exception of Troy, reported that they experienced stable and supportive relationships with their housemothers during placement in care. Pertaining to this, Dakota stated that her housemother encouraged her to focus on academic work and she described her as a mother figure. Similarly, Skylar reported that she had received love and warmth from her housemother. She mentioned that her housemother provided her with opportunities to participate in activities, such as motion picture evenings that made her feel like a “regular” child. In this regard Skylar said: *“She made us feel normal”* (Session 3:41)³⁸.

These reports were confirmed by Jake who mentioned that his housemother attempted to create a family setting for care residents, ensuring that they participated in recreational activities, religious gatherings and meal times together. He reported as follows: *“Since auntie Magda arrived at the children’s home it changed a lot. She really, she made an effort with us kids. She brought God into the home, there was a few single tables in the house, she threw them all out, made one long table so that everyone can sit together as a family”* (Session 1: 109)³⁹. Jake later commented on the positive influence of religion and a homely environment. Related to this other, primary participants also mentioned that they were grateful towards children’s homes for providing them with religious activities as this supported them to overcome adverse experiences whilst they were making the transition to independent living.

Despite opportunities to form significant, stable and supportive relationships with housemothers, participants’ relationships with their housemothers (with the exception of Skylar) seemingly did not have a warm and loving nature. Jake, Troy and Dakota mentioned a lack of sufficient warmth and love during placement in care. Jake said: *“Why doesn’t anyone love me, why doesn’t anyone want to hold me, why don’t they tell me they love me”* (Session 2: 148)⁴⁰, while Dakota reported: *“In the children’s home you get told to go study, you have to go do it, there wasn’t even a little bit of love”* (Session 2: 392). In further support of this a housemother stated: *“They don’t want you to love and care for them. You just have to be there for, there are five things they told me to do. Give food, look that he’s taken care of, check that he has clothes, check that he goes to school and to church, that’s it. I’m not there to love him, because I’m not his mother and the principal told me so himself”* (Dyad interview: 62)⁴¹. These reports were confirmed by another housemother who said: *“Children like rules and regulations, even if it*

³⁸ “Sy het baie ons normaal laat voel”.

³⁹ “Vandat tannie Magda in die kindershuis in gekom het, het dit baie verander. Sy het regtig, sy het soveel moeite met ons gedoen met die kinders. Sy het die Here in die huis ingebring, daar was sulke paar aparte tafels in die huis, sy het hulle almal uitgegooi, een lang tafel gemaak laat almal bymekaar as ‘n familie saam sit”.

⁴⁰ “Hoekom het niemand my lief nie, hoekom wil niemand my vashou nie, hoekom sê niemand hulle is lief vir my nie”.

⁴¹ “Hulle wil nie hê jy moet vir hulle omgee en lief wees nie. Jy moet net daar wees vir, daar is vyf dinge wat hulle vir my gesê het ek moet doen. Kos gee, kyk dat hy versorg is, kyk dat hy klere het, kyk dat hy skool toe gaan en kerk toe gaan, dis al. Ek is nie daar om vir hom lief te wees nie, want ek is nie sy ma nie en die hoof het dit vir myself gesê”.

is a pain for them. They don't like hugs" (Dyad interview: 11)⁴². Another housemother expressed her concerns regarding the lack of relational well-being at children's homes: *"There's no individual attention or love"* (Dyad interview: 52)⁴³. It follows that the results of the study indicate a lack of sufficient emotional nurturing at children's homes and children's villages, as perceived by residents. This may in turn hamper young adult care leavers' formation of relationships following their departure from care.

Primary participants however experienced a need for love, nurturing and care from a mother figure during their placement in care. Continuity of employment for housemothers seemed important to care residents in order to develop warm, trusting and loving relationships with housemothers. In the case of Troy, the continuity of employment for housemothers at his children's village was lacking as housemothers seemingly often resigned from positions and were then replaced with new personnel. A possible explanation for such lack of continuity of housemothers at children's villages can be found in a statement by a social worker who said that children's homes often employ under qualified staff as they do not have sufficient financial resources to employ qualified personnel. She explained: *"Unfortunately, the state and private sector don't support you. You really have to try and do a lot with little money. So if our organisation had more money we could appoint better quality people"* (Dyad interview: 35)⁴⁴. This was confirmed by a housemother: *"Their salaries are also very low"* (Dyad interview: 57)⁴⁵.

As such, according to the results of the study, a lack of adequate salary compensation may explain the high incidences of resignation of housemothers at children's homes. In addition, frequent changes of housemothers at children's homes may in turn explain why young adult care leavers experience difficulties to maintain stable and warm relationships with housemothers, which are in many cases the only significant parental figures in their lives. This may furthermore have a harmful effect on young adult care leavers whilst making the transition to independent living, as they may experience difficulties to initiate and maintain new relationships, due to a lack of attachment experienced as young care residents, not only with their families of origin, but also their housemothers.

According to the results, housemothers are seldom sufficiently trained in terms of the emotional development of vulnerable children, such as the children typically placed in their care. Harmony reported that care residents who resided at her children's home experienced a multitude of psychological difficulties and that according to her experiences the housemothers were not adequately trained to support them. In this regard Harmony suggested that housemothers be trained in counselling skills in order to be able to support care residents in terms of healthy emotional functioning. She also emphasised the value of social interaction with housemothers and recommended that housemothers

⁴² "Kinders hou van reëls en regulasies, al is dit vir hulle 'n pyn. Hulle hou nie van drukkies nie".

⁴³ "Daar is nie individuele aandag en liefde nie".

⁴⁴ "Ongelukkig die staat en privaatsektor, ondersteun jou nie. So jy moet rerig met min geld baie probeer doen. So as ons as organisasie meer geld gehad het kon ons beter kwaliteit mense aanstel".

⁴⁵ "Hulle salarisse is ook baie swak".

participate in mother-daughter type activities with care residents. Harmony deemed this as important as she seemingly regarded her housemother as a role model for parenting tasks whilst she was raising her own children. In this regard Harmony stated: *"Now I'm going to raise these children this way and that's how I still raise my children today"* (Session 2: 293)⁴⁶. As such, young adult care leavers seemingly simulate housemothers' parental skills, when they have children of their own.

4.3.2 SUB-THEME 1.2: PREPARATION FOR TRANSITION

In this section the researcher discusses the categories that emerged related to young adult care leavers' experiences during placement in care which seemingly had a significant influence on their transition to independent living. These sub-themes include the acquisition of life skills and the need for a sense of autonomy.

4.3.2.1 Category a: Acquisition of life skills

The results of the study indicated that the participants' opportunities to develop life skills were seriously limited. According to the primary and secondary participants, staff at children's homes took care of the daily needs, decisions and routines of care residents. This included the buying of food, toiletries and household goods as well as cooking meals and doing laundry. The adverse effect of this was clearly raised by Skylar: *"They shouldn't do everything for you because today, I couldn't really cook. David taught me to cook and for a coloured girl to not cook and clean and stuff like that. I can't even clean properly and I didn't even know how to use a washing machine. I can't iron. I couldn't cook. I can't do anything for myself then they put you in a strange world and you have to start learning at that age. Then you have to learn how to do washing, iron and you don't even know how to. You have to learn to cook, something you've never done before"* (Session 2: 29)⁴⁷. Skylar's reports were confirmed by Troy: *"The housemother did everything for me and that waking up in the mornings, she would wake us up and now you have to wake up on your own. And the food, you have to go shopping for your own, coz the housemother shops for food and sometimes she cooks also for you"* (Session 1: 242).

Apart from not acquiring fundamental skills during placement in care primary participants also reported a lack of opportunities to develop independent life skills, such as setting up a budget, choosing a career, opening a bank account, applying for identity documents, compiling a curriculum vitae and renting accommodation. In this regard Troy explained that he experienced a need for exposure to

⁴⁶ "Ek gaan nou hierdie kinders so grootmaak en dis hoe ek vandag nog my kinders grootmaak".

⁴⁷ "Hulle moenie so baie vir jou alles doen nie. Want soos vandag, ek kon nie rerig eers gekook het nie. David het my geleer kook. En vir 'n kleurling meisie om nie te kook en skoon maak en sulke goete nie. Ek kan nie eers reg skoonmaak nie, ek het nie eers geweet hoe om die wasmasjien te gebruik nie. Ek kan nie stryk nie. Ek kon nie kook nie. Ek kan niks vir myself doen nie dan sit hulle jou so in so vreemde wêreld nou moet jy begin leer op daai ouderdom. Dan moet jy begin leer wasgoed was, stryk en jy weet nie eers hoe nie. Jy moet leer kook, wat jy nog nooit gedoen het nie".

independent living skills during his placement in care: *“How to budget, how to spend money, how to, like when you’re on your own, just like basic stuff, I haven’t experienced that”* (Session 1: 241).

Another area of concern related to life skills acquisition is based on the primary participants’ early parenting experiences. Participants for example did not report on receiving sex education during placement at children’s homes. In this regard Skylar mentioned: *“They don’t teach you about being in a relationship with a man and prevention”* (Session 2: 15)⁴⁸. As such, there seems to be a need not only for independent living skills but for sex education as well, to be provided to children in residential care, in preparation for when they leave care.

4.3.2.2 Sub-theme b: Need for a sense of autonomy

According to the results of the study, participants found it difficult to develop a sense of autonomy and self-reliance following their departure from care. However, a lack of self-reliance was apparently linked to participants’ childhood experiences at parental homes, during which participants apparently experienced that they did not have a sense of control over their lives. Participants were then placed in children’s homes by social workers who typically did not discuss the placement with them apparently due to their developmental level at the time of care placement. During their time in care they were reportedly also not provided with opportunities to take initiative or to make independent choices. As such, a multitude of pre-transition experiences had an unhelpful effect on young adult care leavers’ development of self-reliance and autonomy during their transition to independent living.

Pertaining to this, the discipline structure in children’s homes supposedly also made it difficult for care residents to develop a sense of self-reliance and autonomy following their departure from care. In this regard primary participants reported that they were often denied opportunities to make decisions and to plan day-to-day activities during placement in care. In addition, participants reported on being told which schools and social gatherings to attend, and they were not provided with decision making opportunities regarding study choices and/or after-care accommodation. Similar reports were made by a housemother: *“We make all his decisions for him. When he eats, when he sleeps, when he gets up, when he goes to school, when he studies, when he drinks coffee, when he does anything, we make the decisions”* (Dyad interview: 57)⁴⁹; *“Your teenagers can’t develop independently by going to town on their own or to shops or to buy clothes for themselves. After school they have to be in at the gates by a certain time and then the gates are closed, and they can’t leave again. The child has to learn how to make his own decisions; we make all their decisions for them. With the matrices, I mean, we are there every morning. You wake them up, pack away your things, get your room tidy, come and eat quickly,*

⁴⁸ “Hulle leer jou nie van as jy ‘n verhouding het met ‘n man van prevention nie”.

⁴⁹ “Ons neem al sy besluite vir hom. Wanneer hy eet, wanneer hy slaap, wanneer hy opstaan, wanneer hy skool toe gaan, wanneer hy studeer, wanneer hy koffie drink, wanneer hy enige iets doen, ons neem die besluite”.

go brush your teeth, wash your face, get ready we are going to leave now, and the moment you're not there anymore they fall because there is no one telling them do this now and by two o'clock we eat, and at three o'clock it's homework. Then there are children that were there from age three to eighteen and when they leave they fall immediately" (Dyad interview: 51)⁵⁰. Similar ideas were raised by another housemother: *"Strict routine, you don't bath before six o'clock. Time for lunch and then it is studies and then play time. I have a timetable for the children when what should happen and at what time"* (Dyad interview: 11)⁵¹.

According to the results of the study rules and routines at children's homes often deprive care residents of opportunities to make independent decisions. As a result young adult care leavers were reportedly dependent from a young age on personnel at children's homes to guide and to make decisions for them. This in turn may have resulted in indecisiveness, helplessness and uncertainty when they were expected as young adults to make decisions independently. As such, the need seems evident for children in residential care to be involved in decision making processes, in preparation for when they leave care.

4.4 FINDINGS ON PRE-TRANSITION EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG ADULT CARE LEAVERS

In the next section the researcher presents the findings of the study relating to the pre-transition experiences of young adult care leavers prior to and during their placement in care, by situating the results against existing literature. She highlights congruent findings, contradictions and new insight gained from the results of the study.

4.4.1 REASONS FOR CHILDREN BEING PLACED IN CARE

In South Africa the foremost reasons for placing youth in care include termination of parental rights due to neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse, poverty, family violence, parental substance abuse, disability and widespread unemployment (South African Child Welfare, 2005). A study by Stein (2005) similarly indicates that youth will be looked after by local authorities when their parents experience material and emotional problems which render them unable to cope with parental responsibilities. Adding to this, Stein (2005) found that although the majority of care residents are placed in children's homes following experiences, such as sexual abuse, poverty and neglect, that youth can also be placed in care as a

⁵⁰ "Jou tiener kinders kan nie onafhanklik ontwikkel deur self dorp toe te gaan of self winkels toe te gaan of self vir hulle klere te koop nie. Hulle moet op 'n sekere tyd naskool by die hekke in wees en dan word die hekke toe gemaak en dan kan hulle nie weer uitgaan nie. Die kind moet leer om sy eie besluite te neem, ons neem al sy besluite vir hom. Met die matrieks, ek meen jy is elke oggend daar. Jy maak hulle wakker, pak jou goed weg, kry jou kamer netjies, kom eet gou-gou, gaan borsel gou tande, was jou gesig, kry klaar ons gaan nou stap en die oomblik wat jy nie daar is nie dan verval hierdie kinders want daar is niemand wat vir hulle sê doen nou dit en twee-uur eet ons, en drie-uur is dit huiswerk. Dan is daar kinders wat van die ouderdom van drie jaar to agtien daar was en as hulle uitgaan dan val hulle onmiddelik".

⁵¹ Streng roetine. Jy bad nie voor ses uur nie. So laat is dit middagete en dan is dit studies en dan is dit speelyd. Ek het tot 'n rooster vir die kinders wanneer is wat en hoe laat".

result of difficulties that they experience with adapting into family homes, school settings, neighbourhoods and communities.

In support of existing literature the main reasons for participants' placement in care in this study were found to be neglect (due to parents' inability to cope) as a result of various combinations of poverty, parental mental illness, illiteracy as well as parental drug and alcohol dependency. Two participants were placed in care due to instances of sexual, emotional and physical abuse. In support of this finding, existing studies (Gibbs *et al.*, 2005; Kidane, 2002) indicate familial abuse, rejection, loss and disruption as reasons for placing children in care. Although the participants in this study were not placed in care due to difficulties they experienced in communities or school settings, such as those reported in a study by Stein (2005), one participant mentioned that he was placed in care following three failed placements in foster care. As such, the possibility exists that he might have been placed in care as he experienced difficulties adapting into three family homes.

Although the researcher found a multitude of studies describing the reasons for placing children in care, there seemed to be limited evidence on how local authorities become aware of youth who are in need of protection and care. In this regard, the results of this study indicate that two participants were placed in care following intervention by family members. Family members reportedly contacted the Department of Social Development as they were concerned about the development of the young adult care leaver during their childhood years due to their experiences based on adverse family circumstances. Following multiple instances of physical, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect, poverty, deprivation, parental alcohol abuse and parental mental health problems, two participants' contacted local authorities during their primary school years as they hoped that placement in care could provide them with an opportunity to escape adverse family circumstances. Similarly, a sibling of another participant contacted a social worker due to poverty and neglect. As such, new insight from this study relates to young adult care leavers often being placed in care due to the intention of care residents themselves, who contact people or organisations, in an attempt to obtain help and to break away from adverse childhood circumstances.

4.4.2 CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES WHILE PLACED IN RESIDENTIAL CARE

According to the results of the study, participants displayed ambivalent emotions regarding their placement in care. Participants' reports ranged from positive experiences, such as experiencing encouragement and stability, to a shortage of emotional care, depersonalisation, a lack of personal freedom and instances of abuse. As background, the researcher found a multitude of studies describing the quality of care at children's homes and the subsequent influence of care environments on young care leavers' psychosocial adaptation as adults (Wolff & Fesseha, 2005; Parker, Barrett & Hickie, 1992; Rutter, Quinton & Hill, 1990; Hodges & Tizard, 1989).

A study by Wolff and Feeseha (1999) indicates that an authoritarian structure at children's homes can result in poor psychological functioning for young adult care leavers, whereas administration that includes participation of care leavers in decision making processes and interactions within the community in which they live, may enhance their functioning. The results of this study indicate that young adult care leavers received limited opportunities to make decisions and to meet peers, and community members outside of children's homes as most of their leisure activities involved socialising with care residents. According to a study by Wolff and Feeseha (1999) this may have a negative influence on young people's psychosocial adaptation as adults.

A study by Perry (2001) similarly found that care residents often experience instances of abuse and emotional neglect during placement in care. In support, a study by Skeels (1966) indicate that youth who are placed in underfunded, overcrowded and affectively deprived places of care at birth or shortly thereafter, often experience harsh disciplinary measures and neglect. In further support, research studies conducted over the past 40 years report on instances of abuse, neglect and deprivation that child care residents may experience during placement in care (Cermak, Coster & Miller, 2005; Geoghagen, Pierre, Evans-Gilbert, Rodriguez & Christie, 2004; Johnson, 2000; Johnson & Dole, 1999; Moran, Bifulco, Ball, Jacobs & Benaim, 2002; Skeels, 1966).

Although the present study indicate some evidence of physical abuse amongst care residents, a lack of celebrations during special occasions as well as alcohol abuse and drug use at children's homes, these reports were limited. Instead, participants rather displayed gratitude towards children's homes and mentioned high quality care, food, accommodation, encouragement and educational opportunities which were highly significant for the participants as this was often the means through which they felt cared for. As such, the results of this study differ in a number of ways from preceding studies. Possible reasons for contradictory evidence might be found in the differences between participants who took part in this study and participants of earlier studies. Former studies were often conducted several years prior to the care experiences of the participants of this study. Conditions at children's homes might have changed during the last decade. Improvements at children's homes have for example been made especially following the interest of child welfare practitioners and policy makers regarding the protection of vulnerable youth in care over recent years. The present study also reports on young adult care leavers who were raised in children's homes in a South African context, and experienced meaningful interactions with their caregivers, which was often not the case in former studies.

Participants of this study reported positive child care experiences which included the participation in a range of activities offered by housemothers, for instance, camping- and day trips, sport performances and after-school activities. In this regard it was found that housemothers had to initiate and organise extramural activities, as places of care often had restrictions in terms of routine, resources and

discipline, making it difficult for care residents to participate in activities that were not presented at children's homes. The participants furthermore reported on positive relationships with housemothers who seemingly displayed an interest in their development and encouraged them to achieve academically. In this regard a study conducted by Rutter and Quinton (1984) found that care residents who are encouraged to participate on an academic and sport level, and experience the presence of an interested caring adult during adolescence, will probably experience positive adaptation during transition to adulthood, when compared to peers who did not receive these areas of support.

Although participants experienced close relationships with housemothers they also reported limited emotional nurturing and affection during placement in care. Similar findings are reported in a study by Stein, Allen, Allen, Koontz and Wisman (2000) who found that care residents are often deprived of relational well-being in the form of nurturing, affection and warmth at children's homes. According to attachment theory, a loving and nurturing relationship with at least one parent promote the development of a sense of worthiness and self-esteem, as well as appropriate long-term social-emotional development, and mental health. As such, according to Fonagy (2001), care leavers might find it difficult to maintain relationships during the transition to independent living, as lack of stable relationships during childhood could have an influence on their social-emotional development and mental health.

Although the participants of this study indicated limited emotional affection from housemothers, the relationships that they had with housemothers during placement in care were seemingly significant and positive to them. In this regard participants expressed a sense of gratitude towards housemothers for providing them with a home that reflected traditional family rituals. In addition, the leadership roles that housemothers assigned to young adult care leavers, during placement in care, seemingly provided them with a sense of meaning and purpose. However, the results of this study also found that children's homes often employ untrained caregivers due to a lack of funds. In addition, there was evidence of low caregiver children ratios which often left housemothers feeling overwhelmed and unable to provide sufficient support to care residents. In support of this finding, previous studies (Lin, Cermak, Coster & Miller, 2005; Johnson & Dole, 1999) report that children's homes often employ untrained caregivers and have low caregiver children ratios due to a lack of funds.

4.4.3 TRENDS IN EXPERIENCES OF YOUTH IN CARE

In the next section the researcher provides an overview of a few trends that youth generally experience during placement in care including insufficient therapeutic support, inadequate performance at school and a lack of preparation for the end of care process. She also discusses how these experiences may influence young adult care leavers during their transition to independent living.

4.4.3.1 Insufficient therapeutic support while in residential care

Young adults who are raised in care are prone to develop psychological difficulties due to various traumatic experiences, such as abuse, neglect, rejection, family dysfunction and abandonment, which they typically experience prior to care placement. According to the results of this study the primary participants presented with psychological, behavioural and learning difficulties during their transition to adulthood. These difficulties included depression, insomnia, suicidal thoughts, promiscuous sexual behaviour and anxiety, which in many cases developed prior to and during placement in care. Yet, participants reported that they did not receive therapeutic interventions for these difficulties.

In this regard, Coleman and Hendry (1999) similarly found that young adult care leavers who do not receive therapeutic intervention during placement in care, often experience psychological challenges whilst they are making the transition to independent living, as this period might induce memories of previous trauma and separations. In further support, Maposa (2010) as well as Lenz-Rashid (2006) found that, coupled with the negative impact of long-term care, low levels of education, unemployment, economic insecurity, lack of social support and unstable accommodation, might cause ongoing adult mental health difficulties, such as depression, substance abuse, conduct disorders, insomnia and anxiety for young adult care leavers. Providing mental health services to young adult care leavers during and following placement in care is therefore imperative, and cogent for several reasons. However, similarly to the findings of this study, Atkinson (2008) reports that children's home residents often do not receive therapeutic intervention and that young adult care leavers cannot typically afford intervention fees and associated costs to seek help for mental health problems themselves.

The Children's Act of South Africa (1983) recommends that residents who are placed in care receive therapeutic and psychosocial intervention to support them in overcoming negative emotions. However, care residents often do not receive therapy due to high number case loads and time constraints typically prevalent at children's homes. Moreover, coupled with the complexity of negative emotions usually experienced by care residents and the lack of human and financial resources at children's homes, care residents often do not receive psychological intervention (Mamelani, 2009). Furthermore, a variety of therapeutic interventions are needed for youth at different stages of development, which is often challenging to manage in care settings, especially if it is under-resourced. In light of this, places of care therefore typically struggle to provide adequate psychological support to care residents. As a result many of the psychological, learning and behavioural challenges that care resident's experience persist to adulthood (Mamelani, 2009). It follows that young adult care leavers generally face immense emotional challenges and risks during their transition to adulthood.

The findings of this study indicate that participating young adult care leavers experienced a lack of therapeutic intervention during placement in care. Similar to the findings reported by Mamelani (2009),

the findings the researcher obtained suggest that a lack of therapeutic support at places of care may often be attributed to a lack of funds. However, adding to this, insight from this study relates to children's homes sometimes having the idea young adult care leavers do not need therapeutic intervention if they do not display overt problems, such as inappropriate behaviour and poor academic performance. As such, the young adult care leavers who did not display negative emotions outwardly, perhaps due to them internalising emotions, reportedly did not receive therapy. In an attempt to heal emotionally, young adult care leavers subsequently participated in self reflective activities during placement in care. In this regard participants wrote poems, drew and kept journals, in order to broaden their self-knowledge and to restore emotional health. Therefore, despite the perceptions of the personnel at children's homes, the participants emphasised a need for therapeutic intervention during placement in care as this could potentially support them to experience fewer psychological challenges during their transition to independent living (Coleman & Hendry, 1999).

4.4.3.2 Performance at school

Research completed over the past decade highlight high rates of school exclusion and non-attendance among care residents (Dixon & Stein, 2005; Gibbs *et al.*, 2005; Jackson *et al.*, 2003; Social Exclusion Unit, 2003; Biehal *et al.*, 1995; Cheung & Heath, 1994). In this regard, the Social Exclusion Unit (2003) found that care residents are ten times more likely than peers who are raised in family settings, to be suspended. In support of this, Courtney, Terao and Bost (2004) found that adolescents in care were more than twice as likely to be suspended and nearly four times more likely to be expelled from school as their peers who are raised in family homes. Relating to this other studies indicate that children and young people in care generally perform poorer at school, are more likely to be excluded from school and will leave school early without appropriate qualifications (Biehal *et al.*, 1995; Heath, Colton & Aldgate, 1994; Jackson, 1994).

In terms of contradictions between the findings of this study and those of existing research merely one of the five primary participants reported on instances of truancy and expulsion from school. However, with the support of a weekend carer this participant also completed his secondary schooling successfully. As such, the findings of this study indicate that young adult care leavers succeeded educationally during their school years, displayed leadership skills and performed well academically. A possible explanation for variations in findings may be found in the care experiences of participants who took part in this study. Participants reported on their experiences of placement stability and forming stable relationships with committed housemothers, and in some cases weekend parents and educators, who encouraged them to perform academically. In this regard Stein (2005) identifies placement stability and encouragement from significant others as key contributory influences in successful education outcomes for care residents. Pertaining to this Jackson and Thomas (2001) also

found that young adult care leavers can achieve educational success if they remain in the same children's home and school, as this implies the maintenance of friendships and relationships with helpful educators. This was also true for the participants of this study and may further explain why they succeeded educationally during school years.

In support of this finding a number of factors related to care residents' experiences in care and in school have been proposed to explain the differential. These factors include children's early learning and educational difficulties, low expectations by carers and teachers, a lack of support, and multiple changes of placement and school (Berridge, 2007; Harker *et al.*, 2003; Jackson, 2001; Fanshel, Finch & Grundy, 1990). As such, according to the findings of this study, a 'culture of achievement' (Blyth, 2001:215) for children in care depends on many factors. At one level, factors that can support the educational progress of young people in care relate to those that support the educational progress of all children, primarily the interest and encouragement by adults important to the young person. Perhaps the most fundamental form of support for care resident's educational performance is ensuring placement stability which, according to the findings of this study, enabled participants to maintain stable relationships with committed housemothers, and in some cases weekend parents and educators, who encouraged them to perform academically.

Another new insight stemming from this study indicate that positive relationships with carers can support care residents who are truant and excluded from school in returning to education. In this regard it was found that participants achieved academic success following the support of weekend parents who encouraged participants' educational achievement and provided an environment in which educational participation was valued. Moreover, with the encouragement of a weekend carer one participant was taken from a school for learners with special needs and placed in a mainstream school, where he successfully completed secondary schooling. As such, there is evidence in the findings of this study that a positive relationship with a significant role model can encourage young adult care leavers to attend school on a more regular basis and to complete secondary schooling successfully. In further support of this finding various research studies indicate that parental interest and belief in the value of education is of great importance for successful educational outcomes of children (Lucey & Walkerdine, 2000; Baldwin, 1998; Taylor, 1991; Osborn 1990). However, a significant finding from this study is that interest remains powerful even if it is suggested by a weekend carer and not a parent or primary caregiver. As such, social workers and houseparent's can use weekend carers as potential allies if they hope to encourage care residents to perform academically.

4.4.4 FORCED REQUIREMENTS IMPLIED BY SUDDEN TRANSITION

In the next section the researcher provides an overview of the changes and requirements implied by sudden transition that youth generally experience when leaving placement in care. This includes self-

determination as prerequisite requirements, forming an identity, acquiring independent living skills and the need for stability and continuity in care.

4.4.4.1 Self-determination as prerequisite requirement

By the age of 16 years, adolescents typically experience a strong urge to break free from family and community members in an attempt to gain a sense of autonomy (Fischer *et al.*, 1996). As such, by the time the average adolescent reaches adulthood, he would have acquired a host of decision-making skills which can support him to develop self-determination and autonomy. However, the discipline structure in most children's homes in South Africa (Epprecht *et al.*, 2001), makes this developmental task for the late adolescent almost impossible. The findings of this study confirms existing research as primary participants seemingly had to adhere to rules and routines at children's homes concerning which school to attend, when to eat, when to bath, as well as which social gatherings and schools they were to attend. As a result, they were overly dependent on others to make decisions for them and to take care of their daily needs. Various research studies similarly report that a lack of opportunities for care residents to make decisions during placement in children's homes can negatively influence young adult care leavers' development of a sense of self-determination and autonomy (Epprecht, *et al.*, 2001; Fischer, *et al.*, 1996).

According to the findings of this study the young adult care leavers received little or no opportunities to practice skills of self-determination during their placement in care, but were suddenly expected to be in control, and to make independent decisions following their departure from care. As such, this study emphasises the trend of care residents not having a practice field for decision making and the development of decision making skills during placement in care. This typically prevents care leavers from experiencing a sense of self-determination following their departure from care. Pertaining to this, the researcher found that caregivers, such as housemothers seemed concerned about children's homes, which emphasize the safety and protection of children, not addressing the needs of young adult care leavers. As such, according to the findings of this study, primary and secondary participants emphasized the importance of care residents having opportunities to take responsibility and ownership of their lives while in care as this can support any person during a process of transition to independent living. In support of this finding, Kidane (2002) and Gibbs *et al.* (2005) state that when care residents are provided with opportunities during placement in care to make decisions and to live independently, they may be supported to develop a sense of accomplishment and self-reliance as young adults.

4.4.4.2 Forming an identity

Research across the globe indicate that the development of a sense of self is connected to the formation of various positive life skills, such as being able to plan and feel in control of one's life (Stein,

2006; Newman & Blackburn, 2002; Yates, 2001; Rutter *et al.*, 1998). Relating this to young adult care leavers, one can conclude that the development of a sense of self is an important undertaking for young people leaving care, as having a sense of self may support them during their transition to independence. However, this study found that identity formation seemed to impose an ongoing challenge for young adult care leavers during placement in care as they often experienced a lack of knowledge regarding their heritage and personal histories. In this regard, the young adult care leavers who participated in this study reported that they struggled with the formation of personal identities due to limited familial interaction with biological families during their placement in care. Participants also experienced disruption and instability prior to being placed in care, which seemingly further hampered their search for identities. In support of this finding, Triseliotis (1984) suggests that the achievement of a clear sense of self for young adult care leavers is linked to the quality of care and attachments they experience during placement in care, as well as care leavers' knowledge about their heritage, genealogy and personal history. Ward (2000) similarly emphasises that care residents may experience a complexity of identity concerns as young adults, following separation from their biological families and placement in children's homes.

In this study the researcher found that participants experienced stigma and discrimination from other learners at school due to their placement in care. Pertaining to this, Stein and Carey (1986) found that care residents' experiences of how other people perceive them and behave towards them has a significant influence on their identity formation. Relating this to the findings of this study, may explain why participating care residents often described themselves as "children's homes children" and "orphans" which seemingly formed part of their identities. Another potential explanation for the difficulties that young adult care leavers experienced with forming their identities can be found in a study by Stein (2005), indicating that care leavers are generally not provided with enough time to explore and self-reflect during placement in care. In further support, these experiences are also highlighted in a study by Yates (2001:155) who postulates that young care leavers are typically not "...awarded the time for identity search". Similarly, the findings of this study indicate that young adult care leavers were not provided with opportunities for self-discovery and expression during placement in care, which might have had a negative influence on their identity formation, in turn negatively influencing their transition to independence.

Research in the field of young people leaving care indicates that one of the main barriers to supporting this group of people achieve a secure sense of self is the failure of those entrusted with their care to help them understand why their parents had abused or neglected them or was unable to care for them (Stein, 2006; Newman & Blackburn, 2002; Yates, 2001; Rutter *et al.*, 1998). Pertaining to this, study participants did not report on any opportunities during which they could gain knowledge and understanding of their background, and personal histories. In this regard they were seemingly not

supported during their placement in care to understand how their adverse childhood experiences influenced the subsequent events in their lives. In support of this finding, Van Breda, Marx and Kader (2012) emphasise that providing young care leavers with opportunities to broaden their self-knowledge, can improve their levels of self-efficacy and support them to develop a positive sense of identity. All these areas can in turn promote young adult care leavers' levels of resilience, and support them during their transition to independent living.

4.4.4.3 Acquiring skills for independent living

Although legislation entitles care residents to adequate preparation, life skills and psychological support young adult care leavers often report that they experience a lack of exposure to independent life skills during placement in care (Stein & Wade, 2000; Stein & Carey, 1986). This study confirms this, as participants indicated that children's homes generally did not succeed in transferring life skills for independent living to them. Rather, children's home staff generally took care of care residents' daily needs and made decisions on their behalf. Therefore, according to the findings of this study, the routines followed at children's homes for buying food, toiletries and household goods, as well as the fact that staff members cooked all meals and did residents' laundry, made it difficult for young adult care residents to gain independent living skills during their placement in care.

Various existing studies indicate that care residents are typically not provided with opportunities to develop independent living skills due to strict rules, which are often put in place for the practical management of children's homes (Mamelani, 2013; Tanur 2012; Massinga & Pecora, 2004). As a result, care residents do not get sufficient opportunities to learn basic life skills, such as doing laundry, cooking or managing money during placement in care (Tanur, 2012). In addition, the young adult care leavers who participated in this study reportedly did not receive exposure to various other life skills, such as setting up a budget, choosing a career, opening a bank account, applying for identity documents, compiling a curriculum vitae or renting accommodation as most of these tasks were performed by places of care. In support of this finding, Meyer (2003) found that young adult care leavers at the age of 18 years are not likely to have adequate skills to manage finances, career responsibilities and relationships. According to the findings of this study, limited skills acquisition hindered the participants in making a successful transition to independent living. Segal *et al.* (1999) similarly report that a lack of basic independent living skills may cause care leavers to feel overwhelmed, in turn negatively affecting their psychological adaptation as young adults.

4.4.4.4 Need for stability and continuity in care

Research dating back to the 1960s, reviewed by Jackson and Thomas (1999), emphasise the importance of stability and continuity of support for individuals who reside in care. This review indicates

that success in adulthood is strongly predicted by continuity of care placement and how secure residents feel during placement in care. Pertaining to this, the study found that the continuity of care at children's villages was often disrupted due to the frequent changes of housemothers. As a result, one young adult care leaver, for example, did not experience a sense of security and continuity in care even though he was placed in one residential care facility for an extended period of time. As such, he reportedly found it difficult to develop trusting and redeeming relationships with housemothers. This in turn may have had a negative influence on his development as a young adult whilst he was making the transition to independent living. In support of this finding Jackson (2002), Dumaret and Coppel-Batsch (1998) as well as Biehal *et al.* (1995) emphasise that young adult care leavers who experience good quality care, which includes the continuity of carers, are more likely to complete educational qualifications, be employed, obtain stable accommodation, maintain a positive self-esteem and achieve satisfactory social integration in adulthood, than young adults who have experienced disruption during placement in care.

On the contrary, this study furthermore found that the majority of young adult care leavers experienced stability and continuity in care, which in turn provided them with opportunities to build stable and redeeming relationships with carers. In support of this finding, Rutter *et al.* (1998) found that continuity in relationships with housemothers generally provides young adult care leavers with opportunities to build trusting relationships with carers. In addition, this study found that stable relationships with housemothers and weekend parents during placement in care was important for young adult care leavers' academic success, and could in turn promote positive outcomes during young adult care leavers' transition to independent living. In this regard, housemothers and weekend carers provided young adult care leavers with continued and positive recreational, academic and religious activities during placement in care, which in turn may have promoted positive identity outcomes for young adult care leavers. In support of this finding, Stein (2005) found that continuity and stability in care are the "foundation stones" (Stein, 2005) for young adult care leavers as this may support them during their adaptation to adulthood. Pertaining to this, a range of studies indicate that young people who experience continuity in care are more likely to experience positive outcomes as young adults, when they are compared to same age peers who did not experience stable good quality of emotional care (Sinclair, Baker, Wilson, & Gibbs, 2005; Clayden, Stein, & Wade, 2000; Rutter *et al.*, 1998; Howe, 1995).

4.5 REVISITING THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THEME 1

In this section the researcher situates the findings on Theme 1 in terms of the theoretical perspectives that she regarded as central to the relevance and understanding of the study.

Stroebe *et al.* (2002:151) states that individuals experiencing a severe stressor (relocation) and who lacks resources (social support), “...*would be unable to cope with the demands of the new situation....*”, referring not only to work or study demands, but also to social environments. This belief is in agreement with *cognitive stress theory*. The researcher proposes that this theory could provide insight into the experiences that the participants of this study had during the pre-transition phase. According to the findings of the study, participants experienced severe stressors prior to placement in care, such as abuse, poverty and neglect. They were then removed from their families of origin and expected to adapt into an unfamiliar care environment, forming relationships with staff and other care residents. Pertaining to this the participants reported that they initially found it difficult to adapt and form relationships, as they perceived that they did not belong in places of care. However, with the social support and encouragement of staff members they adapted into their new environments, focusing on their academic and sport performances. Participants generally received the necessary resources (social support) which assisted them to overcome a stressor (relocation) and find meaning in their relationships at places of care.

Keyes (2007) *well-being theory* focuses on three dimensions relevant to the current study, namely emotional, psychological and social factors, that represent the underlying structure of mental well-being. According to well-being theory, mental health is constituted not only by the absence of psychopathology, but by a state of flourishing (Keyes, 2007). The aim of this study was not to measure the levels of participants flourishing or well-being but to explore transition experiences. Based on the findings of the study the researcher proposes that the participants experienced an array of emotional, psychological and social dimensions underlying Keyes (2007) well-being theory.

Keyes (2007) describes *Social integration* and *Social contribution* as two factors reflecting well-being on a *social* dimension. *Social integration* involves the evaluation of the quality of one's relationships and feeling part of society. The participants of this study reported that they experienced high levels of social integration during their placement in care as they were provided with opportunities to form stable and redeeming relationships with carers and other care residents. As such, participants generally experienced a sense of belonging during placement in care, based on the quality of the relationships that they had with peers and staff members.

Social contribution entails the evaluation of one's social value and it includes the belief that one is a vital community member, with something of value to give (Keyes, 2007). The participants of this study reported that their housemothers assigned leadership roles to them, which seemingly provided them with a sense of meaning and purpose. As such, participants generally experienced that they were

valued and this seemingly contributed to their subjective perception that they were vital members at their places of care.

Keyes (2007) describes *Positive affect* as one component of the *emotional* dimension of well-being. *Positive effect* is described as being regularly cheerful, being interested in life and being in good spirits. This component of well-being may also be experienced as happiness, calmness and peacefulness. The participants of this study reported that they were generally content at places of care as they experienced a sense of protection. As such, stability and continuity in care possibly contributed to the participant's experiences of *emotional* well-being which reportedly had a positive effect on their transition during their placement in care.

Keyes (2007) describes *Positive Relationships with Others* as one factor reflecting well-being on the *psychological* dimension. This factor entails warm, satisfying and trusting relationships, concern about the welfare of others, empathy, affection, intimacy, and an understanding of the reciprocal interaction of human relationships. The participants of this study reported on the positive relationships that they experienced with housemothers and weekend carers who displayed an interest in their development and encouraged them to achieve academically. These positive relationships encouraged participants to establish trusting relationships during their transition to adulthood. Pertaining to this participants displayed concern and empathy towards other individuals who were experiencing adverse circumstances.

One other *psychological* well-being component, as described by Keyes (2007), is *Autonomy* which implies self-determining and independent behavior, resistance towards social pressures, regulation of behavior from within, and evaluation of the self by means of personal standards. The participants reported that they were expected to adhere to the rules and routines at children's homes. They were also reportedly overly dependent on others to make decisions for them. As such, according to the results of the study, the participants did not have a practice field for decision making. This typically prevented them from experiencing a sense of self-determination and autonomy following their departure from care. They consequently found it difficult to resist social pressures and to regulate their behaviour.

According to the results of the study participants were prone to develop psychological difficulties due to various traumatic experiences, which they typically experienced prior to care placement. In this regard, the participants of the study presented with psychological, behavioural and learning difficulties during their transition to independence. These difficulties included depression, insomnia, suicidal thoughts, promiscuous sexual behaviour and anxiety, which in many cases developed prior to and during placement in care. Keyes (2007) states that the absence of ill-being does not automatically indicate the presence of comprehensive well-being. In applying well-being theory in this study, the removal of the

participants from the problematic circumstances that they experienced prior to placement in care, did not equate healthy functioning and flourishing following their placement in care, although their basic needs were provided for. Therefore, the key to sustainable wellness lies not merely in changing problematic circumstances, but in daily intentional activities (Lyubomirsky 2007, Lyubomirsky, Sheldon & Schade, 2005) and constructive coping behaviour. It is therefore argued that the systematic development of psychological intervention and the skilful practice of strengths such as self-determination, perseverance and positive relations, whilst care residents reside in care, could activate higher levels well-being for young adult care leavers during their transition to independent living.

Stacey's (2003; 2000) *complex responsiveness theory* portrays individuals as interactive organisms that interconnect dynamically within their environments. These interactions influence the systems in which they function and in turn they are also being influenced by the different systems in which they interrelate. In applying the complex responsiveness theory to this study, the participants reportedly formed part of a care system that was based on a set of norms. These norms required the participants to examine and respond to social workers, housemothers, care residents and weekend carers, which improved their academic and social behaviour. As such, the way in which the participants responded at places of care was not only based on their histories of interaction (Stacey, 2003) prior to placement in care, but also on their reflections of new information received from their interactions at places of care. As such, complex responsiveness theory provided insight and understanding regarding how participants engaged within their care environments, associated with the process of transition to independence.

4.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher reported on the findings of Theme 1 that emerged during the thematic analysis and interpretation phase of the current study. She presented insight regarding the *pre-transition experiences that influenced young adult care leaver's transition to independence*. She made use of participants' narrative accounts and verbatim quotations, to enrich and authenticate the results she presented. She presented the sub-themes and categories that emerged following a process of inductive thematic analysis in order to indicate the results she obtained. After presenting the results, the researcher situated these against the background of existing literature, thereby foregrounding the findings she obtained. She highlighted congruent findings between what she found and what existing literature reflects, as well as contradictions she identified.

In chapter 5, she presents the next theme of the current study, providing an overview of the results and findings pertaining the *experiences associated with the process of transition to independence*.

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CHAPTER 5

THEME 2: EXPERIENCES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROCESS OF TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the researcher focused on the first emerged theme, namely the *pre-transition experiences that influenced young adult care leaver's transition to independence*. In this chapter, she presents the second theme that resulted from the data analysis, namely *the experiences associated with the process of transition to independence*. She presents the results and findings related to the experiences of young adult care leavers who are in the process of transition. The researcher namely discusses young adult care leavers' immediate experiences when leaving care as well as the tasks and challenges associated with the intermediate stage between dependence and independence. After providing her results, she relates these to existing literature in order to present the findings of the study.

5.2 STORIES OF THE PRIMARY PARTICIPANTS WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE TRANSITION PHASE

In this section the researcher provides her own narrative accounts of each of the primary participants, compiled from all data sources described in chapter 3 of the study. The researcher specifically describes the primary participants' immediate experiences when leaving care as well as the tasks and challenges they identified as important and associated with the middle stage of independence. The stories provided here build on the introduction of the participants in chapter 4 (section 4.2) and should be read in conjunction with the information provided there.

5.2.1 DAKOTA

During her placement in care Dakota performed well academically and as a result received a tertiary education bursary from the children's home. She reportedly experienced feelings of uncertainty about career options and subsequently enrolled for a BA degree as she believed that this qualification would eventually provide her with an opportunity to specialise in a specific career field when she was prepared to make an occupational decision. Dakota was placed in a university hostel when pursuing tertiary studies, entering the hostel at the age of 18 years and on completion of grade 12.

While in the hostel Dakota reportedly contacted her place of care for social support, however they were seemingly not prepared to provide in this need. Although she did not experience difficulty to initiate friendships while at university she seemingly found it challenging to maintain peer relationships due to

instances of conflict. In an attempt to shield herself from rejection and emotional upset she apparently started isolating herself from her peers at university. As a result she experienced high levels of despondency, loneliness and melancholy during her residency in the university hostel. During this time she attempted to commit suicide, participated in unsafe sexual practices and experimented with alcohol and drugs. She supposedly participated in harmful behaviour in an attempt of gaining acceptance from her peer group and filling a void that she was experiencing at the time.

During Dakota's enrolment at university she had regular contact with her biological mother. Following a disagreement between them however ceased contact with her mother. Shortly after this incident her mother passed away. As a young adult Dakota continued to blame herself for her mother's death and became involved in dysfunctional sexual relationships that often involved physical abuse, promiscuity, infidelity and violence. She also reportedly abused alcohol and drugs on a regular basis at the time. However, despite this harmful behaviour Dakota continued to perform academically based on her belief that intellectual accomplishments could provide her with economic stability and support her in gaining acceptance, respect and acknowledgement.

5.2.2 HARMONY

Following Harmony's placement in care she reportedly experienced safety and stability. Within three months of her placement in care she apparently stopped biting her nails and experienced less anxiety and fear. During her placement in care she performed well academically and as a result received a bursary from the children's home to continue with tertiary studies. Even though she planned to enrol for a degree in law the children's home allegedly required of her to change her choice of study to drama, as they seemingly believed that this suited her better. The children's home arranged lodging for her and she was subsequently placed in a student commune.

Following Harmony's departure from care the children's home provided her with financial support. However, she reported that she experienced abandonment and loneliness as she did not receive social support from the children's home. Due to her need for belonging and acceptance she formed friendships with peers who lived with her at the student commune, and with fellow students. She reportedly abused alcohol, participated in unsafe sexual behaviour and used drugs in an attempt to gain peer acceptance. This apparently had a detrimental effect on her academic performance, resulting in a lack of academic performance and the children's home withdrawing financial support. Following this, she learned that she was pregnant. As she did not have contact with the children's home anymore or with her biological family members, she moved in with the father of her first born child. After the birth of their child they got married but soon divorced due to her husband apparently being unfaithful in their marriage.

Following Harmony's divorce from her first husband, she entered into another romantic relationship and fell pregnant with her second child. The father of this child apparently requested her to have an abortion but she was willing to raise their child as a single mother. After giving birth Harmony married the father of her second born child, who however did not inform his parents about their marriage. Harmony experienced intense sadness and disappointment as she perceived her second husband to be ashamed of her. As a result, she again experienced rejection and loneliness which in turn exacerbated her feelings of vulnerability due to a lack of family support. Adding to this, she was disappointed with herself for not completing her tertiary education qualification.

5.2.3 SKYLAR

During Skylar's placement in care she occasionally experienced loneliness and despondency as she did not have contact with her biological mother. Her experiences of loneliness were exacerbated during weekends and holidays when she had to remain in care due to not having weekend carers. She also experienced disappointment following her placement in a school for learners with special needs. Apart from this, she mentioned supportive experiences at the children's home and seemingly felt cared for in terms of her essential needs for clothing, shelter and food.

At the age of 17 years and on completion of grade ten, Skylar was forced to depart from the children's home. During this time she reportedly experienced fear and uncertainty due to a lack of knowledge regarding the world that existed outside the children's home. She was not prepared to make the transition to independence, seemingly due to a lack of independent living skills and emotional maturity. Although she expressed the need to continued placement in care the children's home did not permit this. She was expected to depart from care with hardly any material resources, as well as a lack of social support. As such, Skylar reportedly experienced a sudden loss of childhood, which was just as abrupt as her placement in care.

As Skylar was the youngest of three siblings, her older sisters departed from care earlier. Her siblings returned to the family home from which they were initially removed. As the children's home arranged accommodation for Skylar and provided her with financial support for 12 months following departure from care, she did not have to return to her family home. The children's home provided her with curtains, bed linen and crockery. Following her departure from care she lived in a diminutive room at a boarding house in an economically disadvantaged area, with adult community members who reportedly experienced financial difficulties. During this time she experienced loneliness, fear and isolation especially as she did not receive social support from her place of care.

Although Skylar reportedly wanted to obtain a tertiary education qualification, this was not probable due to her graduation from a school for learners with special needs, providing schooling up to grade ten.

Despite this situation, the children's home provided Skylar with financial assistance to complete short-term vocational courses. She passed the vocational courses with the exception of a computer skills course as she apparently did not have a computer to practice on. Although she contacted the children's home in an attempt to gain practical support for this, they were not perceived by her to be interested in her academic, social or emotional progress.

The children's home withdrew financial support after 12 months and Skylar then found employment as a waitress. She worked during the evenings at a restaurant that was located in close proximity to the boarding house where she stayed as she was uncertain how to use public transport. This part-time position resulted in her forming friendships with individuals who were not raised in care. Upon successful completion of a computer skill course, Skylar sought employment as an administrative assistant at a law firm. At the age of 19 years she started working as an administrative assistant at a law firm during the day and continued her employment as a waitress in the evenings. She worked long hours for a feeble income but was apparently uninformed about salaries and employment benefits.

As Skylar experienced loneliness she got drawn into a romantic relationship. She was however unaware of safe sex practices and fell pregnant. She left the boarding house to move into an apartment with the father of her first born child. For her, this arrangement implied the promise of financial, practical and social support. Following the birth of her daughter, her romantic partner abandoned them, and as a result she could not afford to live in the apartment any longer. She moved back to the boarding house where she had stayed before. Skylar asked her older sister to live with them as she apparently struggled to form a bond with her daughter. She also experienced the need to focus on her career and obtain financial stability, which seemingly made it difficult for her to take care of her first born child.

When her daughter was seven months old, Skylar formed another romantic relationship. She sent her daughter to live with her older sibling at their family home, and moved into an apartment with her partner while continuing to work as an administrative assistant. She had another daughter out of this relationship and following the birth of her second child, her first born daughter moved back into their home. As a young adult Skylar continued to reside with her partner but they seemingly lived separate lives.

5.2.4 TROY

Despite Troy's reports that the children's village where he resided did not provide him with emotional nurturing, he seemed grateful towards them for providing him with accommodation, sustenance, clothes and educational opportunities. As Troy performed well academically he was awarded a bursary from the children's village to continue his tertiary studies. Following completion of grade 12, when leaving the children's village he was sent to live with his grandmother who resided in a different city. Despite his

requests to continue residency at the children's village, as he felt unprepared to leave due to a lack of skills, this request was not permitted as he had a family member to which he could return. The children's village gave him a lump sum of money as well as his clothes, and allegedly dropped him off at a bus station. As such, he was left with no choice but to leave the children's village after 16 years of residency.

On arrival at his grandmother's home Troy reportedly felt pressurised to enrol for a tertiary degree. As he had not received career guidance during placement in care, he experienced difficulty in making a career decision. He aspired to be an entrepreneur and enrolled for a degree in entrepreneurship at a college which was situated close to his grandmother's home. Following enrolment he received a monthly allowance from the children's village that provided for his tertiary fees and basic living expenses. He also worked part-time to earn an additional income. He then moved into an apartment and used the lump sum of money that he received from the children's village, to purchase a second-hand car and furniture.

Following departure from care, Troy reportedly experienced loneliness and isolation, and as a result started searching for his biological father. He gave his biological father his contact information but his father did not display an interest in having a relationship with him. Following his final examination the children's home withdrew financial support, allegedly without prior discussion. Troy felt pressurised to find employment and he seemingly believed that he might be more successful in attaining employment in the city in which he was raised. At that stage he had maintained contact with residents who were raised in care with him. He seemingly believed that they might support him to gain employment.

Following arrival in the city in which he was raised, he moved into an apartment with one other care leaver and they worked at a renowned retail store. However, Troy had to resign from this position after accusations of him stealing. Soon hereafter, he learned that he was going to be a father. As he was unemployed at the time, he did not have the financial means to support his new family. In an attempt to gain an income Troy started participating in illegal drug smuggling operations. Prior to the birth of his son he gained employment at a warehouse that sells commodities to vendors.

5.2.5 JAKE

Jake was born in a catholic hospital in September 1985. His mother apparently struggled with an alcohol addiction and as a result he was placed in foster care. He resided with three foster families but placements were seemingly unsuccessful as he was sent to live in a children's home at the age of three years. Following care placement and an array of behavioural problems Jake was expelled from school and transferred to a school for learners with special needs, where he had to repeat grade five. He was placed in the care of a devoted housemother at that time, who provided him with opportunities

to participate in extra-curricular activities. He also formed a stable relationship with a weekend carer who seemingly encouraged him to perform academically. His weekend father arranged therapeutic intervention and medication for Jake's attention difficulties. Jake focused on his academic performance and as a result was placed back in a mainstream school. He successfully completed grade 12 and due to him showing promise, received a tertiary education bursary from the children's home where he resided. He decided to enrol for a degree at a university of technology, specialising in games programming and robotics, as he found computers interesting.

On completion of secondary school and at the age of 19 years, Jake spent a holiday with his weekend carers, prior to commencement of his tertiary studies. He then moved into an apartment that was owned by his weekend carers. He however experienced a lack of independent living skills and found it difficult to complete chores, such as cleaning his apartment and cooking nutritional food. Adding to this, he experienced high levels of uncertainty and inadequacies when comparing himself to his peers at university. He found it difficult to initiate new friendships and as a result preferred to lead a solitary life. He reportedly resided in his apartment for long periods of time, often isolating himself from community members. In this regard Jake reported that his weekend carer was his only acquaintance and that he supported him to apply for a driver's license and identity document. Furthermore, his weekend father apparently taught him how to plan a monthly budget and provided him with guidelines for cooking.

Jake then formed a romantic relationship with a partner whom he met whilst socialising with his older brother. Whilst enrolled for tertiary education he learned that his partner was pregnant. She moved in with him for financial and practical reasons. He continued his studies during the pregnancy and following the birth of his daughter, he applied for full-time employment as he experienced a need to provide for his new family. As a result he discontinued his formal tertiary education.

5.3 RESULTS ON EXPERIENCES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROCESS OF TRANSITION

In the next section, the researcher presents the results of the study that relate to the transition phase (Theme 2) by discussing the three sub-themes and related categories that emerged during thematic analysis of the raw data. The discussion is enhanced and enriched by means of direct quotations and vignettes. Figure 5.1 provides an overview of the emerged sub-themes and categories.




THEME 2: TRANSITION EXPERIENCES		
Sub-theme 2.1: Immediate experiences when leaving care 	Sub-theme 2.2: Tasks associated with making the transition 	Sub-theme 2.3: Dealing with related challenges 
Category (a): Forced to be independent Category (b): Feelings of uncertainty and anxiety due to abrupt end of care Category (c): Need for continued contact and social support by residential care facilities	Category(a): Attainment of suitable accommodation Category(b): Developing a sense of identity Category(c): Acquiring skills to function independently Category(d): Furthering education and obtaining a qualification Category(e): Forming and maintaining healthy relationships	Category(a): Isolation and loneliness Category(b): Coping with vulnerability due to being stigmatized Category(c): Refraining from unhealthy and harmful behaviour

Figure 5.1: Overview of emerged sub-themes and categories for Theme 2

5.3.1 SUB-THEME 2.1: IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCES WHEN LEAVING CARE

Three categories emerged regarding participants' immediate experiences when leaving care, including forced to be independent, high levels of uncertainty and anxiety due to abrupt end of care and a need for continued contact and social support by residential care facilities.

5.3.1.1 Category a: Forced to be independent

According to the results of the study participants were discharged from care on completion of secondary school and at the ages of 17, 18 and 19 years. Skylar reported that she left care at the age of 17: *"To the age of seventeen. Grade one to my last day. Then you are done with school, and then you have to leave the children's home"* (Session 1: 1)⁵². Primary participants were allegedly forced to leave care and to venture into the outside world with limited independent living skills, material resources and social support. In this regard Harmony reported: *"Now you're out of the children's home, you don't have a place and you're eighteen, you just wrote matric"* (Session 2: 302)⁵³.

Troy similarly reported that he experienced abandonment and high levels of uncertainty after he was forced to leave his place of care at a young age. Pertaining to this Troy stated: *"All of a sudden you're just out; you're like a baby of 18 years old"* (Session 1: 231). Similar reports of forced independence were made by Skylar: *"It is a hard shock for someone to go alone into the world, it's really hard. It's*

⁵²"Tot die ouderdom van sewentien. Graad een tot my laaste dag. Dan is jy mos klaar met skool, dan moet jy nou uit die kinderhuis uit".

⁵³"Nou kom jy uit die kinderhuis uit, en nou het jy nie 'n plek nie en jys 18, jy't nou matriek geskryf".

difficult and tough. You have to be really strong" (Session 3:48)⁵⁴. Although Skylar and Troy wanted to continue residency at their places of care, as they felt that they were not prepared for the "outside world", this was not permitted by their children's homes. In further support of this, a secondary participant reported that young adult care leavers often experience a need to extend placement at children's homes as their emotional development is often not on par with their same age peers who were raised in a family setting. In this regard she stated: *"There are very few who are emotionally on their age level"* (Dyad interview: 51)⁵⁵. As such, according to the results of this study, young adult care leavers were often forced to leave places of care even though they felt that they were not prepared for independent living.

According to the results of the study young adult care leavers were thus expected to suddenly move away at a young age, from a highly regimented and protected life, to one of vulnerability and relative freedom. With the exception of Troy, participants did not have a family home to return to as their family circumstances had not changed during placement in care. In this regard Skylar reported: *"I didn't want to have hardships and I didn't want to go to my mother's home. I accepted everything but I felt when I left that I didn't have nowhere to go"* (Session 2: 29)⁵⁶. As such, the results of this study indicate that young adult care leavers were often not prepared for the transition process as participants reported that they were forced to leave their places of care. Young adult care leavers subsequently experienced a sudden loss of childhood on the day that they left care, often causing them to experience loneliness upon departure from care which may in turn have negatively influenced their transition to independent living.

5.3.1.2 Category b: Feelings of uncertainty and anxiety due to abrupt end of care

The participants reportedly experienced an abrupt end of care process as they were forced to leave children's homes with limited independent living skills, material resources and social support. Skylar reported that she had to leave the children's home to live alone in a diminutive room in an economically disadvantaged neighbourhood. She reported feelings of hopelessness and lack of a future vision, following her departure from care at the age of 17 years: *"It's funny when you leave the children's home, there's no one who worries about you, it's finished. It's over and done. Your life is ruined. There's nowhere. Nothing, everyone is in their own place. What you had there is done. They shouldn't have left me alone like that"* (Session 2: 13)⁵⁷. Similarly, Harmony reported on an abrupt end of care

⁵⁴ "Dis 'n harde skok vir iemand veral as jy so alleen in die wêreld ingaan. Dis verskriklik hard. Dis moeilik en dis tough en jy moet baie sterk wees".

⁵⁵ "Daar is bitter min van hulle wat emosioneel op hulle ouderdomsvlak is".

⁵⁶ Ek wil nie swaar kry nie en ek wil ook nie na my ma se huis toe gaan nie. Ek het alles aanvaar maar ek het net gevoel toe ek daaruit gaan ek het nowhere to go".

⁵⁷ "Dit is snaaks as jy uit die kindershuis uitgaan, daar's niemand wat oor jou worry nie, dis soos in klaar. Dis oor en dis verby. Jou lewe is daarmee heen. Daar's nowhere. Niks nie, soos in elkeen is op sy eie plek. Daar wat jy daar gehad het is klaar. Hulle moes my nie so alleen gelos het nie".

experience which involved a lack of material support: *"At the end of your matric year they tell you to go. Here's a place for you and a few rands"* (Session 2: 302)⁵⁸. Pertaining to this, Troy reported that he too experienced abandonment and high levels of uncertainty at the age of 18 years, as he was expected to move to an uncertain family home. He stated: *"Straight after school they just told me you're going to your granny and I don't even question them at that time"* (Session 1: 231).

In support of these experiences a housemother reported that care leavers are typically forced to leave children's homes with limited material and social support: *"The children's home provide them with a home, food, money and then when they turn 18, they are out"* (Dyad interview: 49)⁵⁹. Another housemother likewise expressed her concerns regarding the abrupt end of care process: *"I frequently tell them, when you leave out of the gates then you know there isn't a aunty Magda, there isn't a warm bed, there isn't food and you have to take care of this yourself"* (Dyad interview: 3)⁶⁰. One more secondary participant expressed her concerns regarding the lack of support for young adult care leavers: *"How big is the need of children that have to leave at 18 years and there isn't a safety net for them"*. (Reflexive interview: 88)⁶¹.

In terms of the care leavers preparedness when they leave the children's home, housemother stated that young adult care leavers are often not emotionally prepared to make the transition to adulthood at the age of 18 years. She namely mentioned: *"The children enter the adult world as babies out of a children's home and they are definitely not on their own age level"* (Dyad interview: 51)⁶² and later: *"They cannot handle the pressure of living alone, working and making all their own decisions"* (Dyad interview: 52)⁶³. This might explain why Troy and Skylar, who were residing in care for most of their childhood, felt that they were not prepared to make the transition to independence. As a result they experienced the need to extend their placement at the children's homes. Troy reported as follows: *"I said I'd rather study while I am there because I can't just go like after school and not like have something behind my name"* (Session 1: 231). As such, although these participants communicated with their places of care that they were not prepared to leave residential care, they were reportedly not permitted to extend their placement.

Harmony and Dakota, who left care at the age of 18 years, seemingly experienced less anxiety, uncertainty and fear as they were placed in student hostels. They were therefore not expected to live

⁵⁸ "Aan die einde van jou matriek jaar sê hulle vir jou daar gaan jy nou. Hiers vir jou 'n plekkie en so paar randjies".

⁵⁹ "Die kindershuis gee 'n huis, kos, geld en as jy agtien is, is hulle uit".

⁶⁰ "Ek sê dikwels vir hulle as julle by daai hek uitgaan dan weet julle daar is nie 'n tannie Magda nie, daar is nie 'n warm bed nie, daar is nie kos nie en jy moet self sorg daarvoor".

⁶¹ "Hoe groot is die nood van die kinders wat dan nou as hulle agtien is moet uitgaan en daar is nou geen vangnet vir hulle nie".

⁶² "Die kinders stap in 'n grootmens wêreld in en hulle kom as babatjies uit die kinderhuise uit en hulle is definitief nie op hulle ouderdomsvlak nie".

⁶³ "Hulle kan nie die druk hanteer van alleen bly en te werk en al jou eie besluite te neem nie".

alone. Furthermore, some similarities exist between student communes and children's homes. Harmony and Dakota were also placed in care at the age of 13 years and seemingly had more knowledge about the world, when compared to Jake, Skylar and Troy who were placed in care at a young age. Jake, who left care at the age of 19 years, also recalled a more organised departure as his weekend carers provided him with support. In this regard he said: *"You were gone but it was done in a manner in which I was used to. It was December then and I always went to Harry for holidays. After that I had to move January when I had to start studying, and then I was on my own"* (Session 3:184)⁶⁴. Jake therefore did not experience such high levels of anxiety and uncertainty, as his weekend carers provided him with emotional and practical support following his departure from care.

5.3.1.3 Category c: Need for continued contact and social support by residential care facilities

The primary participants reportedly experienced numerous losses following their departure from residential care, including, but not limited to, the giving up of valued relationships with peers and staff. Skylar, Dakota and Troy all three explained that although they initially had some degree of contact with their residential care facilities, it soon became apparent to them that their previous housemothers displayed a lack of interest in providing social support to them. In this regard Dakota mentioned: *"Then she stopped contact with me when I entered the adult world. She broke contact completely. It was really difficult for me. The only constant person in my life was gone"* (Session 2: 393)⁶⁵; and also: *"The housemother that I had in the children's home was not involved with me. As I left the children's home she broke contact with me so that I could become independent. This was difficult for me, as I felt alone and it felt as if I was rejected again"* (Lifestory: 506)⁶⁶.

Skylar similarly reported on experiences of sadness and rejection following her housemother's apparent lack of interest. She mentioned: *"I never heard from them again. If you don't phone out of your own and ask how it's going, no one cares. You are on your own. No one cares at all. What happened to you afterwards, no one cares. If you feel sad or need to talk to someone, you have to talk to yourself"* (Session 2: 14)⁶⁷; and also: *"They shouldn't have let me alone. They should have sent somebody to stand by me"* (Session 1: 20)⁶⁸. As such, primary participants reported that they experienced a lack of

⁶⁴ "Jy was weg maar dit was op so manier wat ek was gewoond. Dit Desember daai tyd, na Harry hulle toe te gaan vir 'n vakansie. Ja, ek was nog vir die vakansie daar gewees, die Desember en na dit moes ek trek. So Januarie toe ek begin swot het toe is ek op my eie".

⁶⁵ "Toe het sy op gehou kontak met my hê toe ek die grootwêreld ingaan. Sy het heeltemal kontak gebreuk met my, heeltemal. Dit was vir my baie hard gewees. Die enigste persoon wat vir my 'n constant in my lewe was, was toe weg".

⁶⁶ "My huisma wat ek in die kindershuis gehad het was toe nie betrokke by my nie, want omdat ek die kindershuis verlaat, het sy kontak verbreuk sodat ek onafhanklik kon word. Dit was vir my baie moeilik, want ek het so alleen gevoel, en dit het gevoel of ek weer verwerp was".

⁶⁷ "Ek het nooit weer van hulle gehoor nie. As jy nie self bel en hoor hoe gaan dit nie. Niemand worry nie, jy's op jou eie been alleen. Niemand gee niks om nie. Wat gebeur met jou na dit, niemand worry oor jou nie. Of jy nou voel jy is bietjie hartseer of wil met iemand praat, jy moet maar met jouself praat".

⁶⁸ "Hulle moes my nie so alleen gelos het nie. Hulle moes iemand gestuur het om my by te staan".

interest and social support from caregivers at children's homes. This often left them with loneliness, sadness and anger as they often did not have anyone to turn to during times of uncertainty. Primary patricians in response attempted to gain support from biological family members and in romantic relationships, often relying on unhealthy relations.

A possible explanation for the lack of social support from children's homes might be found in a report made by a housemother who mentioned that housemothers found it challenging to continue contact with care leavers due to profound workloads and responsibilities at children's homes. One of the housemothers explained: *"You're still the housemother but you can't contact them telephonically because you still have thirteen children. The contact with your children who already left care is not what it's supposed to be during that first year"* (Dyad interview:3)⁶⁹.

5.3.2 SUB-THEME 2.2: TASKS ASSOCIATED WITH MAKING THE TRANSITION

In this section the researcher discusses a number of categories with respect to tasks implied by the transition from care to independence. The categories include attainment of suitable accommodation, developing a sense of identity, acquiring skills to function independently, furthering education and obtaining a qualification, as well as forming and maintaining healthy relationships.

5.3.2.1 Category a: Attainment of suitable accommodation

According to the results of the study children's homes arranged and placed the participating young adult care leavers in lodgings immediately following their departure from care. Skylar was placed in a boarding home that provided lodgings for community members who experienced financial challenges, in an economically disadvantaged neighbourhood. Although she did not report on the living conditions, she reportedly experienced loneliness, uncertainty and fear, as she felt like a youngster living amongst unfamiliar adults. In this regard she reported: *"I'm alone in a room where many people stay. Grown-ups. It used to only be children and you were always protected. There you are on your own"* (Session 2: 15)⁷⁰. The children's home paid Skylar's rent for 12 months following her departure from care.

Contrary to Skylar's experiences, Dakota and Harmony were placed in student hostels, and received financial bursaries which provided for their accommodation. Dakota and Harmony did not report on experiences of fear or uncertainty but they apparently participated in harmful behaviour in order to gain acceptance from their peers who resided with them.

⁶⁹ "Jy is nogsteeds die huisma maar jy kan omtrent nie telefonies kontak nie, want jy sit nogsteeds met jou dertien kinders. So jou kontak wat jy met jou kind het wat uit die kinderhuis uitgaan is vir daai eerste jaar nie eintlik wat dit moet wees nie".

⁷⁰ "Ek is alleen en dis 'n kamer waar daar klomp mense bly. Groot mense. Dis nou nie meer, dit was mos altyd net kinders en jy was altyd beskerm. Daar is jy soos in op jou eie".

Troy reported that he was forced to move to his grandmother's home in a different city, yet moved elsewhere when he started studying. He explained his experience: *"I stayed with my gran for like the first few months. Then the one, the youth leader came up to where I was staying to see where she stays and all that. After that, then while I was studying, I got my own place, a commune and then they paid for the rent and fees, all that and they give you an allowance every month"* (Session 1: 227). As such, Troy reported that the children's village financially provided for his accommodation whilst he was completing his tertiary education qualification. As in the case with Troy, Jake resided in an apartment that was owned by his weekend father. Jake mentioned that the children's home provided him with financial support to maintain his accommodation: *"The only thing that I had to pay was the levy, which was one thousand rand a month. This was paid from the money I received from the children's home"* (Session 1: 12)⁷¹. The results of the study, thus indicates that young adult care leavers were placed in fairly good quality accommodation and that the children's homes provided them with financial support for accommodation.

Harmony and Jake indicated that their children's homes withdrew financial support for accommodation due to their lack of academic performance whilst they were enrolled for tertiary education. Jake was however seemingly permitted to prolong his residency at his weekend carers' apartment despite his lack of academic performance. Unlike Jake, Harmony and Skylar reported that they did not have adequate resources to maintain stable accommodation following financial withdrawal from their places of care. In addition, Harmony and Skylar experienced high levels of uncertainty and vulnerability about where they would stay following the birth of their children. As a result they moved into lodgings with their romantic partners. Skylar reported: *"I have to move in with this man because of my bad situation. I considered my situation. What if I couldn't pay anymore. I barely had food to eat. I had nowhere to go. Maybe he can support me"* (Session 2: 15)⁷². Harmony posited similar reports of sharing accommodation with romantic partners as she experienced a lack of financial resources to provide for herself. Financial constraints also seemingly prevented Harmony and Skylar from finding alternative accommodation when they experienced difficulties in their romantic relationships. This continued to be a problem for them whilst were making the transition to independence.

5.3.2.2 Category b: Developing a sense of identity

According to the results of the study the primary participants experienced ongoing challenges in formatting their own sense of self whilst making the transition to independence. Dakota explained: *"For*

⁷¹ "Al wat ek moes betaal het is levy, wat 'n duidend rand 'n maand was. So dit het afgekom van die kinderhuis se geld wat hulle vir my gegee het".

⁷² "Ek moet nou by hierdie man intrek want my situasie is nou 'n slegte situasie. Ek het gedink aan my situasie. Wat as ek nie meer my geld, kan betaal nie, kon nie eers ordentlik eet nie. Ek het nowhere to go. Miskien sal hy my kan bystaan".

years I didn't know who I was, what I wanted to do, my identity" (Session 2: 397)⁷³. A similar report was made by Skylar: *"That is my big thing. Who am I?"* (Session 4:68)⁷⁴. The challenges that participants experienced in terms of identity formation was seemingly linked to their childhood experiences and a lack of contact with biological family members. In this regard Dakota, Troy and Harmony seemingly attempted to gain a sense of self by forming relationships with biological family members following their departure from care. Participants apparently believed that relationships with biological family members could support them to gain insight into their personal histories and heritage, and in turn help them develop a sense of identity. However, the participants' attempts did not seem to have the desired effect as they found it difficult to build relationships with biological family members.

Dakota and Jake reported on incomplete memories of their childhood years, which reportedly hindered the formation of their identities. As a result Dakota attempted to build a sense of self based on academic achievements, career accomplishments and economic stability. She stated: *"I am successful and I have travelled the world. I am highly educated. I have a good career where I earn good money"* (Lifestory: 507)⁷⁵. Similarly, Jake based his sense of self on the relationships that he had with his daughter and wife. As such, participants seemingly attempted to gain a sense of self through success experiences and relationships with co-workers, romantic partners, families of origin and children.

Despite them experiencing ongoing challenges to form an independent identity, participants agreed that an essential part of their identity were linked to their placement in care. In this regard the primary participants referred to themselves as *"children's home children"*, *"orphans"* and *"abandoned children"*. Participants described themselves as belonging to a greater group of *"children's home children"* and often referred to themselves as *"we"* and *"us"* when they reflected on the experiences of care residents in general. In this regard Skylar mentioned: *"Children's home children are not strong enough. Maybe we give up too easily; I think we give up easily"* (Session 5: 82)⁷⁶. Due to this *"identity"* that they seemingly formed during their placement in care, participants experienced that they were different and atypical from the rest of society.

5.3.2.3 Sub-theme c: Acquiring skills to function independently

The primary participants expressed dissatisfaction about them lacking the necessary skills to function independently. Skylar expressed her experiences as follows: *"I didn't know which transport was available to use. You walk around and ask. You have to be strong physically to be able to ask. You*

⁷³ "Ek het vir jare nie geweet wie ek is en wat ek wil, my identiteit nie".

⁷⁴ "Dis my groot ding. Wie is ek?"

⁷⁵ "Vandag is ek baie suksesvol en het die wêreld vol getoer. Ek is hoogs geleerd, het 'n goeie werk waar ek goeie geld verdien".

⁷⁶ Kinderhuis kinders is seker maar nie sterk genoeg nie. Ander mense fight die battle. Miskien gee ons te vinnig op, ek dink ons gee baie vinnig op".

need to have guts to go up to a person and ask, mister can you help me" (Session 2: 24)⁷⁷. Skylar furthermore reported that she also experienced difficulty to complete basic chores, such as laundry, cooking and cleaning. In this regard she mentioned: *"I couldn't cook and for a coloured girl to not know how to cook or clean. I can't even clean properly. I didn't even know how to use a washing machine. I couldn't cook, I can't iron, I can't do anything for myself then they place you in such a strange world and you have to start learning those things on your own"* (Session 3:42)⁷⁸. She furthermore expressed concerns about her lack of knowledge of employment interviews and salaries: *"I was nineteen, a year after I studied. I didn't even know about salaries and stuff. I didn't know how to talk in interviews or what to say. I told them just give me what you want"* (Session 2: 16)⁷⁹. Similar reports were made by Troy regarding the lack of skills for independent functioning: *"How to budget, how to spend money, how to, like when you're on your own, just like basic stuff. I haven't experienced that"* (Session 1: 241).

In support, a housemother expressed similar concerns regarding a lack of skills for independent living: *"There are some children's homes that believe that children aren't allowed near a stove. They're not allowed to make themselves coffee because they will break the kettle. These children can't do anything for themselves. And you'll find that they are very behind, light years behind"* (Dyad interview: 57)⁸⁰. As such, the results of this study indicate that care residents typically do not acquire the basic skills for independent functioning during their placement in children's homes and that this may cause young adult care leavers to experience frustration and feelings of vulnerability whilst they are making the transition to independence. Moreover, a lack of independent living skills may also affect young adult care leavers' relationships as this might cause them to feel peculiar when they compare themselves to their peers who were not raised in care.

Although Harmony did not report on a lack of basic skills, such as cooking and cleaning, she expressed the need for driving skills and support with compiling a curriculum vitae. She stated: *"How do you send a child into the world and she can't drive. She has to have a licence, after that it's her duty to renew it but make sure they know how to drive. Skills, they need to have skills. A CV, yes, how to draw up a CV"* (Session 1: 279)⁸¹. Therefore, Harmony and Dakota did not report on a lack of basic skills in the same manner than the other participants. A possible reason for this may be found in their personal histories,

⁷⁷ "Ek het nou nie geweet watse transport is daar wat jy kan gebruik nie. Jy loop en vra, jy moet jou maar fisies sterk maak om te kan vra. Jy moet nou guts hê en kan gaan by 'n persoon, kan meneer my nie help".

⁷⁸ "Ek kon nie rerig eers gekook het nie en vir 'n kleurling meisie om nie te kook en skoon maak en sulke goete nie. Ek kan nie eers reg skoonmaak nie, ek het nie eers geweet hoe om die wasmasjien te gebruik nie. Ek kon nie kook nie, ek kan nie stryk nie, ek kan niks vir myself doen nie dan sit hulle jou so in so vreemde wêreld nou moet jy begin leer op daai ouderdom".

⁷⁹ "Ek was negentien, 'n jaar na ek studeer het. Toe het ek nie eens geweet van salarisse en goete, ek het nie geweet hoe om in die interview te praat en wat om te sê nie. Ek het maar net gesê gee my maar soveel soos wat julle wil".

⁸⁰ "Daar is van die kinderhuise wat glo die kinders mag nie naby die stoof kom nie. Hulle mag nie vir hulleself koffie maak nie want hulle gaan die ketel breek. Hierdie kinders kan niks doen nie. En jy sal vind hulle is baie agter, hulle is ligjare agter".

⁸¹ "Hoe stuur jy hierdie kind in die wêreld in en sy kan nie bestuur nie. Sy moet 'n lisensie hê, daarna is dit haar verpligting om dit te hernu, maar sorg dat hulle weet hoe om te bestuur. Skills, hulle moet daai skills hê. 'n Cv ja, 'n cv op te stel".

with both of them living with their biological families for longer periods of time prior to placement in care than the rest of the participants. In this regard, they reported that they had to complete chores and take on adult responsibilities during residency with their biological families. As such, Harmony and Dakota may have had more exposure to the skills associated with independent living, when compared to Jake and Skylar who resided in care for longer periods of time. Although Troy also resided in care for an extended period of time he reported on his participation in a variety of chores at the place of safety. He said: *"You have to do dishes. Like you get chores to do also. You must clean"* (Session 1: 236).

Another area of concern related to the skills necessary for independent living can be detected from the primary participants' early parenthood experiences. Within 18 to 24 months of leaving care three of the five primary participants had to cope with being parents. As such, three of the participants were aged 20 or younger when their first children were born. A housemother confirmed that adult care leavers often have children within the first two years of leaving care: *"The moment that he, usually within the first two years, gets that balance, baby under the arm and a wife, then they come to say hallo"* (Dyad interview 1: 3)⁸². Skylar expressed her concerns about her lack of knowledge on safe sex practices: *"I learned this when I fell pregnant, then only did I learn about prevention. Pills that you have to drink to not become pregnant and injections and you have to go to the clinic and this I learned when I was pregnant."* (Session 2:15)⁸³. Following an interview question on sex education at children's homes, Jake replied: *"No, she never spoke about it"* (Session 3:138)⁸⁴. As such, a distinct need seems to exist to acquire basic skills for independent functioning, as well as sex education in particular, to be provided to youth in children's homes before departure from care, as this was perceived as something that could support them during the transition to independence.

5.3.2.4 Category d: Furthering education and obtaining a qualification

Primary participants placed importance on obtaining educational qualifications and furthering their education as they seemingly believed that this could support them during their transition to independence. As Harmony, Dakota, Troy and Jake displayed educational promise during placement in care they were awarded academic bursaries to enrol at education institutions upon their departure from care. In support of this a housemother explained that young adult care leavers who do not perform academically during placement in care are usually expected to find employment shortly after leaving care. Pertaining to this she stated: *"There are children who aren't academically strong enough and they have to leave and do work, like be a packer"* (Dyad interview: 22)⁸⁵. As such, the results of this

⁸² "Die oomblik as hy, gewoonlik die eerste twee jaar, daai balans kry, baba aan die arm en 'n vrou, dan kom hy hallo sê".

⁸³ "Ek het dit geleer eers toe ek swanger geraak het, toe geleer van prevention. Pille wat jy moet drink om nie swanger te raak nie en inspuitings en jy moet clinics loop en dit het ek op my tyd geleer toe ek swanger is."

⁸⁴ "Nee, sy het nooit oor dit gepraat nie".

⁸⁵ "Daar is kinders wat nie akademies sterk genoeg is nie en wat dan moet uitgaan en byvoorbeeld 'n werk doen soos pakker wees".

emphasises the link between financial support for tertiary studies from children's homes and the academic performance of young adult care leavers during their placement in care.

The consequences of limited educational promise and completion of the secondary school were directly experienced by Skylar. As the secondary school she attended only made provision for learners to complete grade ten, it was not possible for her to complete grade 12. She mentioned that she was angry at the children's home for placing her in a school for learners with special needs as this prevented her from furthering her education and obtaining a tertiary qualification. She expressed her discontent in the following way: *"I'm very angry. I could have been much further in my life"* (Session 2: 29)⁸⁶. In this regard Skylar reported that she might have had a better quality of life as a young adult if she was raised in a family home that provided her with an opportunity to complete schooling in a mainstream school. She stated her perception: *"If I stayed with my mom, I could have had matric. Then I most probably would have had a better job"* (Session 2: 31)⁸⁷. To this end, Skylar seemingly believed that a lack of formal education affected all areas of her life and that it formed an obstacle for her in improving her quality of life as a young adult. Moreover, as Skylar apparently did not display educational promise in a mainstream school, she only received financial support for 12 months following her departure from care. On the other hand, Harmony, Dakota, Troy and Jake who displayed educational promise in mainstream schools during their placement in care, were reportedly awarded with academic bursaries from their children's homes, which was not dependent on a time period, but on academic progress at tertiary education facilities.

In terms of the careers they chose, Harmony reported that the children's home indicated that she had to enrol for a degree of their choice. She adhered to this as she seemingly feared that the children's home might withdraw financial support if she did not comply with their request. Harmony reported that she however did not fit in with her peer group at university, due to a wrong career choice: *"I begged them to change my study field since I didn't fit in with the drama students. They pushed me aside, I didn't belong there. It's not where I was supposed to be"* (Session 2: 305)⁸⁸. As such, Harmony seemingly did not perform optimally academically due to a lack of interest in the degree that she was enrolled for. She also reported on instances of alcohol abuse during her tertiary studies, which could have impacted on her performance in a negative way. In this regard she stated: *"I drank a lot. Went clubbing. I didn't perform well academically that year"* (Session 2: 305)⁸⁹. As Harmony failed to perform academically, the children's home withdrew financial support. She also fell pregnant during her second year at university and as a result did not complete her tertiary studies. However, she often spoke about

⁸⁶ "Ek is baie kwaad. Ek kon nou al baie ver gewees het in my lewe".

⁸⁷ "As ek by my ma gebly het, kon ek matriek gehad. Dan het ek seker 'n beter werk gehad".

⁸⁸ "Ek het hulle so gesmeek, asseblief kan ek nie net my rigting verander nie, want ek pas nie aan tussen hierdie drama studente nie. Hulle het my uitgestoot, ek het nie daar gehoor nie. Dit is nie waar ek moes gewees het nie".

⁸⁹ "Ek het verskriklik gedrink en alles. Geclub hop. Ek het sommer nie akademies goed presteer in daai jaar nie".

her educational aspirations of becoming a counsellor and, as in the case of Skylar, displayed the desire to undertake further education and skills development, even though she could not afford tertiary fees and associated costs at the time of data collection or prior to this period.

Jake reported that his weekend father assisted him to enrol for a degree in computer programming and that the children's home supported him financially during his tertiary studies. He explained: *"You receive that study bursary, then they pay you an x amount for petrol, your studies, your accommodation"* (Session 2: 129)⁹⁰. Similar reports were made by Troy regarding financial assistance received from his place of care whilst he was completing a degree in entrepreneurship. He expressed his experiences in this regard: *"They paid for the rent and fees and they give you an allowance every month"* (Session 1: 228). He also mentioned that the place of safety did not provide him with career guidance and that they allegedly withdrew financial support without prior arrangement on completion of his final examination. As such, Troy reportedly completed his tertiary degree, in contrast with Harmony and Jake who were halted in their pursuit of further education following the birth of their first born children whilst they were enrolled at tertiary institutions. It should also be mentioned here that Dakota and Troy, who did not have children during their tertiary educational training, completed their tertiary qualifications.

Dakota completed an undergraduate, honour's, master's and doctorate degree. The children's home reportedly made provision for her tertiary fees. Academic achievement thus supported Dakota to develop a positive sense of self and to gain a sense of control over her life. She reportedly used academic responsibilities to escape adverse and difficult life circumstances: *"I always performed well academically, it was my safety cushion. I threw myself into academics as I always do when I don't understand the world. I felt that if I had that degree, then everything's fine. Then I am in control"* (Session 2: 406)⁹¹. Dakota mentioned that the children's home supported her financially whilst she was completing her tertiary degrees but that they did not provide her with social support. She noted that the children's home were not aware of the norms at tertiary institutions that students were expected to vacate during holidays. Most students reportedly had family homes to return to, but she found herself with nowhere to go whilst completing her undergraduate degree. This was seemingly a lonely and dispiriting experience for her, as evident in the following contribution: *"December holidays were difficult, as they evacuated the residency, and where do I go with all my things. That was depressing for me"* (Session 2: 390)⁹². In response she spent holidays with a romantic partner and her peer group.

⁹⁰ "Jy kry mos daai swotting beurs, dan betaal hulle sommer jou 'n x bedrag vir jou petrol, jou swottings, jou verblyf".

⁹¹ "Ek het altyd akademies presteer, dit was soos my safety cushion. Ek het myself maar in die akademie ingegooi soos ek altyd doen as ek nie iets in die wêreld kan verstaan nie. Ek het gevoel as ek daai graad, as ek dit het, dan is alles fine. Dan is ek in beheer".

⁹² "Desember vakansies was moeilik, want dan ontruim hulle die koshuis, en waar gaan ek met al my goeters. Dit was vir my verskriklik *depressing* gewees"

5.3.2.5 Category e: Forming and maintaining healthy relationships

Although the primary participants often experienced instances of abuse, rejection and abandonment in the relationships that they had prior to their placement in care, they continued to experience a need to form and maintain stable relationships, not only with peers and romantic partners, but with their biological families as well. Troy and Dakota sought contact with their biological fathers shortly after their departure from care. As Troy stated: *"Then I went and then I got him, and I phoned him and then met up with him, and I asked him does he remember like my mother. And he doesn't remember nothing, but he did take my number and he told me if he does remember stuff he's gonna phone me but till today he hasn't"* (Session 1: 225). Harmony also located her biological mother whilst she was making the transition to independence and Dakota reported that she could not locate her biological father even though she wanted to. Although Harmony and Troy was successful in locating their biological parents, they seemingly experienced challenges to build stable relationships with their parents due to a lack of parental interest.

Harmony reported that she also reunited with her biological father following her departure from care. He reportedly later resided with her after he was diagnosed with a terminal illness. She apparently took care of her father's physical needs and they were able to reconcile their relationship prior to his death. In this regard Harmony stated: *"He didn't want me to be angry at him, but then I told him dad I forgave you a long time ago. Why do you care about the past. It is the end. You know, I don't have to you, you know. I am not angry at you"* (Session 1: 271).⁹³ Following the death of her father she seemingly had no contact with other extended family members. In contrast to this, Skylar occasionally visited her biological mother and siblings. She reportedly provided her biological family with financial support and stated that their visits were limited to the provision of financial resources. In this regard Skylar mentioned: *"My contact was just I had to send them money"* (Session 1: 8)⁹⁴.

Similar reports were made by Dakota who mentioned that she supported her siblings both financially and emotionally. She seemingly experienced good relationships with her two younger brothers. Skylar also referred to the relationship that she had with her older sister and reported that her sibling provided her with parental advice following the birth of her first child. As such, her older sibling provided her with practical support and this relationship also had a parental quality as she could rely on her sister for guidance. Skylar mentioned that her biological family's circumstances did not change during her placement in care. Jake also mentioned that he often visited his biological mother and siblings, but that his biological mother continued to abuse alcohol and resided in poverty. He expressed his experiences in the following way: *"She was so drunk. We arranged with her beforehand. You know alcoholics outlive*

⁹³ "Hy wil net nie hê ek moet vir hom kwaad wees nie, maar toe se ek vir hom pa, ek het jou al lankal vergewe, wat worry jy nou oor die verlede. Dis die einde, jy weet, ek hoef nie. Ek is nie kwaad vir jou nie".

⁹⁴ "My kontak was maar net ek moet hulle geld stuur".

everyone. *We got there one day and my mother was super drunk* (Session 1: 104)⁹⁵. In contrast to this, Troy's contact with his family of origin was limited as he did not have living relatives except for his grandmother and biological father. Even though he initially resided with his grandmother following departure from care he did not report on the quality of the relationship that he had with his grandmother. Moreover, despite maintaining some contact, participants seemingly found their families of origin to be unsupportive. As such, according to the results of this study the participants did not report on developing close bonds with biological parents or extended family members following their departure from care, despite several of them initiating contact and providing support.

According to the results of the study young adult care leavers furthermore experienced difficulties in forming and maintaining healthy and stable romantic relationships. Dakota mentioned that she experienced tension between being dependent and independent due to her adverse childhood experiences. In this regard she stated: *"Because my mother was financially dependent on my stepfather he kept on hitting her. That's why I have this need to be independent"* (Session 3:424)⁹⁶. It follows that Dakota seemingly preferred to rely on herself as she did not trust the intentions of others. In support of this she stated: *"You can meet someone or he cheats on me. Trust issues. Trust, I'm scared they hurt me"* (Session 3:425)⁹⁷.

In summary, Dakota allegedly avoided romantic relationships due to her need to be emotionally self-reliant. She said: *"I was too independent and I didn't want to let anyone in and I would have criticised. I want to be emotionally independent"* (Session 3:427)⁹⁸. As such, she did not only display the need for financial autonomy but also for emotional independence, which often caused her to avoid committed relationships. One other possible reason for the difficulties that Dakota experienced in maintaining romantic relationships may be found in the following report: *"I was extremely focused on my work, I was very ambitious, and even now I'm still very task orientated. I am more task orientated than people orientated"* (Session 1: 384)⁹⁹. As such, Dakota chose to focus her efforts on obtaining economic stability and as a result possibly neglected romantic relationships, as already indicated.

Other reasons pertaining to the difficulties that young adult care leavers experienced with forming and maintaining romantic relationships, could possibly be found in reports by participants concerning self-disclosure. Participants namely experienced difficulties to disclose information about their childhoods

⁹⁵ "Sy was so dronk gewees en ons het vooraf met haar gereël ek meen sy, jy weet mos alkoholiste "outlive" almal, en ons het die een dag daar aangekom toe is my ma superdronk".

⁹⁶ "Omdat my ma afhanklik was van my stiefpa materieel het hy haar maar aangehou slaan. Dis hoekom ek hierdie need het om by myself independent te wees".

⁹⁷ "Jy kan iemand ontmoet of hy verneuk op my. Jy weet nie. Trust issues. Trust, ek is bang hulle maak my seer".

⁹⁸ "Ek was te onafhanklik en ek wou niemand ingelaat het nie en ek sou gekritiseer het. Ek wil onafhanklik wees emosioneel".

⁹⁹ "Ek was verskriklik focused op my werk, ek was baie ambisieus, en nou nog is ek baie taak, task orientated. Ek dink jy sal die verskil sien ook, ek is meer task orientated as people orientated".

as they feared rejection and abandonment. Dakota expressed her concerns as follows: *"I struggled when it came to relationships with men. I actually at a stage lied and didn't tell people I'm from a children's home because I felt so shy and wanted acceptance"* (Session 2: 392)¹⁰⁰. This in turn may have had an undesirable effect on participants' relationships as self-disclosure is a basic condition for healthy romantic relationships.

Closely related, Harmony reported that she felt unhappy and insecure in both her marriages as she experienced an inability to attach to others: *"It's as if that umbilical cord is cut and it can't grow back again. It can't attach again. It can't be perfect again. Connection. You lose that string, that attachment to something that's valuable"* (Session 2: 301)¹⁰¹. Similar concerns about attachment were made by Dakota: *"I honestly have to say that I've struggled to bond throughout the years"* (Session 2: 394)¹⁰². Likewise, Skylar reported that she struggled to attach to peers and romantic partners, but that she experienced warm and loving relationships with her daughters.

Harmony and Skylar reported on their need for romantic relationships, due to them feeling lonely following their departure from care. They then seemingly continued with romantic relationships following pregnancies, due to the need for economic stability. In this regard Harmony mentioned: *"How Jacques and I ended up together was I didn't have anywhere to go. I am pregnant. I didn't have a job and I have a child to look after"* (Session 2: 302)¹⁰³. Skylar and Harmony mentioned that they chose to stay in unhappy relationships based on their fears that their children may experience financial difficulties should they end the romantic relationships.

In contrast to this Troy indicated that he did not experience difficulties with maintaining relationships. Although he did not report on romantic relationships he mentioned that he experienced fulfilling relationships with his peer group, specifically with residents he was raised within care. He seemingly experienced trusting relationships with former care residents and perceived them as his family. In his view, he did not experience difficulty in his current relationships and that he was capable of forming and maintaining new relationships. In this regard he mentioned: *"I feel like I am a people's person I get along with everyone. Even at work people were surprised"* (Session 1: 240).

Following Jake's departure from care, he reportedly experienced an intense need for belonging but he often felt that he was not worthy of love. He wanted to be part of a family in an attempt to fulfil his need

¹⁰⁰ "Ek het maar gesukkel met verhoudings met mans. Ek het actually op 'n stadium, was dit so gewees, wat ek gelieg het en nie gesê het ek kom uit 'n kinderhuis uit omdat ek skaam was en om aanvaarding te kry".

¹⁰¹ "Dis asof daai, daai naelstring gesny word. En hy kan nie weer uitgroei nie. Hy kan nie weer attach nie. Hy kan nie weer volmaak en perfek raak aan iets anders nie. Konneksie. Jy verloor daai, daai string, daai attachment aan iets wat waardevol is".

¹⁰² "Ek moet sê eerlik waar deur die jare het ek gesukkel om te bond".

¹⁰³ "Hoe ek en Jacques bymekaar beland het. Ek het nerens heen gehad om te gaan nie. Ek is swanger. Ek het nie 'n werk nie en ek het 'n kind om na te kyk".

for nurturing, acceptance and love. Although he reported that he did not form relationships with peers, he seemingly fulfilled his needs for belonging through relationships with his wife and daughter. He explained: *“The only relationship I have is with her and my child. I have no friends”* (Session 1: 122)¹⁰⁴. Jake seemed to be the only participant who was reportedly happily married. He described partnering as crucial in the way in which he managed to establish himself whilst making the transition to independence. In this regard he reported: *“We struggled and built together”* (Session 1: 135)¹⁰⁵. He spoke with pride of how he and his wife had successfully made it through the hard times of their early relationship and then marriage, where they had combined work, study, early parenthood and home building. In his view, his stable partner had a positive impact when he was making the transition to independence: *“Biggest thing that changed my life was my wife and my child. If I look back on my life, since I’ve met them only positive things happened”* (Session 3:192)¹⁰⁶. It appears as if Jake’s relationships with his wife and daughter supported him to develop a sense of self and provided him with a sense of belonging whilst he was making the transition to independence.

5.3.3 SUB-THEME 2.3: DEALING WITH RELATED CHALLENGES

In this section the researcher discusses the categories related to the challenges the young adult care leavers experienced whilst making the transition to independence. The categories include isolation and loneliness, coping with vulnerability due to being stigmatized, and refraining from unhealthy and harmful behaviour.

5.3.3.1 Sub-theme a: Isolation and loneliness

The results of the study indicate that the participants experienced loneliness shortly following their departure from care. Jake expressed his experiences in the following way: *“You were used to having sixteen people and then all of a sudden you’re on your own. The silence drove me crazy”* (Session 3:187)¹⁰⁷, whilst Harmony said: *“You have no one to talk to”* (Session 2: 301)¹⁰⁸. As such, participants seemingly lacked companionship immediately after departure from care, as they were mainly forced to transition from children’s homes where they had valued relationships with peers and staff, to solitary accommodation, where they were suddenly on their own.

Participants seemingly preferred to live solitude lives following their departure from care as they feared rejection, discrimination, emotional hurt and insecurity in an unfamiliar world. In this regard Jake said: *“I didn’t really explore the world. You know, once you’ve found a place or a corner you stay there, that’s*

¹⁰⁴ “Die enigste verhouding wat ek het is met haar en my kind. Ek het niks vriende nie”.

¹⁰⁵ “Ons het saam gesukkel en ons het saam gebou”.

¹⁰⁶ “Grootste ding wat my lewe verander het was maar my vrou en my kind, want ek dink as ek hierna ook kyk ek meen dit is van waar ek hulle ontmoet het af, is al die positiewe goed”.

¹⁰⁷ “Jy was gewoon daar is 16 mense en dan ewe skielik op jou eie. Die stilte dit het my mal gemaak”.

¹⁰⁸ “Jy’t niemand om mee te praat nie”.

where you feel safe and happy" (Session 2: 132)¹⁰⁹. Similar reports were made by Dakota who mentioned that she isolated herself following experiences of rejection from her peer group at university: *"I isolated myself after that. It was a terrible dark time for me"* (Session 2: 400)¹¹⁰. Skylar also reported on instances of isolation: *"I don't like going out that much. I can sit inside all day"* (Session 3:44)¹¹¹. Her preference to isolate herself seemingly originated from her childhood as she feared the world from which she was rescued as a young child. She apparently perceived the outside world as an intimidating place from which she needed to be rescued and protected. In this regard she said: *"I have a fear of the outside life"* (Session 2: 400)¹¹².

Adding to this, Skylar stated that she spent most of her time in the safety of the children's home, also residing in care during weekends and holidays. As such, Skylar received limited opportunities to gain exposure to the world outside of the children's home. In this regard she mentioned: *"Because I grew up that way, you stay at one place. You are in a children's home, you never go anywhere. If you go somewhere it's to school and home and you get dropped off and picked up. You don't go on your own"* (Session 4:66)¹¹³.

One other possible reason found in the results of the study regarding young adult care leavers' tendencies to isolate themselves following departure from care relate to their "identities" as "orphans". In this regard participants reported that they felt peculiar due to their complicated emotional and economic backgrounds. As a result, they seemingly avoided contact with peers and romantic partners, in turn isolating themselves and intensifying their loneliness. Pertaining to this Dakota stated: *"I was this orphan so I felt very lonely"* (Session 2: 391)¹¹⁴. Similar reports were made by Harmony: *"You go with this mentality and sword over your head that you're an orphan. I'm abandoned and no one loves me"* (Session 2: 386)¹¹⁵.

Related to this, participants reported that they isolated themselves following departure from care due to experiences of vulnerability and a lack of family support. As they did not have family members to which they could turn to for support, they reportedly felt socially, emotionally and economically disadvantaged, which in turn caused them to experience high levels of fear, vulnerability, anxiety and shame. Harmony stated: *"You're a gazelle. Alone. You are in the bush and they know that you are alone and vulnerable"*

¹⁰⁹ "Ek het ook nie regtig die wêreld gaan explore nie. Dit is maar, jy weet jy voel maar sodra jy 'n plekkie het of 'n hoekie het, dan sit jy maar daar in hom".

¹¹⁰ "Ek het myself geïsoleer daarna. Dit was vir my 'n verskriklike donker tyd".

¹¹¹ "Ek is nie baie lief om uit te gaan nie. Ek kan die heeldag hier sit".

¹¹² "Ek het 'n vrees vir die buite wêreld".

¹¹³ "Omdat ek so groot geword het, jy bly op een plek. Jy's in 'n kindershuis, jy gaan nooit nêrens nie. As jy iewers gaan dis skool toe en huis toe en jy word opgetel en afgelaai. Jy gaan nie op jou eie".

¹¹⁴ "Ek is hierdie weeskind gewees, so ek het baie eensaam gevoel".

¹¹⁵ "Jy gaan loop met die mentaliteit en met die swaard oor jou kop, van eks nou 'n weeskind, en ek's weg gegooi. Niemand is lief vir my nie".

(Session 2: 301)¹¹⁶, indicating her perception that she was vulnerable for falling prey to community members who might take advantage of her. Harmony expressed her concerns in the following way: *“That’s why they get dumped in holes and wells. They’re vulnerable. Who’s going to care? Who’s going to say something if I attack you? Who’s going to notice? Who’s going to care if I mess with you? If I wipe the floor with you, who’s going to care? You’re anyway an abandoned child”* (Session 2: 302)¹¹⁷. As such, in an attempt to protect themselves from harm participants seemingly limited social exposure with community members, resulting in self-imposed isolation.

5.3.3.2 Category b: Coping with vulnerability due to being stigmatised

Participants reported multiple instances of stigmatization and discrimination, which they allegedly experienced whilst making the transition to independence but also during placement in care, having a continued influence on their approach to the transition process. Pertaining to this Harmony mentioned that her status as a “child born out of infidelity” continued to influence her as a young adult: *“I’m a product of his infidelity. So yes, a lot of my problems in life came from that. My whole life. I can’t tell you how many times it was night for me because of that”* (Session 1: 247)¹¹⁸. As such, Harmony’s perception of being stigmatized due to being born out of wedlock, continued to cause her embarrassment, dishonour and shame whilst making the transition to independence.

While being placed in care, community members apparently often categorised child care residents as “orphans”. This term appeared to carry negative connotations for the participants, including for them being viewed as criminals, vulnerable, victimised, socially isolated and helpless. In this regard Dakota highlighted: *“I always felt half uncomfortable. It was these rich girls who came out of rich homes and I was this orphan”* (Session 2: 391)¹¹⁹; and also: *“She’s from a children’s home, nothing will come of her, and you shouldn’t associate yourself with her. That day broke me and it was the type of stigma that I feel stayed by me psychologically”* (Session 2: 398)¹²⁰. This idea was similarly emphasised by Jake: *“Even when children hear you’re from a children’s home they put away their wallets and money thinking you’re a criminal”* (Session 2:146)¹²¹, and: *“As a children’s home child you feel you can dress normal and look normal but you don’t feel normal. Everyone stares at you with these big eyes and you feel like*

¹¹⁶ “Jy’s ‘n bokkie. Alleen. Wat in die bos is en hulle weet jys afgesonder van jou trop en jy is kwesbaar”.

¹¹⁷ “Dis hoekom hulle in gate en putte en dinge gedrop word. Hulle is kwesbaar. Wie gaan omgee? Wie gaan nou as ek jou hier aanval vir my kom ietsie kom sê? Wie gaan agter kom. Wie gaan weet as ek met jou mors? As ek met jou die flippen vloere smeer, vee, wie gaan omgee. Jy’s anyway ‘n weggooi kind”.

¹¹⁸ “Ek is ‘n produk van sy infidelity. So, ja, in daaruit het baie probleme in my lewe gekom. My hele lewe. Ek kan nie vir jou sê hoeveel kere nie, was dit vir my nag as gevolg van dit”.

¹¹⁹ “Ek het half altyd ongemaklik gevoel. Dit is hierdie ryk meisies wat almal uit hierdie ryk huise uitkom, en ek is hierdie weeskind gewees”.

¹²⁰ “Sy kom uit ‘n kinderhuis uit, niks gaan van haar word nie, en jy moet jouself nie met haar assosieer nie. Daai dag het my gebreek en dit was die tipe stigma wat altyd half ek gevoel het, sielkundig, bly by my”.

¹²¹ “Selfs kinders as hulle hoor jy is in die kinderhuis, bêre hulle, hulle beursies en geld en dink jy is ‘n groot krimineel”.

an outsider and don't want to mix" (Session 1:118)¹²². In further support, Harmony accounted: *"There were people who thought children's home child meant you had a disease that's contagious"* (Session 2:286)¹²³.

According to the participants not having stable relationships with biological family members is associated with a lack of support by society in general. Pertaining to this, participants described experiences of anger, shame and frustration when they were shown empathy, pity or compassion due to adverse childhood experiences and perceived experiences of vulnerability. Skylar reported: *"Orphan. I hate that word. It actually hurts me a lot and that oh shame"* (Session 3:50)¹²⁴, whilst Troy stated: *"I won't tell them where I grew up coz they will just feel sorry for you and treat you like, oh he grew up there, do you want food do you want whatever. I don't like people must feel sorry for me and I'm pretty fine on my own now. They mustn't give me mothers"* (Session 1:241). Jake similarly reported that he felt insulted when individuals displayed pity, expressing his experiences: *"When people know you were in a children's home and they begin to show sympathy, that frustrates me, it drives me crazy"* (Session 2:132)¹²⁵. As such, during their transition to adulthood, care leavers often refrained from self-disclosure and seemingly deflected questions regarding their childhood in order to avoid stigma, pity and empathy from community members. Moreover, participants were seemingly not always truthful about their childhood experiences and care residency whilst making the transition to independence.

5.3.3.3 Category c: Refraining from unhealthy and harmful behaviour

Substance abuse was prevalent in the lives of this group of participants (with the exception of Skylar) especially within the first three years following departure from care. Harmony for example reported that she did not complete her tertiary studies due to alcohol abuse. Similarly, Dakota mentioned that she participated in sexually promiscuous behaviour whilst abusing substances: *"I was promiscuous, but only when I was on substances"* (Session 2:382)¹²⁶. As a result, she had a criminal record for driving under the influence of alcohol. Troy reported that he moderately consumed alcohol over weekends: *"Not like as in heavy, like now and then. Ok I drink every weekend"* (Session 1:232).

Jake mentioned that he abused alcohol and drugs during his placement in care: *"I can remember standard seven I smoked weed every day, in the mornings before school. Yes, we even smoked during exam times before we go write"* (Session 2:140)¹²⁷. He reportedly stopped abusing alcohol and drugs

¹²² "As 'n kindershuis kind voel jy, jy kan normaal aantrek, jy kan normaal lyk maar jy voel dit nie. Almal kyk jou met hierdie oë en jy voel net uit, jy wil nie meng nie".

¹²³ "Daar was mense, wat dink, kindershuis beteken jy het 'n disease wat aansteekbaar is".

¹²⁴ "Weeskind. Ek haat daai woord. Dit maak my hart eintlik baie seer en daai "ag shame".

¹²⁵ "As mense weet jy was in die kindershuis en hulle begin vir jou simpatie gee. Dit frustreer my, dit maak my mal".

¹²⁶ "Ek was maar ook promiscuous, maar net as ek op 'n substance was".

¹²⁷ "Ek kan onthou standard sewe het ek elke dag weed gerook, in die oggende voor skool het ons gerook. Ja, ons het selfs in eksamen tye voordat jy gaan skryf dan rook jy".

following his departure from care as he did not experience a need for alcohol and drugs at that stage: *"No that I got used to at school. Yes, it was out of my system"* (Session 3:185)¹²⁸. Troy reportedly consumed cannabis: *"I haven't even tried drugs, ok weed, just weed. I used to but not anymore"* (Session 1:232). As such, the results of this study indicate that the participants used drugs and abused alcohol shortly following departure from care. According to the participants, they engaged in such behaviour to avoid rejection and to gain acceptance from their peer group. Dakota explained: *"I got involved in the wrong things and made wrong decisions. I looked for acceptance from people and I felt that I didn't fit in anywhere. I experimented with the wrong things"* (Lifestory: 506)¹²⁹.

Although the participants were not specifically questioned about their sexual behaviours, data related to this topic emerged when they described their romantic relationships. According to the results of the study two participants seemingly engaged in promiscuous sexual behavior. Harmony reported that on multiple risky sexual behaviours: *"I was in relationships where I was sexually abused. I get all these jollers and these common, low men who only want to jol and party and they have no depth in life"* (Session 2:298)¹³⁰, while Dakota directly indicated: *"I was very promiscuous"* (Session 2:405)¹³¹; and also: *"I was into them, but physically, like sexually. I used them for sex as I knew that I did not want a relationship"* (Session 3:424)¹³². Both Dakota and Harmony reported that they participated in at risk sexual behaviour in an attempt to fulfil their needs for love and belonging. In this regard Dakota said: *"We also looked for love, sexually"* (Session 4:402)¹³³. She later reported that she used sexual encounters to escape difficult life circumstances: *"For me it was escapism. Totally an escapism"* (Session 2:405)¹³⁴.

Harmony reported that she got involved in at risk sexual behaviour as she struggled with boundary setting. She mentioned that she was reluctant to offend sexual partners and that she was open to being coerced into sexual relationships, as she found it difficult to say no. In this regard Harmony reported: *"I don't want to say or do anything to offend anyone. I think it's because I was molested. I'm too scared to say anything, and now I leave it and just allow it"* (Session 2:299)¹³⁵. It should be noted that Dakota and Harmony were the only participants who reportedly experienced sexual abuse during childhood.

¹²⁸ "Nee wat daai het ek darem gewoond geraak op skool. Ja dit was uit my sisteem uit".

¹²⁹ "Ek het by die verkeerde dinge betrokke geraak en baie verkeerde besluite geneem. Ek het aanvaarding gesoek by mense en gevoel ek pas nerens in nie. Ek het verder geeksperimenteer met die verkeerde dinge".

¹³⁰ "Ek was kort-kort in 'n verhouding waar ek seksueel misbruik was. Ek kry al hierdie jollers. Ek kry al hierdie common, lae ouens wat byvoorbeeld hulle wil net, jy weet, jol en party en hulle het geen diepte in die lewe nie".

¹³¹ "Ek was baie losbandig gewees".

¹³² "Nee, ek was in to them maar fisies gewees, soos seksueel. Ek het hulle gebruik vir seks basies, want ek het geweet ek soek nie 'n verhouding nie".

¹³³ "Ons het ook liefde gesoek deur seksueel".

¹³⁴ "Dit vir my 'n escapism, dis vir my heeltemal 'n escapism".

¹³⁵ "Ek wil niks sê of doen wat iemand moet offend nie. Ek dink, ek dink dis omdat ek gemolesteer was. Ek is te bang om iets te sê en nou los ek, laat ek dit net toe".

5.4 FINDINGS ON YOUNG ADULT CARE LEAVERS' EXPERIENCES OF THE PROCESS OF TRANSITION

In the next section the researcher presents the findings of the study relating to experiences typically associated with the transition from residential care to independence, by situating the results against existing literature. She highlights congruent findings, contradictions and new insight gained from the results of the study.

5.4.1 CARE LEAVING AS A PROCESS RATHER THAN AN ABRUPT INCIDENT

The findings of this study highlight the trend of young adult care leavers typically being forced to leave places of care and bring an abrupt end to formal support networks at the age of 17 to 19 years, without being thoroughly prepared or eased into the process. In support of this finding, existing studies consistently indicate that the majority of young people leave care at 17 years of age (Dixon & Stein, 2005; Biehal *et al.*, 1995; Stein & Carey, 1986). Participants in this study experienced abandonment and fear as a result of them being expected to leave care at a relatively young age, with limited preparation for independent living. In this regard young adult care leavers experienced that they were not sufficiently skilled to pursue an independent life and that they lacked the relevant knowledge regarding the "outside world". Due to this, participants wanted to remain in care as they were seemingly not prepared for the transition to independent living.

However, prolonging placement is generally not permitted at children's homes in South Africa. In this regard, a study conducted by Stein (2005) found that young adult care leavers are often denied the opportunity to extend their placement at children's homes. This may in turn have a negative effect on young adult care leavers' self-esteem and educational attainment (Stein, 2005). As such, the findings of this study are supported by Stein's (2005) description of care leavers as becoming '*instant adults*' who immediately following release from care are expected to live an independent life, with frighteningly little preparation, material possessions and support (Foster, 2002).

This study further indicates that the majority of the young adult care leavers were expected to live alone when leaving care. Some participants were placed in student hostels and not expected to live alone, but reportedly experienced loneliness and abandonment as they received limited support from places of care, and did not have anywhere to go during holiday times. In this regard, despite participants' efforts to contact their former children's homes, caregivers provided young adult care leavers with limited emotional and practical support, in their view. As a result young adult care leavers experienced a sudden ending of care, placing them at a disadvantage as they were expected to suddenly cope with adult responsibilities at a far younger age than other young people who receive support from stable

families. In support of this finding, Propp *et al.* (2003) found that care leavers are typically expected to transition directly from childhood dependence to adult self-sufficiency (Propp *et al.*, 2003).

The researcher further found that young adult care leavers were not able to rely on family support, places of care, community networks or government to ease their transition into independent living in this study. Stein (2005) similarly indicates that young adult care leavers typically do not have social networks or family connections where they can gain support. This can in turn cause care leavers to experience various challenges while making the transition to independence. To this end, Jones (2002) found that the successful transition to independent living in South Africa, as in other Western countries, depends on gaining employment, following completion of school and further education, and training. As such, young people often depend on their families for emotional, financial and practical support, whilst they are completing their educational training, often into their early twenties (Jones, 2002). For example, a recent study by Shirk and Stangler (2004) indicate that parents of young adults do not expect them to complete the transition to adulthood till the age of 26 years.

For the average young person, the movement towards independence through leaving home generally involves a rather lengthy transition period (a process) during which young people occasionally leave and return home. An intermediate or halfway stage may be seen between dependence and independent living during which young people will typically reside with extended family or in a supportive institution, such as a college or hostel (Mauders *et al.*, 1999). On the contrary, the participants of this study did not have any 'safety net' to which they could return, and they subsequently had to face suddenly imposed independence alone and in isolation. This trend seems typical of young adults leaving residential care, who do not have a healthy family support structure. In support of this finding, Aldgate (1994) found that young adult care leavers often lack a safety net of family and friends which may cause them to experience high levels of vulnerability and uncertainty when expected to transition into independence.

In addition to experiencing a lack of support following departure from care, young adult care leavers experienced an end of care situation that was sudden and emotionally painful as they were expected to quickly venture into the world with limited skills for independent living, as well as limited material resources. Van Breda, Marx and Kader (2012) similarly indicate that the sudden ending of care and a lack of sufficient skills for independent living can result in care leavers experiencing loneliness, fear and vulnerability when they find themselves unable to cope with societal expectations (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012). In addition, according to the findings of this study, young adult care leavers may experience various challenges whilst making their way to independence, which may in turn intensify their feelings of apprehension when they for example experience difficulty to maintain accommodation, to obtain educational qualifications and adapt into society. In this regard, young adult care leavers in

this study furthermore experienced loneliness and found it difficult to form a sense of self due to a lack of social networks and family connections. These findings are supported by the findings stemming from research by Stein (2006), indicating that the negative emotions young adult care leavers experience following departure from care can be attributed to factors, such as the sudden ending of care, a lack of independent living skills and the shortage of ongoing financial, and social support, typically offered by most healthy families of origin, but which is not generally present in the lives of these care leavers.

The young adult care leavers who participated in this study appeared to experience poor starting points at the time of leaving care and the majority began their adult lives with little formal preparation. As a result, the young adult care leavers experienced their transition from residential care as distressing and the care leaving occurrence provoked a complex set of emotions including fear, abandonment, apprehension and anxiety. These findings are common and universal of care leaving experiences shared by most young people as they make the transition from life in a residential home to independence and adulthood (Stein, 2006). The present study therefore supports existing literature on disadvantages and challenges faced by care leavers across the globe (Dixon & Stein, 2005; Sinclair, Baker, Wilson & Gibbs, 2005; Massinga & Pecora, 2004; Biehal, Clayden, Stein, & Wade, 1995; Stein & Carey, 1986). Like their international counterparts, participants of this study also indicated experiences of accelerated, compressed and abrupt ending of care, rather than a gradual process, which would support the transition that follows (Stein, 2006).

Although the majority of participants indicated the transition as abrupt and sudden, one of the participants recalled a more organised transition and experienced less anxiety and uncertainty, as he relied on his weekend carers for emotional and practical support. As such, this particular participant's experiences is not congruent with other findings, such as those following the studies by Van Breda, Marx and Kader (2012) as well as Stein (2005) who postulates that most young adult care leavers experience a disrupt end of care process. The contradiction between these findings and the one participant in this study may be explained in terms of the personal experiences of the participants in Van Breda, Marx and Kader (2012) as well as Stein's (2005) studies, who did not have weekend carers to which they could turn to for support following their departure from care. This potential explanation aligns with findings that healthy and stable families are key to young people making the transition into independence, as indicated by Rutter (1999).

5.4.2 LACK OF CONTINUED SOCIAL SUPPORT FROM RESIDENTIAL CARE

The findings of this study indicate that the young adult care leavers experienced a lack of emotional and practical support from their children's homes, especially after leaving care. This left them with feelings of sadness, loneliness, abandonment and rejection. Participants experienced numerous negative emotions following their departure from care due to the losses they experienced, including, but

not limited to, the giving up of valued relationships with peers and staff members of the children's homes. Contact with housemothers that did occur was restricted in duration and frequency. Examples of insufficient support include housemothers being unhelpful when approached, lack of interest from children's homes, as well as limited of emotional and practical care. Levels of support from residential social workers also appeared to be lacking. In support of this finding, Foster (2002) found that care leavers often experience a lack of social support from their places of care, which may leave them feeling vulnerable, especially during times of adversity.

In this regard, a study conducted by Stein (2005) found that care leavers who are deprived from social support from children's homes will not experience continued relational bonds, in turn resulting in their psychological development as young adults being negatively effected. Pertaining to this Rutman (2005) demonstrates that youth in care, who maintain relationships with at least one important adult, are more likely to have successful relationship outcomes as young adults. Cashmore and Paxman (1996) as well as Green and Jones (1999) also reveal that care residents who experience ongoing positive relationships with social workers and significant others are far more likely to overcome adversities resulting from pre-care and in-care experiences and to prosper when they leave care. As such, the findings of this study emphasise the need for young adult care leavers to continue with relational bonds with their places of care, following the departure from care, as this may support care leavers to thrive whilst they are making the transition to independent living. Based on the findings of this study, this however does not seem to be general practice in the South African context, necessitating ongoing research in this area, with the aim of informing practice.

Insight from this study thus relate to children's homes often withdrawing social support following young adult care leavers' departure from care. Several reasons can explain this trend, such as housemothers typically experiencing high workloads and responsibilities at places of care, while receiving limited financial compensation. This finding is supported by a study conducted by the Mamelani Projects (2013), indicating that housemothers and social workers often experience high case loads which it difficult for children's homes to provide young adult care leavers with support, following their departure from care. In response, the young adult care leavers who participated in this study attempted to compromise by seeking support from their families of origin, however their efforts to accomplish this were often unsuccessful. In support of this finding, a study by Stein (2005) indicates that young adult care leavers are often deprived of emotional and practical support from biological families as circumstances typically do not change during care leavers' placement in care. This was also found in the current study.

An interesting finding from this study relates to one of the young adult care leavers receiving emotional and practical support from a sibling following departure from care. This finding indicates the importance

of maintaining contact between siblings who are separated and, where possible, placing siblings together, as this may have implications for the children when making the transition to adulthood, or later in life. Relationships with siblings may support young adult care leavers to develop a sense of security. In support of this finding, Bilson and Barker (1992) report that contact between siblings can support young adult care leavers to develop a secure sense of self and that sibling bonds are often particularly strong when parenting is not effective. Although the Children Act of 1989 emphasises contact and work with sibling groups, Bilson and Barker (1992) found that this has remained a neglected area of practice and requires ongoing research.

5.4.3 ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Various studies in a number of countries indicate the trend of poorer educational engagement and attainment for young adult care leavers, when compared with same-age peers who did not reside in care (Smithgall, Gladden, Howard, Goerge & Courtney, 2004; Biehal *et al.*, 1995; Heath, Colton & Aldgate, 1994; Jackson, 1994; Stein, 2006). In this regard it has been found that young adult care leavers often lack educational qualifications and as a result hold unskilled jobs (Wade & Dixon, 2006; Broad, 1998). Explanations for low levels of educational attainment for young adult care leavers include factors, such as disrupted and impoverished early childhoods as well as numerous changes of placement and schools prior to departure from care (Cameron, 2007; Wade & Dixon, 2006; Broad, 1998). While educational outcomes for former care residents are documented, relatively little is known about how young adult care leavers perceive educational participation and attainment. As such, there seems to be a gap in the existing literature on how care leavers, who do achieve educational success, manage to complete their educational qualifications (Cameron, 2007). Based on the findings of this study some new knowledge may be added to this field of interest.

Gerber and Dicker (2006) report that children's home residents are twice as likely as peers from family homes to drop out of high school. As such, literature suggests that care leavers often do not qualify for tertiary education programs as they do not meet the academic requirements needed for acceptance into a tertiary education institute. In this study findings however indicate that participants who displayed educational promise at school were awarded with academic bursaries to attend tertiary educational facilities as a result. A possible reason for these contradicting findings may be found in the experiences of the participants of this study during their placement in care. Unlike the study conducted by Gerber and Dicker (2006) young adult care leavers who participated in this study reported on sound relationships with housemothers and weekend carers who encouraged them to succeed educationally. Concerned others also conveyed the message to participants that they could potentially have a better quality of life as young adults should they attain educational success. Moreover, participants of this study were made aware that financial support for tertiary studies was dependent on academic progress

during placement in care. In support of this finding, Jackson *et al.* (2005), Bebbington and Miles (1998) as well as Broad (1998) found that care residents who were raised in the care of staff emphasising on the importance of educational participation for future success, performed academically during placement in care. In recognition of this, the Children Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of care residents (Cameron, 2007).

Despite reports of receiving financial support from children's homes, young adult care leavers reportedly did not receive career guidance prior to enrolment at tertiary facilities. Therefore participants were often expected to make uninformed career decisions with educational enrolment being based on personal interest. In support of this, Dumaret, Donati and Crost (2011) indicate that it is essential to help young adult care leavers to explore career options prior to their departure from care as this may support them to complete tertiary qualifications. Pertaining to this, one participant out of the group of five young adult care leavers who took part in this study was reportedly forced to enrol for a degree other than her preferred career choice. This seemingly influenced this young adult care leavers' educational success as she discontinued a tertiary program due to a lack of interest. In support of this finding, Cashmore, Paxman and Townsend (2007) found that young adult care leavers often discontinue educational studies due to a lack of interest.

Other factors in the narratives of the participating young adult care leavers which seemingly negatively influenced their educational success included untimely responsibilities in terms of relationships and having children at an early age. Two participants halted their pursuit of further education following the birth of their first born children. A study by Pinkerton (2011) similarly highlight that young adult care leavers often do not complete tertiary studies due to unplanned pregnancies and early parenthood. In this regard, Cashmore, Paxman and Townsend (2007) also found that young adult care leavers may discontinue tertiary studies due to changes in circumstances, such as becoming pregnant. Although two young adult care leavers out of the group of five participants reportedly did not successfully complete tertiary qualifications due to unplanned pregnancies, they completed short courses following discontinuation from formal tertiary studies. However, courses were seemingly short- term in nature and limited in scope, and participants did not gain further qualifications beyond short vocational courses. It should also be reported that two participants who did not have children during enrolment at formal education institutions successfully completed their recognised tertiary qualifications.

Evidence was found that young adult care leavers who were in schools for learners with special needs were not awarded with tertiary education bursaries. One participant who attended a school for learners with special needs was awarded limited financial assistance from the children's home, based on a time frame, following her departure from care. Moreover, placement in a school for learners with special needs prevented this participant to apply for a degree at a formal educational facility as she did not

meet the minimal academic requirements for acceptance into a tertiary education institute. This participant took personal effort to gain additional skills as she completed secretarial, computer and office skills courses, whilst she was employed during the day and evenings.

One young adult care leaver completed four recognised degree qualifications at a university which seemingly supported her to attain employment in a highly remunerated occupation. The children's home provided the participant with financial assistance whilst she was completing her tertiary studies. Although children's homes reportedly provided for tertiary fees, the places of care seemingly did not provide adequate support to care leavers during enrolment at tertiary institutions. In this regard, one participant reported that children's homes were not aware of the norms at university hostels that students had to evacuate lodgings and this seemingly left her desolated during holidays. Fragmented emotional and practical support from children's homes was also reported by other participants, as they experienced a lack of involvement and monitoring from places of care whilst they were enrolled for tertiary educational qualifications.

In support of this finding, studies conducted by Mallon (2007) as well as Martin and Jackson (2002) report that although care leavers are dedicated to education attainment, they are often unable to take advantage of educational opportunities due to a lack of resources and support from children's homes. In further support, Cameron (2007) reports that young adult care leavers who do attain educational qualifications are often self-reliant and managing their lives and studies with limited support from children's homes. In this regard, it is important to note that successful completion of tertiary studies is not only related to financial resources but also to continuous practical and social support (Stein, 2006).

One other factor that reportedly had an influence on participants' educational participation was their personal perceptions regarding "children's home children", "orphans" as well as "abandoned children". This seemingly formed an essential part of young adult care leavers' identities during tertiary education years and often prevented involvement in educational activities. In this regard, participants of this study seemingly did not participate in activities presented at tertiary institutions as they experienced that they were different and atypical from university peers. De Lemos (1997) and Cavanagh (1995) similarly indicate that young adult care leavers are often perceived by others as having "below normal" intellectual and learning abilities. As such, there may be fewer expectations for young adult care leavers to perform on an academic level (Cavanagh, 1995). In further support of this Martin and Jackson (2002) found that young care leavers often perceive that are seen as underachievers who may fail, due to them not being afforded the same opportunities than young adults who were raised in traditional family homes.

The findings of these related studies may explain why the participants of this study often avoided participation in activities presented at tertiary institutions based on their fear for peer rejection. In this

regard, care leavers tended to isolate themselves at university institutions, as they perceived themselves to be different from their peers who were raised in family homes. Pertaining to this, young adult care leavers did not receive adequate emotional and financial support whilst they were attempting to gain higher qualifications, making them feel that they did not belong at tertiary institutions. In support of this finding, Jackson, Ajayi and Quigley (2003) found that young adult care leavers tend to fear discrimination due to their lack of social skills, social support, resources (money, clothes, transport) and psychological difficulties.

Another factor that reportedly influenced the young adult care leavers' educational attainment was participation in harmful behaviour. Participants reported on their involvement in alcohol and drug abuse, in an attempt to gain acceptance from peers and to experience a sense of belonging at tertiary institutions. As a result their academic performance was negatively influenced. Due to a lack of academic performance, children's homes in turn withdrew financial support, resulting in some young adult care leavers discontinuing their tertiary studies. In support of this finding, several studies highlight the negative impact of alcohol and drug abuse dependency on young adult care leaver's success at educational institutions (Lenz-Rachid, 2008).

The findings of this study thus indicate that the young adult care leavers had a considerable degree of interest and commitment to furthering their education. However, central to the educational success of the participants who attained qualifications, was a degree of self-determination, initiative-taking, self-reliance, motivation and commitment to achieve academically. Participants emphasised the importance of educational participation based on their belief that educational qualifications could support them to establish their own sense of self and gain a sense of control over their lives. This finding indicates the importance of education for this group of young adult care leavers. In support of this finding, Velleman and Orford (1999) regard educational success as one of the stabilizing factors in adulthood that may support young adult care leavers to recover from the negative impact of parental alcoholism in their childhood. However, on the other hand, factors such as lack of interest in the tertiary program enrolled for, alcohol abuse, children's homes withdrawing funds due to lack of the care leaver's academic performance, perceptions of stigma, untimely responsibilities in terms of relationships and having children at a early age, impacted negatively on the attempt to obtain tertiary education.

5.4.4 INITIATING AND MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS

Attachment theory (Fonagy, 2001) provides some explanation for the relationship complexities faced by young adult care leavers. According to attachment theory, a loving and nurturing relationship with at least one parent will promote the development of a sense of worthiness and self-esteem, as well as appropriate long-term social-emotional development, and mental health. As participants of this study were often exposed to instances of abuse and neglect from biological parents and were then raised in

care, they were not provided with opportunities to develop close relationships with their biological parents. Although the participants reported that they had close relationships with housemothers during their placement in care, relationships were often limited to one housemother and were not necessarily as loving in nature. Adding to the complexities, participants were forced to leave their children's homes, experiencing the abrupt ending of relationships with peers and caregivers. Existing research (Lips, 2007; Ward, 2000) suggests that the lack of social support that young adult care leavers may subsequently experience have a detrimental effect on their identity formation and development of intimacy in relationships.

Collins, Paris and Ward (2008) found that young adult care leavers occasionally live with their biological parents, siblings, and extended family members. Contradictory evidence was found in this study as no participants reported on residing with biological family members. However, all participants attempted to restore relationships with their biological parents and siblings as part of process of transition to independent living. As participants experienced limited contact with birth families during their placement in care and recalled instances of familial abuse, rejection and abandonment, it was however often difficult for them to form healthy relationships with biological family members following their departure from care.

In support of this finding, Jones (2002) as well as Biehal and Wade (2000) indicate that although care leavers will typically experience a need to have a sense of family and belonging, they may also experience inadequate relationships prior, during and following departure from care due to instances of familial abuse, rejection, disruption and loss in their lives. In addition, whilst participants' resided at the children's home, biological families seemingly continued to experience economic and social disadvantages. Regardless of such unchanged family circumstances, one of the participants reconciled her relationship with her father following his diagnoses with a terminal illness. Other participants occasionally visited their biological parents but the relationships were primarily based on the provision of financial support to biological family members. Therefore, the findings of this study indicate that, despite maintaining some contact, young adult care leavers found their families of origin to be unsupportive.

An interesting insight stemming from this study relate to the one participant attempting to identify with her siblings in order to experience a sense of belonging and to broaden her self-knowledge. She namely relied on a sibling for parental advice following the birth of her first child. As such, this participant's older sibling was a particularly important source of support and the relationship seemingly had a parental quality, as she relied on her for guidance. In support of this finding, studies conducted by Wade (2008), Jahnukainen (2007), Biehal and Wade (2000) as well as Dumaret and Coppel-Batsch

(1998) indicate that young adult care leavers who display resilience whilst making the transition to independence often experience protective resources, such as high levels of support by siblings.

Other important factors influencing the participants' relationships concern a lack of intimacy, trust and personal boundary settings, which seemingly originate from adverse childhood experiences and unsatisfactorily relationships with biological parents. In this regard the participants felt disappointed by their biological parents' inability to take care of them and then avoided close relationships based on their fear of repeated experiences of abandonment. In support of this finding, Collins (2001) indicates that young adult care leavers will typically experience a lack of trust due to adverse past experiences, frequent moves and separation from their family, which will contribute to the lack of long term and meaningful relationships in the lives of young adult care leavers, as was also found in the case of the participants.

Participants also experienced difficulty to disclose information on their personal backgrounds as they feared rejection. This may further have negatively influenced their relationships as self-disclosure is often deemed necessary to maintain warm and close attachments (Collins, 2001). Frampton (2002:24) similarly report that care leavers are often reluctant to mention that they were raised in care as they fear stigma and discrimination, as others may perceive them to be "*damaged goods*". Similar to the findings of this study, it is evident from other studies that care leavers may find it difficult to overcome the damaging emotional legacy of family problems and placement in care, which often renders them unable to form and maintain stable relationships (Downes, 1992; Stein & Carey, 1986).

One of the participants, out of the group of five care leavers, was seemingly able to maintain a loving relationship with his romantic partner. This participant viewed partnering as a crucial part of managing and establishing oneself whilst making the transition to independent living. Having a stable partner seemingly had a positive impact on this participant's transition and supported him to develop a sense of identity. The relationship with his wife enabled him to manage daily challenges, such as maintaining accommodation and gaining economic security, which he seemingly experienced whilst he was making the transition to independent living. Various research studies similarly found that relationships with stable romantic partners may imply protective resources that can support young adult care leavers to manage transitional problems such as finding employment (Wade, 2008; Jahnukainen, 2007; Biehal & Wade, 2000; Dumaret & Coppel-Batsch, 1998).

According to the findings obtained in this study participants experienced difficulty to form healthy attachments due to a lack of trust, intimacy, self-disclosure, accepting support and personal boundary setting. Moreover, according to this study, childhood adversities will have a negative effect on care leavers' attempts to maintain warm and trusting relationships as young adults (Khumalo, Wissing & Schutte, 2014). In support of this finding, Rutman (2005) indicate that care leavers can be emotionally

disengaged in relationships due to a lack of personal resources, such as trust and intimacy. This was also found to be true for the group of young adult care leavers who participated in this study. In further support Khumalo, Wissing and Schutte (2014) as well as Downes (1992) state that the difficulties young adult care leavers experience in relationships may continue into adulthood, thus denying them satisfaction in personal relationships.

5.4.5 FINDING AND MAINTAINING ACCOMMODATION

Existing studies reveal that obtaining suitable accommodation when transitioning out of care into adulthood remains a major challenge for most children's homes and young adult care leavers (Atkinson, 2008; Lenz-Rashid, 2006). As a lack of housing and unemployment are prevalent in South Africa, this may complicate young adult care leavers' attainment of suitable accommodation (Tanur, 2012). Contradictory evidence was found in this study as participants reported that children's homes arranged after-care accommodation on completion of their formal schooling. As such, following their departure from care, participants did not experience difficulty in finding suitable housing. A possible reason for the variations in findings might be related to the educational achievements of the participants. As participants of this study displayed educational promise they were awarded with academic bursaries, which reportedly made financial provision for accommodation expenses. Participants also reported on support from weekend carers which were not reported in the study conducted by Tanur (2012).

According to the findings of this study accommodation arrangements differed according to the personal circumstances of the primary participants. One participant was placed in a boarding house in an economically disadvantaged neighbourhood with adult community members who seemingly experienced economic difficulties. Although the participant did not report on the quality of the accommodation she experienced high levels of uncertainty and fear as she was expected to live alone in an undersized room. The children's home provided financial support for this young adult care leavers' accommodation for 12 months following her departure from care. Two participants were placed in student hostels where their basic needs were provided for. One participant was sent to a family home and then rented an apartment with the financial support received from his place of care. He lived on his own whilst completing a tertiary qualification. Similarly, the last participant lived alone in an apartment and received a tertiary education bursary that provided for his basic living expenses on condition that he performed academically.

In support of these findings, a study conducted by Elsley, Backett-Milburn and Jamieson (2007) indicates that young adult care leavers' accommodation facilities will vary according to their personal needs. The researchers further indicate that young adult care leavers who are placed in unsupported accommodation may experience loneliness and a lack of skills required for independent living. Similar

findings stem from study as participants expressed need for on-site accommodation where they could develop skills for independent living and receive support from residential care workers.

In general the participants of this study reported on good quality accommodation as their needs for shelter and sustenance were taken care of. None of the participants were homeless or experienced difficulties with accessing accommodation following their departure from care. However, three participants experienced difficulty to maintain accommodation and then had to rely on the support of romantic partners as the children's homes withdrew financial support due to a lack of academic performance. In this regard, two participants reported the risk of homelessness and financial challenges following poor academic performance and early pregnancies. Pertaining to this, participants did not complete tertiary qualifications and in turn secure stable employment. In support of this finding, Atkinson (2008) states that, as young care leavers are often expected to leave care at a young age, they may experience a lack of educational qualifications and skills that will make it difficult for them to gain financial resources to maintain stable accommodation (Atkinson, 2008). In this regard, other studies also report on high instances of homelessness for young adult care leavers due to a lack of vocational skills and employment (Dixon & Stein, 2005; Sinclair, Baker, Wilson & Gibbs, 2005; Pecora *et al.*, 2004; Biehal *et al.*, 1995; Stein & Carey, 1986).

5.4.6 LACK OF SUFFICIENT SKILLS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

According to the findings of this study, the children's homes did not provide care residents with opportunities to develop skills for independent living prior to departure from care. This had an influence on young adult care leavers making the transition to independent living, resulting in high levels of uncertainty and not feeling equipped for life. Participants were namely not provided with opportunities to develop basic skills, such as time management, managing a bank account, doing laundry, using public transport, budgeting, utilities shopping and cooking, as they adhered to rules that were put in place for the practical running of children's homes. In support of this finding, other studies describe the difficulties that young adult care leavers typically experience, in terms of life skills, such as financial management, using community resources, food preparation, problem-solving, decision-making, self-care and building a support network (Atkinson, 2008; Kroner, 2007; Mallon, 1998).

Participants of this study subsequently expressed frustration, helplessness and anxiety over their lack of knowledge and skills for independent living, when making the transition to independent living. Moreover, it was found that young adult care leavers experienced a lack of knowledge about employment interviews, salaries, identity documents and driver's licenses. In support of this finding, other studies found that within the current structure of most of the children's homes in South Africa the opportunities for developing independent living skills, whilst children are in care, are limited. This can be attributed to the vast numbers of children that reside in children's homes and the limited resources

of places and care to present independent living skills programmes (Atkinson, 2008; Kroner, 2007; Mallon, 1998).

Based on the findings of this study, young adult care leavers felt disadvantaged due to a lack of skills for independent living, especially when compared to peers who have been raised in family settings. In addition, children's homes expected the participants to manage independence following their departure from care, although participants did not attain the necessary skills prior to leave care. This often resulted in young adult care leavers isolating themselves and behaving more individualistically in comparison with their peer group. Participants for example reported that they consumed sweets for meals, and contacted other individuals to gain information regarding how to cook nutritional meals and how to wash laundry. In addition, the strain that a lack of skills for independent living introduced to the young adult care leavers, added to the challenges they were experiencing whilst making the transition to independence. In support of this finding, a study by Elsley, Backett-Milburn and Jamieson (2007) indicates that young adult care leavers often experience high levels of uncertainty when they are expected to live alone. Reasons for breakdown of accommodation include a lack of skills for independent living, such as cooking nutritional food, shopping, budgeting and cleaning.

An interesting insight stemming from this study relate to the findings that young adult care leavers' who were placed in care at six years and younger, experienced greater anxiety and fear when they were expected to leave care, in comparison with participants who were placed in care at a later developmental stage, after residing in a family situation for longer. In this regard it was found that participants who resided in care for prolonged periods of time had less exposure to skills training and the "outside world" during placement in care, causing them to experience difficulty to make the transition to independent living.

5.4.7 EXPERIENCES OF ISOLATION AND LONELINESS

Based on the findings of this study participants experienced a range of negative emotions whilst making the transition to independence. Reports included a combination of loneliness, uncertainty and isolation. In support of this finding, Van Breda, Marx and Kader (2012) indicate that the challenges young adults typically experience following departure from care are portrayed as an uncomfortable mixture of anger, loneliness, confusion, excitement and fear. Pertaining to this, the Scottish Executive (2002) reports that 40% of young adult care leavers reported isolation and loneliness as the most challenging negative emotions experienced, following departure from care, in their study.

The current study indicate that young adult care leavers' experiences of loneliness and isolation were often brought on by numerous losses following their departure from care, such as giving up valued relationships with peers and staff. In addition, participants were not accustomed to living

unaccompanied as they had spent most of their childhood years in the presence of care residents and housemothers. Another finding relates to young adult care leavers' reports about limited support received from the places of care and their families of origin. Research in several countries similarly show that young adult care leavers often experience loneliness and isolation, as well as a lack of social support from places of care (Hill *et al.*, 2001).

It was further found in this study that young adult care leavers often isolated themselves from community members as they feared an unknown world. Participants felt comfortable and safe in their homes and feared the unknown world based on their childhood years when the world was perceived as intimidating place from which they needed to be rescued and protected. In support of this finding, a study conducted by Elsley, Backett-Milburn and Jamieson (2007) indicate that young adult care leavers often experience fear following their departure from children's homes as care residents may not be provided with opportunities to explore communities outside of care. Pertaining to this, this study found that participants spent most of their childhood years' within the safety net of children's homes, often receiving limited opportunities to gain exposure to the reality of the world. As such, the findings of this study is supported by a study conducted by Dima and Skehill (2011:2535) which uncovered that young adult care leavers often prefer not to leave children's homes as *"they are disoriented because they walk into an unknown world, terrified by what's there waiting for them. Confused, panicked, feeling "up-rooted"*. This might explain why participants of this study often isolated themselves following their departure from care, when experiencing high levels of fear and vulnerability, which in turn may have caused them to experience loneliness.

This study also found that the participants isolated themselves as they felt vulnerable due to a lack of family protection. In this regard participants' felt socially, emotionally and economically disadvantaged, due to a lack of parental support, causing young adult care leavers to experience anxiety and shame. In support of this finding, Gelling (2009) state that young adult care leavers may feel vulnerable due to a lack of personal support networks. Related to this, participants of this study reportedly feared community members and that they may take advantage of them - financially, occupationally and/or sexually, should they become aware of the fact that the participants did not have family members who could protect them. This fear also relates to young adult care leavers' lack of ability to set boundaries in relationships. In an attempt to prevent possible exploitation, participants tended to isolate themselves and limit social exposure with community members.

Evidence was obtained that young adult care leavers attempted to prevent experiences of loneliness and isolation by actively seeking out family, peer and romantic relationships. However, young adult care leavers' attempts were often complicated by the difficulties they experienced to initiate and maintain committed and stable relationships. Everyday questions regarding their childhood seemingly

caused young adult care leavers to experience anxiety, resulting in self-imposed isolation. In agreement with this finding, Dima and Skehill (2011) found that young adult care leavers seem to be cautious about disclosing information regarding 'care identity' in relationships as they experience a need to avoid stigma.

5.4.8 IDENTITY FORMATION

The researcher identified a gap in literature regarding the identity formation of young adult care leavers transitioning out of care. Although a review of existing literature indicate some reference to identity issues (Samuels & Pryce, 2008; Anghel & Beckett, 2007; Horrocks & Goddard, 2006; Stein, 2005; Dumaret & Coppel-Batsch, 1998; Biehal, Clayden, Stein, & Wade, 1995; Parker, Ward, Jackson, Aldgate & Wedge, 1991; Stein & Carey, 1986), limited attention is paid to the development of the self and identity by care leavers. This study examined this and may add to existing literature on the identity formation of young adult care leavers.

In this study it was found that young adult care leavers often struggled with identity development due to limited familial interaction with biological families during and following placement in care. In agreement with this finding, a study by Van Breda, Marx and Kader (2012) postulates that young adult care leavers regularly experience disruption and instability before, during and following departure from children's homes, which may in turn interrupt their search for an identity. In this regard, the current study indicates that young adult care leavers attempted to reconcile relationships with biological family members following departure from care. Participants seemingly believed that relationships with biological family members could support them in gaining insight regarding their personal histories and heritage, and that this in turn could help them to develop a sense of identity.

Participants experienced limited memories of their childhoods, which were seemingly unhelpful for the formation of their identities. As a result one participant who had limited recollections of her personal history, attempted to build a new sense of self based on academic achievements, career accomplishments and economic stability. Another participant based his sense of self on the relationships that he had with his partner and daughter. In support of this finding, Baldwin (1998) and Biehal *et al.* (1995) found that young adult care leavers often develop positive identities relating to employment, parenthood and relationships. However, studies also postulate (Stein, 2005) that young adult care leavers need time for adjustment and exploration, hence requiring a period of exploration of adult roles and responsibilities. As such, an interesting finding of this study relate to the participants experiencing a lack of memories regarding personal histories and in turn struggling with identity formation, and then attempting to gain new sense of identities, following a period of exploration as young adults. Young adult care leavers namely attempted to develop positive identities through

success experiences and relationships with co-workers, romantic partners, families of origin and offspring.

According to the findings of this study participants were not provided with opportunities to do identity searching as they were experiencing a complexity of concerns whilst making the transition to independent living. Participants spent most of their time adapting to a new and different sub-culture whilst gaining qualifications, managing early parenting roles, earning a living and making provision for food and transport. In support of this finding, Dima and Skehill (2011), as well as Stein (2004: 109) found that young adult care leavers typically do not get time for exploration, freedom, risk-taking, reflection and identity search in the middle stage, the “*transition itself*”, but are rather expected to take on instant adulthood. Similar results were thus reported in this study, as participants premature, compressed and accelerated transitions made it difficult for them to develop a sense of identity, often leaving them feeling unsure and confused about their identities.

Despite ongoing challenges with identity formation, participants seemed certain that an essential part of their identities were linked to their placement in care. They referred to themselves as “*children’s home children*”, “*orphans*” and “*abandoned children*”. In support of this finding, Dima and Skehill (2011) posit that the experience of having been in care, may contribute to the formation of young adult care leavers’ identities. The young adult care leavers in Dima and Skehill (2011) also demonstrated a strong group identity and many tended to advocate their needs on behalf of the whole group. Similarly findings of this study indicate young adult care leavers demonstrating a sense of belonging to a large family of care residents. Participants’ described themselves as belonging to a greater group of “*children’s home children*” and due to this identity, which they reportedly formed during placement in care; they experienced that they were different and atypical from society members who were not raised in care. This perception reportedly affected their economic circumstances, sense of self and relationships. As such, according to the findings of this study, a general challenge for young adult care leavers’ identity formation was one of trying to manage a “spoiled identity of being a children’s home child”.

A study conducted by Bridges (2002) may be of relevance here, indicating a prerequisite for young adult care leavers’ transition to independent living, namely the release of identities as “old” identities (“*children’s homes children*”) to the forming of “new” identities as “members of society”. As such, whilst participants of this study were making the transition to independence they were caught between their old sense of self as “*children’s home children*” and new identity as “community members”. In this regard, this study found that young adult care leavers who were making the transition to independence, found it difficult to release their identity as “*children’s home children*”, which seemingly formed during their placement in care. Relating Bridges (2002) theory to the findings of this study, young adult care leavers may have experienced difficulty with the formation of their identities as they found themselves

in the intermediate stage of independence (transition itself). In the transition process itself participants typically experienced difficulty with the formation of their identities as they experienced a time of confusion, uncertainty, anxiety, and ambiguity and as a result a search for identity, whilst making the transition to independent living. This stage involved a time for the participants when the pre-transition stage had gone (pre-care and in-care experiences) and the post-transition stage (independence) did not yet feel comfortable for them.

5.4.9 COPING WITH VULNERABILITY DUE TO BEING STIGMATISED

Participants reported on multiple instances of stigmatization and discrimination, which they did not only experience during transition to independent living, but also during placement in care. The study found that young adult care leavers namely experienced stigma due to their child care residency and community members categorising them as “orphans”. This term appeared to carry negative connotations, when used by society, including being seen as socially isolated, inferior and helpless. In support of this finding, Dima (2009) states that care leavers are often discriminated against and made to believe they are of inferior intelligence. Following experiences of discrimination young adult care leavers often attempt to manage community living by striving to acquire an ‘ordinary identity’, thus losing the stigmatising “in care identity”. This however is not always possible due to negative stereotypes inflicted on them by society (Dima, 2009). In addition, nearly a third of the participants who took part in Dima’s (2009) study stressed the need to overcome negative stereotypes, such as general beliefs that young adult care leavers are placed in care due to personal deficit of character or behaviour, when most come into care as a result of family circumstances (Schofield *et al.* 2000).

International literature suggests that young adult care leavers are amongst the most excluded groups of young people in society due to lack of familial support and experiences of stigma (Dixon, Lee, Wade, Byford & Weatherly, 2004; Courtney *et al.*, 2001; Stein, 1994). Pertaining to this, participants of this study reported that being without a family was often perceived as being without support and not having healthy relationships with biological parents. In support of this finding, MacLean (2004) revealed that stigmatisation is perpetuated by the lack of opportunities that young adult care leavers receive to socialize with family members in the normal flow of society.

Participants of this study similarly indicated high levels of anger, shame and frustration when others showed empathy, pity or compassion due to their childhood experiences and perceived experiences of vulnerability. Participants subsequently often refrained from self-disclosure and deflected questions regarding their childhood to avoid stigma, pity and empathy from community members. In support of this finding, Frampton (2002) notes that care leavers are often reluctant to mention that they were raised in care as they may fear stigma and discrimination. In further support, the findings of this study

highlight that young adult care leavers were not always truthful about their childhood experiences and care residency whilst they were making the transition to independence.

5.4.10 REFRAINING FROM UNHEALTHY AND HARMFUL BEHAVIOUR

Alcohol abuse and drug use was prevalent for this group of participants especially within the first three years following departure from care. In support of this, Dumaret, Donati and Crost (2011) indicate that 16-20% of young adult care leavers practice alcohol and/or drug abuse within the first years following their departure from care. Similar findings stem from this study, with young adult care leavers often abusing substances whilst making the transition to independent living, in order to gain social acceptance and avoid rejection. Pertaining to this, it was found that one participant did not complete a tertiary qualification due to alcohol abuse.

The study further found that young adult care leavers also participated in sexually promiscuous behaviour whilst abusing substances and that one participant obtained a criminal record for driving under the influence of alcohol. In support of these findings, existing research suggests that care leavers are likely to use, and occasionally abuse, drugs and alcohol. Such behaviour serves as a form of escape from past childhood abuse and associated emotional disturbance (Broad, 2005; English & Grasso, 2000). For example, a study conducted by Barth (1990) found that 56% of the participating youth used drugs while in children's homes and 33% had experienced drug or alcohol problems since leaving care. As such, the findings of this study are supported by existing research, indicating a link between care experiences and drug abuse (Owen, 2000; Maunders *et al.*, 1999).

In terms of promiscuous sexual behavior this study found that two participants engaged in multiple at-risk sexual relationships. In support of this finding, related studies indicate that young adult care leavers often engage in high risk behaviours, such as unprotected sex, as such behaviour serves as a form of escape (Federici, 2003; Marsh & Wolfe, 2002; Thomas, 1997). Pertaining to this, Maposa (2010) also found that young adolescent care leavers tend to engage in unprotected sex with multiple sexual partners. In support, the participants of this study indicated their participation in at-risk sexual behaviour, linking this to an attempt to fulfil their needs for love and belonging. It was also found that one participant used sexual encounters to escape difficult life circumstances. This might explain why care leaving programs often focus on minimising young adult care leaver's health risks with respect to harmful sexual behaviour (Mamelani, 2013).

Another participant of this study engaged in at-risk sexual behaviour, due to her struggle with boundary setting. The young adult care leaver was reluctant to offend others. As a result she was open to being coerced into sexual relationships as she found it difficult to say no. She attributed this to instances of molestation prior to her placement in care. In support of this finding, some general problems with which

adult victims of child sexual abuse have to deal with (Niemeyer, 2007; Le Roux, 1997; Harter, Haugaard & Repucci, 1988; Wheeler & Walton, 1987; Briere & Runtz, 1986) include sexual adaptation problems, such as sexual promiscuity. It should be noted that the two young adult care leavers who experienced sexual abuse during childhood, were the two participants engaging in multiple at-risk sexual relationships during their transition to independent living, thereby indicating the link between childhood experiences and adult behaviour, specifically in cases where therapeutic interventions are lacking.

In terms of crime, one of the young adult care leavers of this study had to resign from employment due to allegations of theft. He then resorted to selling drugs as he experienced economic difficulties. In this regard Barth (1990) found that 24% of care residents in that study had been involved in criminal activities since leaving care. Another study reports that 38% of young prisoners and 23% of adult prisoners had experienced placement in care as children (Ogden, 1992). However, according to the findings of this study, instances of crime were only reported by the one participant, with the crimes not having a violent nature. No participants reported on instances of imprisonment for crime-related activities.

5.5 REVISITING THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THEME 2

In this section the researcher situates the findings on Theme 2 in terms of the theoretical perspectives that she regarded as central to the relevance and understanding of this study.

Erikson's *psychosocial development theory* (Erikson, 1963) portrays individuals as playing an active role in their psychological development through their attempts to understand, organise and integrate their everyday experiences. In applying psychosocial development theory to this study, the participants were in the *Intimacy versus Isolation (Young Adulthood)* stage of their psychosocial development. During this stage, individuals establish close, secure and committed relationships in order to experience satisfying development. Failure to do so might lead to a sense of isolation, loneliness and depression (Erikson, 1963). Based on the findings of this study, participants experienced a range of negative emotions including loneliness, uncertainty and isolation. The current study indicate that their loneliness and isolation were brought on by numerous losses following their departure from care, such as giving up cherished relationships with peers and staff. Evidence was obtained that the participants attempted to prevent loneliness and isolation by actively seeking out family, peer and romantic relationships. However, their attempts were often complicated by the difficulties they experienced to maintain committed and stable relationships, which exacerbated their loneliness and isolation. Thus, the researcher believes that Erikson's theory of psychosocial development is central to the relevance and understanding of this study.

Stroebe *et al.* (2002:151) states that individuals experiencing a severe stressor (relocation) and who lacks resources (social support); find it difficult to manage the challenges and demands of new environmental settings. This belief is in agreement with *cognitive stress theory*. In applying this theory to the findings of the researcher's study, participants reported that they were typically forced to leave places of care and experienced an abrupt end to formal support networks at the age of 17 to 19 years, without being thoroughly prepared or eased into the process. As such, participants experienced a severe stressor when they were expected to suddenly depart from care with limited resources and social support. As a result they found it difficult to manage various challenges whilst making their way to independence, referring specifically to relationships, educational qualifications, employment and accommodation. Cognitive stress theory (Stroebe *et al.*, 2002) therefore provides a deeper understanding and insight regarding the experiences associated with the process of transition to independence for young adult care leavers.

Keyes (2007) *well-being theory* refers to the elements of *social integration*, *social acceptance* and *positive affect*, which are described as *social well-being dimensions* (Keyes, 2007). *Social integration* refers to the evaluation of the quality of one's relationships within environmental settings. Participants reportedly experienced relationship difficulties whilst they were in the process of transition, which seemingly had a negative effect on their social well-being. Pertaining to this, participants referred to themselves as "*children's home children*" and "*orphans*" which reportedly formed part of their sense of self. Due to this identify formation, that participants seemingly formed during their placement in care, they perceived themselves as different and atypical from society members who were not raised in care. As such, according to the findings of the study, participants generally did not feel that they were part of their communities following departure from care, as their "spoiled identity of being children's home children" reportedly affected their relationships within different environmental settings.

Keyes (2007) *well-being theory* describes *social acceptance* as a factor of *social well-being*. Social acceptance refers to the character and qualities of individuals, illustrating social acceptance and perceiving others as capable of kindness. Individuals with high levels of social acceptance generally hold favorable views of human nature and feel comfortable with others. Pertaining to this, the participants of the study seemingly experienced low levels of social acceptance during the transition phase to independence. In support of this, the primary participants often isolated themselves as they felt vulnerable due to a lack of family protection. Participants reportedly also feared that community members might take advantage of them, should they become aware of their lack of family support. Moreover, in an attempt to prevent possible exploitation, participants reportedly isolated themselves and avoided social interaction. Therefore, experiences of mistrust and vulnerability seemingly had an influence on participant's social well-being whilst they were in the process of transitioning to independent living.

Keyes (2007) illustrates *positive affect* as one component of the *emotional* dimension of well-being. *Positive affect* is described as being regularly cheerful, being interested in life and being in good spirits. According to the results of the study the participants seemingly experienced low levels of positive affect whilst they were in the process of transition as they were attempting to manage a complexity of transitional concerns. Pertaining to this, participants reportedly spent most of their time adapting to a new and different sub-culture whilst gaining qualifications, managing early parenting roles, earning a living and making provision for food, and transport. As such, participants of this study generally did not experience high levels of *positive affect* during the “*transition itself*”, as they were expected to take on instant adulthood.

Keyes (2007) identifies *environmental mastery* and *autonomy* as elements of *psychological* well-being. *Environmental Mastery* is described as a sense of environmental mastery and competence, control over a complex array of external activities, effective use of surrounding opportunities and creation of contexts suitable to personal needs, and values. The participants of the study experienced challenges during the transition phase to manage their environments as they reportedly had to negotiate various adult roles with minimal support from places of care. As such, it seems that the participants experienced low levels of environmental mastery during the transition phase to independent living.

Autonomy is described as self-determining and independent behavior, resistance towards social pressures, regulation of behavior from within and evaluation of the self by means of personal standards Keyes (2007). It seems that the primary participants experienced limited opportunities during placement in care to develop the *psychological* well-being dimension of *autonomy*. As a result participants reportedly experienced challenges following their departure from care, specifically referring to regulating their behavior from within and resisting social pressures during their transition to independent living.

The *complex interactive dynamic systems theory* (Jörg, 2009) was also applied in order to understand how participants’ narratives and patterns of behaviour arose. Keeping this theory’s principles in mind, the participants of this study were intentional beings that co-created their narratives within their interpersonal and reciprocal relationships with other individuals. As such, their narratives and behaviour was seen as part of a complex system that was dependent on different conditions, where a small difference in variables, such as decisions and experiences lead to huge differences in adult outcomes (Paley, 2010). Pertaining to this, one of the participants, out of the group of five care leavers reported that having a stable relationship with a romantic partner seemingly had a positive impact on his identity formation and in turn had a positive influence on his transition process. In this regard the participant co-created his transition narrative with the support of his romantic partner as they managed transitional challenges together, specifically referring to accommodation and economic security.

Participants also referred to the interpersonal and reciprocal relationships that they had with their peer group and weekend carers. These relationships seemingly formed part of a complex system dependent on different conditions, which in turn had an influence on participant's narratives, behaviour and adult outcomes. As such, the participants of the study reported that their transition experiences were co-created within their relationships with other individuals, which seemingly also implied protective resources and/or risk factors, associated with the process of transition to independence.

5.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher reported on the findings of the second theme that emerged during the thematic analysis and interpretation phase of the current study. She presented insight regarding the *experiences associated with the process of transition to independence*. She made use of participants' narrative accounts and verbatim quotations, to enrich and authenticate the results she presented. She presented the sub-themes and categories that emerged following a process of inductive thematic analysis in order to indicate the results she obtained. After presenting the results, the researcher situated these against the background of existing literature, thereby foregrounding the findings she obtained. She highlighted congruent findings between what she found and what existing literature reflects, as well as contradictions she identified.

In chapter 6, she presents the next theme of the current study, providing an overview of the results and findings of the study pertaining the *post-transition experiences of young adult care leavers' transitioning to independent living*.

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CHAPTER 6

THEME 3: POST-TRANSITION EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG ADULT CARE LEAVERS' TRANSITIONING TO INDEPENDENT LIVING

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the researcher focused on the second emerged theme, namely the *experiences associated with the process of transition to independence*. In this chapter, she presents the third theme that resulted from the data analysis, namely the *post-transition experiences of young adult care leavers' transitioning to independent living*.

6.2 STORIES OF THE PRIMARY PARTICIPANTS WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE POST-TRANSITION PHASE

In this section the researcher provides her own narrative accounts of each of the primary participants, compiled from all data sources described in chapter 3 of the study. The researcher specifically describes the primary participants' post-transition experiences after transitioning into independent living, as well as the tasks and challenges associated with the final stage of independence. The stories provided here build on the introduction of the participants in chapter 4 (section 4.2) and chapter 5 (section 5.2), and should be read in conjunction with the information provided there.

In this section the researcher provides her own narrative accounts of each of the primary participants, compiled from all data sources described in chapter 3 of the study.

6.2.1 DAKOTA

Dakota was seemingly grateful towards the children's home for providing her with housing and educational opportunities. Upon completion of secondary school, she received a tertiary education bursary from the children's home and then moved into a university residency. After graduating from university Dakota reportedly gained employment, bought a car, rented an apartment in an affluent neighbourhood and completed a doctorate degree on a part-time basis. As a young independent adult she seemingly used career achievements to define herself, and to gain acceptance, respect and acknowledgment from community members. She maintained contact with her younger brothers and searched for her biological father as her mother told her that he resided abroad. She did not have stable relationships with her biological family members she seemingly had close relationships with a group of friends with whom she found comfort and acceptance. They were supposedly aware of her adverse childhood experiences and occasionally supported her when she experienced despondency,

related to insomnia, depression and anxiety. She reported that her peer group provided her with comfort and support as they were aware of the psychological difficulties that she occasionally experienced.

As a young independent adult, Dakota reunited with her housemother and maintained a stable relationship with a weekend carer. She apparently experienced secure relationships with older females who were in positions of authority. She perceived older females as role models and relied on them for advice, guidance and support. As such, she seemingly experienced stable relationships with mother figures that consoled her in times of challenging life experiences.

Dakota reportedly had a promising professional career that provided her with economic stability and opportunities to travel the world. She purchased an apartment in a prosperous neighbourhood and preferred living on her own as this reportedly provided her with a controlled living environment. Although she experienced the need for a stable romantic relationship, she had difficulty to maintain relationships and subsequently had multiple sexual partners. Even though she abused alcohol and drugs during the completion of her tertiary qualifications, she seemingly did not participate in substance abuse after receiving a criminal record for drinking whilst under the influence of alcohol.

Dakota indicated that her childhood years shaped and moulded her. However, as a young adult who made the transition into adulthood, she had to accept responsibility for her future. In this regard she mentioned that healing began when she realised that she was not responsible for her adverse childhood experiences. She chose forgiveness and personal well-being over resentment. However, this was reportedly an ongoing journey for her during the post-transition phase as she continued to struggle to respect herself whilst releasing shame, guilt and anger. As a young independent adult she continued to seek a sense of belonging, stable relationships and success experiences.

6.2.2 HARMONY

During placement in care Harmony reportedly achieved academically and qualified for a tertiary education bursary from the children's home. The children's home placed her in a student commune and as she experienced a need for belonging, she attempted to initiate relationships with her peer group. She reportedly participated in at risk sexual behaviour, and abused alcohol and drugs. As this had a detrimental effect on her academic performance the children's home withdrew financial support.

Harmony fell pregnant shortly after she discontinued her tertiary studies and moved in with the father of her first child, in an attempt to gain a sense of economic stability. Following the birth of her son she married her romantic partner but allegedly divorced as her husband was unfaithful. Following the divorce she established a relationship with a second romantic partner and fell pregnant with a second

child. She married her second husband but experienced rejection, despondency and loneliness upon realisation that her second husband did not inform his family that they were married. During her second marriage she was reportedly involved in an extra marital relationship.

As a young independent adult, Harmony subsequently resided in an office space with her second husband and her two children. They allegedly lost their home due to damage caused by a storm. She was concerned about the well-being of her children whom she maintained stable relationships with. She seemingly participated in various part-time employment opportunities but could not maintain employment for extended periods of time as she preferred not to work in controlled environments. Following various failed employment opportunities, she eventually worked as an administrative assistant for her second husband at his carpentry business. She apparently experienced disappointment as she did not receive recognition or financial reimbursement for this employment position.

Harmony and her second husband therefore experienced financial difficulties and even though she was apparently not happy in her marriage, she decided to stay in the relationship as she was concerned about the well-being of her children. She believed that if she had an education and support network she would not need a romantic relationship. Pertaining to this, when she was 24 years old, she located her biological mother but did not develop a stable relationship with her as her. She did not have contact with her family of origin or other extended family members.

As a young independent adult, Harmony reported that she perceived her childhood years and subsequent adverse experiences as valuable learning tools. She reportedly struggled with depression and even though she displayed optimism and hope for the future, this was not always sustainable. She often participated in self-reflection activities and wrote poems about experiences which seemingly made an impact on her life. She became passionate about children's rights and although she wanted to pursue a degree in law or counselling, financial constraints prevented her from furthering tertiary studies.

6.2.3 SKYLAR

Upon completion of grade ten Skylar was forced to leave the children's home at the age of 17 years. The children's home placed her in a boarding house with community members who were experiencing economic difficulties, and provided financial support for 12 months following departure from care. She enrolled for vocational short-courses and worked as a waitress during the evenings. She later worked as an administrative assistant at a law firm while continuing employment as a waitress during the evenings.

As Skylar experienced loneliness following departure from care she seemingly experienced an urge to be involved in a romantic relationship. She was reportedly uninformed about safe sex practices and fell pregnant at 19 years of age. She then moved into an apartment with the biological father of her first born child, however he soon abandoned them and as she had to move back in which she lived earlier. She continued to work as an administrative assistant and waitress, whilst her older sibling took care of her child.

Skylar formed a close relationship with a second romantic partner when her first born child was seven months old. She moved into an apartment with him and sent her first born child to live with her older sibling at their family home, until her second child was born. She reportedly experienced a lack of independent living skills, such as cooking and cleaning. She however also lived a separate life from her romantic partner as he frequently worked away from home. Although she was not happy in her romantic relationship, she decided to stay as she believed that she would not be able to survive without her romantic partner's financial support.

As a young independent adult, Skylar seemingly blamed the children's home for the economic difficulties she was experiencing during the post-transition phase of independence. Pertaining to this she reportedly believed that she was not able to attain tertiary qualifications and in turn professional employment as she did not complete grade 12. Due to this she preferred not to visit the children's home. She also expressed concerns regarding her mother and two siblings as they continued to live in poverty and despair. She occasionally provided her family of origin financial assistance and reported that they contacted her when they were in need of financial support. These circumstances seemingly made it difficult for her to build relationships with her family of origin.

Skylar participated in various part-time employment opportunities during this time. At the time of data collection she was employed at a debt collection company and did not earn a fixed income but worked for commission. Her life seemingly revolved around her two daughters and they followed a strict daily routine. She indicated to experience social anxiety and was cautious when she met new individuals. She preferred not to socialise with individuals outside of her apartment and she did not have close friends. She allowed acquaintances to live in their apartment when they experienced economic difficulties. Although she experienced financial difficulties she continued to have hopes and dreams for the future. She displayed a drive to succeed and was committed to working hard. She described her daughters as precious and reportedly taught them to persevere regardless of the obstacles they encountered.

6.2.4 TROY

During placement in care Troy performed well academically and as a result the children's village awarded him with a tertiary education bursary. He was then forced to leave the children's village to live with his grandmother in a different city. With the financial support of the children's village, he enrolled for a degree in entrepreneurship and moved into his own apartment. Whilst he was completing his tertiary degree he located his biological father whom did not display an interest in having a relationship with Troy.

After Troy completed his tertiary qualification he relocated to the city in which he was raised. He rented a house with two young adults with whom he had previously resided in care. He gained employment at a renowned retail store but had to resign from this position following accusations of stealing. Whilst he was unemployed his romantic partner fell pregnant and in an attempt to provide financial security for his new family he participated in illegal drug activities. Soon after Troy's 24th birthday his partner gave birth to their son. Although he was seemingly not in a committed relationship with the mother of his son, he visited them frequently.

As a young independent adult, Troy thus shared a one bedroom house with two other adult care leavers. He seemingly shared close relationships with them and they lived, worked and socialised together. He did not report on having contact with biological family members. Moreover, he apparently drank socially and occasionally used cannabis. Although he aspired to own a business and had the necessary qualifications to apply for professional employment, he was seemingly content with working as packing assistant at a warehouse. Even though he experienced financial difficulty he was able to provide for rent and daily living expenses. He was grateful to the children's village for providing him with diverse opportunities and was appreciative of the financial support he received for his tertiary studies. Pertaining to this, he continued to believe that the children's village borrowed him funds and that he will eventually have to repay them.

6.2.5 JAKE

During placement in care Jake had a devoted housemother and caring weekend father who encouraged him to perform academically. Upon completion of grade 12 he received an academic bursary from the children's home and enrolled for a degree in games programming and robotics. Following Jake's departure from care he lived in an apartment owned by his weekend father. The children's home continued to provide him with financial support for tertiary fees and accommodation. He seemingly believed that he did not belong at a tertiary education facility and avoided contact with community members and fellow students.

Jake became involved in a romantic relationship prior to completing his tertiary studies. His romantic partner fell pregnant and then moved with him. He discontinued his studies to participate in full-time employment as he experienced the need to provide financial support for his new family. Shortly following the birth of Jake's daughter, he married his partner. He reported that his wife supported him when he was experiencing economic instability following a failed employment opportunity.

As a young independent adult, Jake had occasional contact with his weekend carer and he referred to him as his father. He seemingly found it difficult to maintain relationships with his peer group and he also did not have stable relationships with his siblings, as they requested him to provide financial support for his mother. This caused tension in their relationship and he preferred to have limited contact with his biological mother who reportedly continued to abuse alcohol.

Jake's wife and daughter seemingly provided him with a sense of responsibility and maturity. He described himself as a strict and over-protective father as he wanted his daughter to be responsible and independent. He was proud of his self-reliant abilities as he took care of his family with very little assistance from others. He had stable employment as computer programmer and preferred to spend most of his time either at work or at home. He bought a house in a middle-class neighbourhood. His wife and daughter reportedly provided him with a sense of belonging and security.

6.3 RESULTS ON YOUNG ADULT CARE LEAVERS' EXPERIENCES DURING THE POST-TRANSITION PHASE

In the next section the researcher presents the results of the study that relate to the post-transition phase (Theme 3) by discussing the three sub-themes and related categories that emerged during thematic analysis of the raw data. The discussion is enhanced and enriched by means of direct quotations and vignettes. Figure 6.1 provides an overview of the emerged sub-themes and categories.




THEME 3: POST-TRANSITION EXPERIENCES		
Sub-theme 3.1: Trends in relationships 	Sub-theme 3.2: Things young adult care leavers had to secure during the post-transition phase 	Sub-theme 3.3: Factors contributing to the resilience of young adult care leavers 
Category (a): Contact with residential care Category (b): Relationships with families of origin Category (c): Romantic relationships and friendships Category (d): Forming new families	Category (a): Accommodation Category (b): Economic stability Category (c): Employment Category (d): Mental health	Category (a): Relationships with caring adult Category (b): Being street-smart and learning from mistakes Category (c): Learning from instances of adversity Category (d): Having goals for the future Category (e): Religion

Figure 6.1: Overview of emerged sub-themes and categories for Theme 3

6.3.1 SUB-THEME 3.1: TRENDS IN RELATIONSHIPS

A number of key qualitative categories emerged with respect to participants' ways of forming, maintaining and avoiding relationships within the post-transition phase related to contact with residential care, relationships with families of origin, maintaining friendships and romantic relationships, and forming new families.

6.3.1.1 Category a: Contact with residential care

Although participants reported that they experienced limited contact with residential care immediately following their departure from the children's homes, a different depiction seemingly emerged when they became independent young adults. Dakota for example revealed that she had regular contact with her housemother after leaving and that she visited the children's home during charity events, when she collected funds for the place of care. Similar reports were made by Jake who remarked that he had occasional contact with his housemother, but unlike Dakota, stated that the thought of the children's home as causing high levels of anxiety. He expressed his concerns about this: *"When I know that I have to go back to the children's home, even when I was in highschool, then I feel butterflies in my stomach. It's like when people go to graveyards; they get goosebumps and freak out"* (Session 2: 151)¹³⁶. Skylar explained her lack of contact with the children's home in a related manner: *"Sometimes I feel I don't want to go there anymore. There are too many things at that place that I don't even want to go back. I have no interest in going there. I feel angry about many things, very disappointed"* (Session

¹³⁶ "As ek weet ek moet terug kinderhuis toe gaan, al was ek hoërskool gewees, ek het net altyd dan kry ek so hol kol, butterflies in my maag. Ek weet nie, dis soos party mense as hulle begraafplaas toe is dan kry hulle hoendervleis dan freak hulle uit".

2: 20)¹³⁷. Skylar seemingly experienced anger and resentment towards the children's home for placing her in a school for learners with special needs. She also revealed that she felt disappointed due to her experience that the children's home abandoned her following departure from care.

Contrary to Dakota's and Jake's reports, Harmony, Troy and Skylar remarked that they did not maintain contact with their housemothers. Skylar expressed her thoughts as follows: *"At the moment she is not there anymore. She is gone now. No contact. We don't phone each other. She doesn't want to. She didn't have time for us anymore so we have very little contact"* (Session 6: 94). As such, Skylar ascribed the lack of a relationship with her housemother to her former carer not being interested in having a relationship with her. In addition, participants reported that they tended to rather keep contact with other care residents through social media. For example, Skylar mentioned: *"We only talk on facebook, how are you. No we don't, I do have contact with them, but we only say hallo and goodbye"* (Session 3: 48)¹³⁸. As such, participants' contact with previous co-residents appeared to be infrequent and limited to contact via social media.

6.3.1.2 Category b: Relationships with families of origin

Participants indicated various challenges in terms of relationships with their biological families. Pertaining to this, Dakota reported on contact with her stepfather and two younger brothers after leaving care however their relationships were seemingly based on the provision of financial support for her two younger brothers. She expressed her thoughts: *"Everybody told me that I enable them to do nothing, as I make it comfortable for them"* (Session 1: 385)¹³⁹. She furthermore reported that she ceased financial support when she realised that her brothers might not find employment if she continued to provide for them financially.

Similar reports were made by Skylar who had occasional contact with her biological family members and allegedly provided them with financial support: *"Our contact is that I have to send them money. When I have money then I have to take care of them"* (Session 1: 8)¹⁴⁰. Similarly, Jake revealed that his family members too requested financial support: *"My sister and brother ask me to contribute money to help but I just say no"* (Session 1: 104)¹⁴¹. As such, Dakota, Jake and Skylar seemingly did not experience satisfactory relationships with biological family members where relationships were often based merely on participants' provision of financial support to their families of origin. In support of this

¹³⁷ "Ek voel maar net partykeer ek wil nie meer soentoe gaan nie. Nie laat ek, daar's te veel goete, te veel dinge by daai plek dat ek nie eers wil terug gaan. Ek stel nie meer belang om soentoe te gaan nie. Ek voel kwaad oor baie goete, baie teleurgesteld".

¹³⁸ "Ons praat maar net oor Facebook, hoe gaan dit. Nee, ons het nie. Ek het kontak met hulle maar ons sê net hallo en goodbye".

¹³⁹ "Almal het vir my gesê ek *enable* hulle die heeltid, om niks te doen, want ek maak dit vir hulle gemaklik".

¹⁴⁰ "My kontak was maar net ek moet hulle geld stuur. As ek geld het moet ek maar vir hulle sorg".

¹⁴¹ "My sussie en boetie vra my om geld by te dra om te help maar ek sê net nee".

trend, a managing director of a transition home revealed that biological family members would occasionally contact young adult care leavers when they started earning a salary. She expressed her concerns about this: *"His family was never interested in him until he started earning money"* (Dyad interview: 93)¹⁴².

Another secondary participant reported that it was often difficult for young adult care leavers to renegotiate relationships with biological family members as they seemingly had different life goals. She voiced her concerns in the following way: *"The other big challenge that they face is that they have to integrate with their families and they have to separate their goals of working hard, having their own lives and how do I negotiate those relationships with my family"* (Reflexive interview: 93)¹⁴³.

The primary participants reportedly experienced a lack of interest from biological family members. Troy described an experience that he had with his biological father: *"He did take my number and he told me if he does remember stuff he's gonna phone me, but till today he hasn't"* (Session 1: 225). Skylar similarly experienced a lack of parental interest from her biological father: *"I don't know him. I just know he is my father. I don't know him and I have nothing. I don't have a bond with him. There is nothing between us"* (Session 5: 87)¹⁴⁴. Pertaining to this, Harmony reported that at the age of 24 years, she located her birth mother but following a few brief reconciliation they seemingly found it difficult to maintain a stable relationship as her mother was not honest about the circumstances that lead to her adoption. Harmony expressed her experiences as follows: *"She does not want to share the truth. She lies. She says the people who adopted me were older, a man and a woman that adopted me, that is not the truth. She said my real father died in a car accident, but she lies to everyone"* (Session 1: 246)¹⁴⁵.

Although Jake had regular contact with his biological mother and siblings during the transition phase to independence, he reportedly had limited contact with biological family members after he transitioned to independent living. He reported that his family of origin excluded him from family gatherings: *"I mean, they plan things together and I'm excluded"* (Session 1: 105)¹⁴⁶. He also mentioned that he preferred not to have contact with his biological mother as she continued to abuse alcohol and that he wanted to protect his daughter from his mother's harmful lifestyle. He expressed his concerns in the following manner: *"We got there the one day and then my mom was super drunk. Then she grabbed my daughter from my hands and she was still a baby. Luckily she didn't let her fall, but from there on I just*

¹⁴² "Sy familie het nooit in hom belangstel nie, tot hy begin geld verdien".

¹⁴³ "Die ander groot challenge wat hulle face is hulle moet integreer met hulle families en hulle moet dan onderskei, ek het my doelwitte en ek het onsettend hard gewerk hiervoor. Ek het my lewe en hoe negotiate ek nou daai verhoudinge. Jy negotiate aanmekeer daai verhoudinge met jou familie".

¹⁴⁴ Ek ken hom nie, ek weet net hy is my pa. Ek ken hom nie, en ek het niks. Ek het nie rerig 'n bond met hom nie. Daar's niks tussen ons nie".

¹⁴⁵ "Wil nie na vore kom met die waarheid nie. Sy lieg ook. Sy sê ja, maar my, die mense wat my aangeneem het was ook baie jare ouer gewees, was 'n ou oom en tannie wat my aangeneem het. Dis nie die waarheid nie, dis nie. Sy sê my regte pa is dood in 'n motor ongeluk, maar sy lieg vir almal daaroor".

¹⁴⁶ "Ek meen hulle beplan ook goed en reël met mekaar, en jy weet ek word net uitgesluit".

said no" (Session 1: 104)¹⁴⁷. A secondary participant also commented that care leavers seemingly found it difficult to build relationships with their families of origin as their circumstances seldom changed during placement in care. She expressed her thoughts regarding this: *"She told me aunty, you were right, my mom and dad did not change"* (Dyad interview: 1)¹⁴⁸. The managing director of a transition home made similar reports: *"So the reality is that the children stay here their whole lives or a few years, they turn 18 and they can't go back to their parental homes as nothing has changed there"* (Reflexive interview: 88)¹⁴⁹.

Harmony reported that she also did not have contact with her adoptive brother or extended family members. However, she seemingly reconciled with her biological father prior to his death. Similar reports were made by Troy as he stated that he did not have family members except for his grandmother. He expressed his thoughts regarding this: *"Actually there is no big family, just my granny"* (Session 1: 239). It was seemingly difficult for Troy to have a stable relationship with his grandmother as she resided in a different city. Skylar also noted that she too found it difficult to maintain a stable relationship with one of her siblings. She commented: *"I can't be close to her anymore. I don't know how to act towards her"* (Session 2: 21)¹⁵⁰. As such, all the participants reported that they were unable to establish and maintain stable relationships with their families of origin as relations were often characterised by conflict, disconnection, a lack of interest, untruthfulness from biological parents and infrequent contact.

6.3.1.3 Category c: Romantic relationships and friendships

Participants seemingly entered into romantic relationships due to loneliness and a lack of economic stability. In addition, Harmony and Skylar revealed that they felt pressurised to cohabit with romantic partners as they experienced economic insecurity. In this regard participants seemingly believed that involvement in romantic relationships could provide them with financial security and a sense of belonging. Skylar reflected on this: *"I'm forced to be in relationships due to my circumstances"* (Session 5: 85)¹⁵¹; *"I had relationships for the wrong reasons. I didn't have a choice. You have nowhere to go"* (Session 5: 85)¹⁵²; *"I'm not worried about emotionally, financially is my biggest worry"* (Session 5: 76)¹⁵³; *"We're only together because we have to be together, not because we care about each other"*

¹⁴⁷ "Ons het die een dag daar aangekom toe is my ma superdrunk toe gryp sy haar uit my hande uit en sy was nog 'n babatjie. Sy't haar gelukkig nie laat val nie, maar van daar af toe het ek net gesê jy weet nie".

¹⁴⁸ "Sy sê vir my tannie jy was reg, my ma en pa het nooit verander nie".

¹⁴⁹ "So die realiteit is die kinders bly hier hulle hele lewe lank of 'n paar jaar, hulle word agtien en kan nie terug gaan na hulle ouerhuis nie want niks daar het verander nie".

¹⁵⁰ "Ek kan nie meer lekker close wees nie. Ek weet nie hoe om met haar te wees nie".

¹⁵¹ "Ek is baie geforce om in verhoudings te wees deur my omstandighede".

¹⁵² "Ek het vir verkeerde redes verhoudings gehad. Ek het nie 'n keuse gehad nie. Jy het nowhere to go".

¹⁵³ "Ek is nie baie geworried oor emosioneel nie, finansieel is my groot worry".

(Session 5: 79)¹⁵⁴. Similar comments were made by Harmony: *"Most of the time I don't want to be there, but I don't know how to let it go because I'm dependent on him"* (Session 2: 300)¹⁵⁵. Harmony reported that she felt trapped in her second marriage: *"We have everything together. I will lose everything. If I want out then I have to be prepared to leave everything. Car, house, leave it all"* (Session 2: 300)¹⁵⁶. As such, according to the results of this study, Harmony and Skylar experienced discontent in their romantic relationships but continued to live with romantic partners as they believed that they could not leave due to financial constraints.

In contrast to the reports made by Harmony and Skylar, Dakota mentioned that she wanted to establish academic and career credentials, before pursuing a committed relationship. This was seemingly based on her experiences of physical abuse and mistrust in prior romantic relationships. Dakota stated: *"Then I was hit by my boyfriend at the time. He nearly killed me. On that day I thought I was going to die. The police stopped him. It was traumatic and I it felt like I stood in my mother's shoes. Then I made a decision to be so independent that I will never need a man and not make the same mistakes as my mother"* (Lifestory: 506)¹⁵⁷. As such, Dakota seemingly believed that economic stability could provide her with freedom of choice, should her romantic partner abuse her.

Although Troy did not report romantic relationships he experienced fulfilment and gained material support from friendships. He stated: *"With all my friends here, so I decided to stay here. We got a house we rented it out with another guy"* (Session 1: 230). Similarly, Dakota reported on the social and support she received from her peer group. Pertaining to this she noted: *"I have good friends in my life"* (Lifestory: 507)¹⁵⁸. In contrast to the reports by Troy and Dakota, Skylar and Jake explained that they did not maintain close relationships with their peer group. In this regard Jake said: *"I don't have any friends"* (Session 1: 121)¹⁵⁹.

In terms of the stability of romantic relationships Dakota and Harmony reported that they were unfaithful to their partners. In this regard Harmony mentioned: *"There was a guy that I met once. He was the perfect man. Exactly what I wanted, but I was married and I had children so sorry for you forget about*

¹⁵⁴"Ons is maar net saam omdat ons moet saam wees, nie oor ons rerig omgee vir mekaar nie".

¹⁵⁵"Ek wil meeste van die tyd, wil ek nie daar wees nie, maar ek weet nie hoe om dit te laat los nie, want ek is afhanklik van hom".

¹⁵⁶"Ons het alles saam. So ek gaan alles verloor. As ek wil uit, dan moet ek bereid wees om alles te los. Kar, huis, alles te los".

¹⁵⁷"Toe was ek deur boyfriend wat ek gehad het geslaan. Hy het my amper doodgemaak. Ek het daardie dag gedink ek gaan dood. Die polisie het hom kom stop. Dit was baie traumaties en ek het gevoel of ek in my ma se skoene staan. Toe maak ek daardie dag 'n besluit om so onafhanklik te word dat ek nooit 'n man sal nodig hê nie en nie die selfde foute as my ma sal maak nie".

¹⁵⁸"Ek het goeie vriende in my lewe".

¹⁵⁹"Ek het geen vriende nie".

it. Cut your emotions and forget about it" (Session 3: 320)¹⁶⁰. Related to this Dakota explained that she was untrue as she wanted to experience a sense of emotional control: *"I would have loved him, but I would cheat on him. I was so scared about my feelings and I felt insecure, because I liked him so much. When I sleep with other men it would make me less vulnerable. Then I am more in control of my emotions"* (Session 2: 402)¹⁶¹. As a young independent adult, Dakota thus experienced a range of difficulties in romantic relationships and in turn seemingly found contentment in living alone, and achieving her career goals.

Jake was the only participant who reportedly created a stable family life that centred on his wife and daughter. He mentioned that he experienced a strong sense of belonging with his wife and daughter, and that he had positive experiences as a young independent adult due to the relationships that he had with them. Pertaining to this he revealed: *"Biggest thing that changed my life was my wife and my child. If I look back on my life, since I've met them only positive things happened"* (Session 3: 192)¹⁶². As such, with the exception of Jake and Troy, participants mostly referred to challenges and stresses when discussing their romantic relationships.

6.3.3.4 Category d: Forming new families

The results of this study indicate that the majority of the primary participants became parents at a young age. Three of the five participants namely had children within 18 to 24 months after they left residential care care. Pertaining to this, Harmony and Skylar fell pregnant at 19 years of age and were mothers at the age of 20. Similarly, Jake became a father at 20. Harmony, Skylar and Jake were enrolled for tertiary studies at the time and was therefore not in a sound financial position to have children. Similar reports were made by Troy as he allegedly also experienced financial difficulties when he became a father at 24 years of age. As such, four of the primary participants became parents at a relatively young age and subsequently had to manage early parenthood with limited financial resources.

In terms of the attachment and the nurturing of children, Harmony reported that she experienced post-natal depression. She expressed her experiences as follows: *"I suffered from post-natal depression. I know this now, back then I did not realise it. You can't understand why you feel so depressed and blue"*

¹⁶⁰ "Daar was 'n ou wat ek eenkeer ontmoet het. Jis en hy was soos die perfekte man, dit was nou presies wat ek wou gehad het, maar toe's ek getroud en het kinders so sorry vir jou poppie vergeet maar daarvan. Jy moet maar daai emosies bietjie afsny, vergeet daarvan".

¹⁶¹ "Ek sou lief wees vir hom, maar ek sou hom verneuk het. Ek was so bang oor hoe ek gevoel het en insecure, omdat ek so baie van hom gehou het. As ek met ander mans slaap, sal dit my minder vulnerable maak. Dan is ek bietjie meer in beheer van my emosies".

¹⁶² "Ek dink die grootste ding wat my lewe verander het was maar my vrou en my dogter, want ek dink as ek hierna ook kyk, ek meen dit is van waar ek hulle ontmoet het af is al die positiewe goed".

(Session 5: 334)¹⁶³. Both Skylar and Harmony remarked that they found it difficult to form attachments with their first born children. In this regard Skylar mentioned: *"I couldn't really bond with her. I couldn't even hold her"* (Session 2: 18)¹⁶⁴. Harmony similarly stated: *"My first child was very difficult to connect with, because like you said, you can't connect. You can't connect with anything, so I knew I needed mother's instinct but deep inside I couldn't connect with my son"* (Session 2: 306)¹⁶⁵.

Harmony and Skylar also noted that they experienced a lack of knowledge about parenting skills. As a result, Skylar then asked an older sibling to take care of her first born child, when she moved in with her second romantic partner. She explained: *"I didn't know how to be a mother. I didn't even pay attention to her. I did nothing"* (Session 1: 17)¹⁶⁶; *"I didn't know what to do with her. I didn't know what a person did with a child. I didn't have a bond with her. We didn't spend time together. I couldn't hold her. I didn't want to play with her. I wasn't at home but it wasn't a problem for me. I was 20 years old. I was young"* (Session 1: 18)¹⁶⁷. Skylar apparently felt that she had to work to provide financial support for her daughter and her sibling. In this regard she stated: *"I have always been the one that worked, she had to take care of the children"* (Session 1: 17)¹⁶⁸. When her first born child was three years of age, she moved back into Skylar's apartment, following the birth of Skylar's second child.

Different reports were provided for Skylar's and Harmony's second born children. Pertaining to this, both of them reported that they were able to attach to their second born children and remarked that they enjoyed nurturing these children as they felt confident about their parenting skills at that time. In this regard Skylar noted: *"It changed when I had my second child. Then I had more responsibility and then it changed. Then I felt I wanted my own children"* (Session 5: 91)¹⁶⁹. As young independent adults, Skylar and Harmony therefore seemingly found comfort in the relationships with their children and the fact that they were emotionally attached to them. They apparently found meaning in these relationships with their children. Skylar remarked: *"The only good thing now is my children. Furthermore, you only live day by day as it comes"* (Session 5: 79)¹⁷⁰. Similarly, Harmony reported that her children were

¹⁶³ "Ek aan nageboorte depressie gelei. Ek weet dit nou, maar nou, daai tyd besef 'n mens dit nie. Jy verstaan nie hoekom voel jy so depressief en so blou"

¹⁶⁴ "Ek kon ook nie rerig met haar bond nie. Ek kon haar nie eers vashou nie".

¹⁶⁵ "My eerste kind was baie moeilik om aan hom te connect aan, want soos ek sê, jy kannie connect nie. Jy kan met niks connect nie, so ek het geweet ek het hierdie moederlike instinkte nodig maar ek konnie hier binnekant met my seun connect nie".

¹⁶⁶ "Ek het nie geweet hoe om 'n ma te wees nie. Ek het nie eers aandag geskenk aan haar nie. Ek het niks gedoen nie".

¹⁶⁷ "Ek het nie geweet wat om met haar te doen nie. Ek het nie geweet wat doen mens met 'n kind nie. Ek het nie 'n bond gehad met haar nie. Ek het nooit tyd gespandeer met haar nie. Ek kon haar nie eers vashou nie. Ek wou ook nie met haar gespeel het nie. Ek was nooit by die huis nie, so dit was nie vir my 'n probleem gewees nie. Ek was twintig gewees so ek was nog baie jonk gewees".

¹⁶⁸ "Ek was maar altyd die een wat werk, sy moes nou maar na die kinders kyk".

¹⁶⁹ "Dit het verander toe ek my tweede kind het. Toe het ek meer verantwoordelikhede en toe verander dit. Toe voel ek, ek wil bietjie my eie kinders hê".

¹⁷⁰ "Al wat goed is nou is my kinders. Verder lewe jy maar net elke dag soos dit kom".

precious to her: *"My success is my children"* (Session 4: 333)¹⁷¹. Skylar and Harmony stated that, although they had romantic partners, they experienced parenting as challenging, as they seemingly raised their children on their own. Skylar explained: *"He has little time with the children. I'm with them most of the time"* (Session 5: 77)¹⁷². Both Skylar and Harmony reported that their romantic partners were thus not actively involved in child rearing practices.

In terms of child rearing practices, Jake believed that he was overly strict with his daughter as he wanted her to become responsible and independent. In this regard he remarked: *"If she doesn't know how to do something then I tell her I'll show you and then you do it yourself. I just feel if something had to happen to me today, I don't want her to feel she is useless and can't do anything"* (Session 2: 143)¹⁷³. Jake however reported on his perceived close relationship with his daughter: *"We have a very good bond. She loves me dearly and vice versa"* (Session 1: 122)¹⁷⁴. Harmony made similar comments when she referred to the relationship that she had with her children. She revealed that she was actively involved in her children's social lives and often spoke to them regarding their concerns and experiences. In this regard she noted: *"My children can't wait for those moments when I tell them okay, we're going to talk a bit, then they talk about matters of the heart, it's time to open up and unpack"* (Session 3:291)¹⁷⁵.

Skylar seemed concerned about her children's material well-being and as a result she seemingly worked long hours to provide for her daughters financially. In this regard she mentioned that she was responsible for her children and had to protect them from emotional and financial difficulties. Skylar remarked: *"Now you have two responsibilities that's dependent on you. If you mess up what happens to them. Then they have nowhere to go, so it's your responsibility"* (Session 4: 70)¹⁷⁶; and also: *"All I can do now is to get up and see whether I can give my children a better life"* (Session 6: 91)¹⁷⁷. According to Skylar becoming a parent implied a crash-course in growing up and taking responsibility. Similarly, Jake reported that he lead a more responsible lifestyle following the birth of his daughter. Pertaining to this he stated that he reassessed his life at that stage to ensure that he was a responsible father: *"When you have a child, you grow up, but I think if we didn't have her we would have still partied hard"* (Session 2: 152)¹⁷⁸. The researcher also observed Skylar's and Jake's interactions with their children

¹⁷¹ "My groot sukses is my kinders".

¹⁷² "Hy het min tyd saam met die kinders. Ek is meeste van die tyd saam met hulle".

¹⁷³ "As sy nie weet hoe om iets te doen nie dan sê ek vir haar ek wys jou en jy doen dit self. Ek voel net as iets nou vandag met my moet gebeur wil ek nie hê sy moet useless voel en niks kan doen nie".

¹⁷⁴ "Ek en sy het 'n baie goeie bond. Sy is so lief vir my en vice versa".

¹⁷⁵ "My kinders kan nie wag vir sulke oomblikke nie waar ek vir hulle sê, ok nou kom ons gaan nou bietjie gesels dan praat hulle hartsake, dis bietjie tyd om oop te maak en tyd om af te pak".

¹⁷⁶ "Nou het jy twee verantwoordelikhede wat afhanklik is van jou. As jy opmors wat gebeur met hulle, dan het hulle nowhere to go. So dis jou verantwoordelikheid".

¹⁷⁷ "Al wat ek nou kan doen is om op te staan en te gaan kyk of ek nie my kinders kan help of 'n beter lewe gee nie".

¹⁷⁸ "As jy 'n kind het, jy word nou groot, maar ek dink as ons nie vir haar gehad het nie sou ons nou nog net so hard gejol het".

during data collection sessions at their private homes. They appeared to display resilience in their roles as parents, considering that they did not have typical resources and examples of good parenting in preparation for this task.

6.3.2 SUB-THEME 3.2: THINGS YOUNG ADULT CARE LEAVERS HAD TO SECURE DURING THE POST-TRANSITION PHASE

A number of key categories emerged with respect to participants' experiences within the post-transition phase, including accommodation, economic stability, employment and mental health.

6.3.2.1 Category a: Accommodation

As the vast majority of participants in this study experienced economic difficulty during the post-transition phase, they seemingly sought accommodation in economically underprivileged neighbourhoods, where rental fees were supposedly more affordable. Pertaining to this, Harmony reported that she resided in an office space with her children and husband after their home was damaged by a storm and whilst they were repairing their home. She expressed her concerns about this: *"I hate the situation that we are in now, as we are living in an office space"* (Session 3: 319)¹⁷⁹. Troy remarked that he was renting a one bedroom house in an informal settlement. Similar reports were made by Skylar who noted that she too rented a one bedroom apartment in an economically underprivileged neighbourhood. She was reportedly residing with her two children and romantic partner. In this regard, Skylar noted that she experienced the need for alternative accommodation: *"I think they should have a different place to stay because they live in this apartment and it's not nice for them"* (Session 4:70)¹⁸⁰. She mentioned that she wanted to relocate due to their accommodation not making provision for a play area for her children.

Participants who experienced economic instability reportedly received support from romantic partners and landlords, who seemingly made it possible for participants to maintain accommodation. Pertaining to this Skylar attested: *"She hasn't increased the rent since I've lived there, it stays the same. She doesn't ask me a lot of money"* (Session 6:93)¹⁸¹. As such, Skylar reported positive experiences about the owner of the apartment she was renting. In contrast to reports made by Skylar, Troy and Harmony, Jake reportedly bought a home in a good neighbourhood and took pride in maintaining his home. Similar reports were made by Dakota as she reportedly bought a two bedroom apartment with a garden in a prosperous neighbourhood. Dakota and Jake both regarded the creation of their private homes as particularly significant events. Pertaining to this, they seemingly created a place of belonging in self-

¹⁷⁹ "Ek haat die situasie waarin ons sit nou, want ons bly nou in 'n kantoor".

¹⁸⁰ "Ek dink hulle moet net 'n ander blyplek hê, want hulle lewe in hierdie woonstel en dis nie lekker vir hulle nie".

¹⁸¹ "Sy stoot nie haar huur op nie vandat ek daar bly, haar huur bly nog dieselfde. Sy vra my nie baie geld nie".

regulated environments that provided them with a sense of safety, stability, order and control. To accomplish this Dakota and Jake noted that they valued the appearance of their homes and were meticulous about housework. In this regard Jake stated: *"I like a clean and tidy place"* (Session 1:121)¹⁸².

6.3.2.2 Category b: Economic stability

Although the researcher did not specifically inquire about participants' financial positions, they reported on indicators of economic hardship. Skylar for example stated: *"She has similar problems to me, relationship problems and financial problems"* (Session 6:93)¹⁸³. In addition, both Troy and Skylar reported that they could occasionally not afford basic provisions, such as food. In this regard Skylar said: *"You have to suffer and struggle, and know there's no food today"* (Session 2:20)¹⁸⁴. Harmony similarly reported on financial difficulties she faced, and as in the case of Skylar, she ascribed her financial constraints to a lack of formal qualifications as this in her view prevented her from gaining employment. Jake reported that he too had experienced financial difficulties in the past but then worked with his wife to change this.

Dakota did not report incidences of economic hardship and revealed that her career provided economic security. She regarded her educational qualifications and employment as her most important priorities. Dakota stated that she had accomplished career goals due to her fearing poverty. She expressed her views about this: *"It is security because I was poor growing up. I have a fear to go back from where I came"* (Session 2: 403)¹⁸⁵, and stated that she had often neglected relationships as she prioritised career goals which could in turn ensure financial security. In this regard Dakota remarked: *"It makes me self-reliant and sometimes it makes me selfish when it comes to my time and my friends don't see me"* (Session 3:423)¹⁸⁶. She further stated that a sense of economic security had helped her to feel emotionally secure: *"I'm like this because I need security and material things. That I put my hope in material things. Emotional security of course"* (Session 3:423)¹⁸⁷. As such, with the exception of Dakota, the results of this study indicate that young adult care leavers often experience economic instability during the post-transition phase of independence.

¹⁸² "Ek hou van 'n netjiese en skoon plek".

¹⁸³ "Sy het baie dieselfde probleme soos ek, verhouding probleme en finansiële probleme".

¹⁸⁴ "Jy moet swaar kry en sukkel, en weet daar's nie kos vandag nie".

¹⁸⁵ "Dit is sekuriteit omdat ek arm groot geword het, het ek daai vrees om terug te gaan waar ek vandaan kom".

¹⁸⁶ "Dit maak my self-relying en dit maak my soms selfsugtig in my tyd en my vriende sien my nie".

¹⁸⁷ "Ek is so oor ek sekuriteit en materiële goed nodig het. Dat ek my hoop in materiële goed in sit. Emosionele sekuriteit natuurlik".

6.3.2.3 Category c: Employment

According to the results of this study the working lives of the primary participants varied from unskilled employment to highly trained positions and professional roles. Skylar reported that she was employed at a debt collection company and participated in an array of low-paid temporary employment, namely: *"Debt collectors, what I do now, Pick and Pay work"*. (Session 1:12)¹⁸⁸. Skylar remarked that she received a monthly commission based on her work performance. Similarly, Troy reported that he was employed in a low-paid position at a warehouse, which often required physical labour. Even though he reportedly had qualifications to access higher- paid employment, he chose to work at a warehouse with young adult care leavers who had also resided at the children's village. Jake mentioned that he worked at a government institution as a computer programmer but that he also developed computer programs in his leisure time. Pertaining to this he noted: *"I took a chance for work in the government and then I got it and from there on, I studied through them, went on courses"* (Session 1:103)¹⁸⁹. As such, participants were employed and earned salaries, with the exception of Harmony who worked as an unpaid administrative assistant at her husband's carpentry business.

Although the participants reported that they were employed, they however participated in an array of low-paid temporary employment which was often sporadic and seldom provided financial security. In this regard Skylar remarked: *"I lost my work the other day, July. I was a PA to him but he was declared bankrupt. Then I had to sit at home during July and only started working in August at the place I am currently. So it's up and down, difficult and hard"* (Session 1:8)¹⁹⁰. Similar reports of employment insecurity were made by Jake: *"I was retrenched; one of the companies was also retrenched by another company"* (Session 1:103)¹⁹¹. Troy similarly stated: *"You worked Monday then Thursday again and then Saturday, and then the next week you work two days and the following week you work for one day"* (Session 1: 21). As such, the results of this study indicate that young adult care leavers often participated in various unskilled and low paying part-time employment opportunities. In addition, participants reported on being unemployed for periods of time. Troy for example stated: *"I was a bit down because I wasn't working and I was stressing on my girlfriend's pregnant, I was a year at home"* (Session 1:242). He subsequently participated in illegal activities to earn an income: *"I did work for a guy that was in the drug business. Like I just used to go fetch his stuff, drop it off at people that wanted it"* (Session 1:242).

¹⁸⁸ "Debt collectors, wat ek nou doen, Pick 'n Pay werke".

¹⁸⁹ "Ek het 'n kans gevat vir 'n werk in die goverment en toe het ek dit gekry en van daar af, ek swat toe deur hulle, gaan op kursusse".

¹⁹⁰ "Ek het nou die dag my werk verloor, Julie maand het ek my werk verloor, ek was 'n PA ook vir iemand gewees toe het hy bankrot geraak. Toe moes ek gesit het in Julie maand by die huis, en Augustus eers begin by die plek waar ek nou is. So dit gaan maar baie opdraende en afdraende, en moeilik en hard".

¹⁹¹ "Ek was geretrenche, die een company was toe ook deur 'n ander company geretrenche".

The risk of being unemployed and/or employed in low skilled and menial employment, were therefore high for this group of adult care leavers. However, participants also reported on employers who encouraged, supported and maintained faith in them. In this regard Skylar stated: *"I earned good money. He took very good care of me since he knew where I came from"* (Session 4:68)¹⁹². Such employers reportedly supported young care leavers to improve their skills, self-esteem and incomes. In this regard, employment opportunities increased Skylar's quality of life and made provision for her to support herself and her two children.

A housemother held the view that young adult care leavers generally do not experience the need to be successful and as a result may often be unemployed. She expressed her beliefs as follows: *"Those kids will never be able to go on their own. You can't continually tell a child to do this work if they don't like the work, or don't feel like doing it. So they have this attitude of that it's not nice for them to work"* (Dyad interview: 3)¹⁹³; and *"They come riding on bicycles, coloured hair down to their neck, then you immediately know this child doesn't have a place to stay or a work"* (Dyad interview: 4)¹⁹⁴. Similarly, another secondary participant reported that young adult care leavers may experience a lack of motivation, responsibility, commitment and perseverance. She noted: *"I think maybe motivation. They don't finish what they start. They don't have that sense of commitment, they don't have a sense of responsibility"* (Reflexive interview: 74)¹⁹⁵. As such, secondary participants reported that young adult care leavers were often not motivated to maintain employment and as a result often participated in low-paid temporary employment.

According to one of the housemother's young adult care leavers could not manage adult responsibilities following their departure from care, which negatively influenced their employment. She expressed her concerns regarding this: *"They cannot handle the pressure of the outside world. They can't to fit in and to adapt and you have to perform at work, you have to prove yourself. The pressure is too big. They can't do it"* (Dyad interview: 52)¹⁹⁶. As such, primary participants of this study thus had conflicting views as they experienced difficulty to gain and maintain employment due to a lack of qualifications and unforeseen circumstances at places of employment, such as retrenchment and bankruptcy.

¹⁹² "Ek het goeie geld gekry, hy het baie vir my gesorg omdat hy weet waarvan ek kom en alles".

¹⁹³ Daai kinders gaan nooit op hulle eie kan aangaan nie. Jy kan nie aanhoudend vir 'n kind sê doen die werk en dan hou hy nie van die werk nie, of is nie lus om te werk nie. Jy weet, so hulle het hierdie attitude van dit is nie vir my lekker om te werk nie".

¹⁹⁴ "Dan kom hulle op fietse aan gery, hulle hare is gekleur en hang in die nek, dan kan jy sommer weet hierdie kind het nie blyplek en hy het nie werk".

¹⁹⁵ "Ek dink miskien motivering. Hulle voltooi net nie wat hulle begin het nie. Hulle het nie daai sense of commitment nie, hulle het nie sense of responsibility nie".

¹⁹⁶ "Hulle kan nie die druk hanteer van alleen bly en te werk en al jou eie besluite te neem nie. Almal verwag jy moet net inpas en aanpas en inskakel en jy moet perform by die werk, jy moet jouself bewys. Die druk is te groot. Hulle kan dit nie doen nie".

In some ways Dakota's working life was dissimilar to those of the other participants, as she achieved a high standard of education. Pertaining to this she stated: *"I never struggled to find work"* (Session 1:382)¹⁹⁷. Dakota did not work whilst completing her pre-graduate, honours and master's degrees as her financial needs were provided for by the children's home. Upon completion of her master's degree she moved into long-term stable employment, completing a doctorate degree on a part-time basis. She was the only participant who reported that her employment and income provided for a comfortable lifestyle. As such, the results of this study indicate that young adult care leavers who achieve academically on a tertiary level seemingly have better chances to succeed in life, and a better future perspective during the post-transition phase of independence.

6.3.2.4 Category d: Mental health

According to the results of this study, the distress and adversity that the participants experienced as children seemingly continued to have an influence on their mental health during the post-transition phase of independence. In this regard a housemother reported: *"Children with problems have bigger problems when they are older"* (Dyad interview: 39)¹⁹⁸; and also *"A small boy that was molested and he sits with all that emotions and urges and anger in him. He does not get any therapy, now he gets big, he is now a adult male with all those fears, emotions and anger in him"* (Dyad interview: 53)¹⁹⁹. The results of this study indicate a high prevalence of depression and suicidal tendencies amongst three female participants. In this regard Dakota reported that she suffered from insomnia, sleepwalking, hyperactivity, anxiety and night fear. She remarked: *"Some time during the night I walked in my sleep"* (Session 5: 467)²⁰⁰; *"My monster is that I do not sleep well"* (Session 5:451)²⁰¹; and *"Obsessive behaviour where you have anxiety and you stress about everything as you want to control everything"* (Session 3: 425)²⁰². In addition, Dakota noted that she occasionally took prescription medication to relieve symptoms of depression, anxiety and insomnia.

Skylar similarly reported on depressive episodes: *"I don't get out of control or crazy, but I think depression comes to everyone"* (Session 2:20)²⁰³. Harmony reported that she too occasionally suffered from depression and suicidal thoughts. In this regard she stated: *"So I become depressed. Sometimes I get terribly depressed, I get so depressed that I feel I could commit suicide"* (Session 3:351)²⁰⁴; *"Once I*

¹⁹⁷ "Ek het nooit gesukkel om werk te kry nie".

¹⁹⁸ "Kinders met probleme het groter probleme as hulle ouer is".

¹⁹⁹ 'n Klein seuntjie wat nou gemolesteer is en hy sit met al daai emosies en drange en woede in hom, hy kry geen mate van terapie nie. Nou word hy groot, hy is nou 'n volwasse man met al daai vrese en emosies en woede in hom".

²⁰⁰ "Iewers deur die nag het ek die sleepwalking gedoen".

²⁰¹ "Wel op hierdie oomblik is my monster dat ek flippen sleg slaap".

²⁰² "Obsessiewe gedrag waar jy anxiety het en jy stres oor alles want jy wil alles beheer".

²⁰³ "Ek raak nie deurmekaar of mal nie, maar ek dink depressie kom maar van almal af".

²⁰⁴ "So ek raak bedruk en ek raak depressief. Ek raak partykeer verskriklik depressief, ek raak so depressief ek voel ek kan selfmoord pleeg".

became so depressed and frustrated that I wrote my testament" (Session 3: 308)²⁰⁵; and *"It feels as though I'm going to die anytime soon this year. I think my time is near because I feel useless and it feels as if I haven't achieved anything"* (Session 3:324)²⁰⁶. She seemingly also displayed symptoms of a bipolar mood disorder.

Skylar reported that she suffered from anxiety and nervousness, especially in the presence of unfamiliar people. As a result she often avoided interpersonal contact with individuals from the "outside world" and she preferred not to be socially involved with people, and activities. In this regard she stated: *"I don't like going out and seeing friends or going too far away, I think that's my fear"* (Session 2: 66)²⁰⁷; and *"I don't want to be around many people with lots of noises, and it's all over the place, then I'm going to get nervous"* (Session 3:44)²⁰⁸. Although these female participants reported on experiencing a range of negative emotions, Dakota was the only one who sought and received psychological counselling following her departure from care. Skylar and Harmony reported that they were in need of counselling but could not afford the costs associated with therapeutic intervention.

Participants reported on a range of self-reflective activities as attempts to maintain a positive outlook in life. Pertaining to this, Dakota mentioned that she wrote poems and kept journals, seemingly to broaden their self-knowledge. She stated: *"I do an inventory about fears, resentments and people I have hurt. What I did to forgive and move on"* (Session 3:412)²⁰⁹. Similar reports were made by Harmony who reported that she wrote poems during adverse as well as joyful events, saying: *"Writing, it's part of therapy that you psychologists also use"* (Session 5: 334)²¹⁰.

6.3.3 SUB-THEME 3.3: FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE RESILIENCE OF YOUNG ADULT CARE LEAVERS

Being educated, married, owning a home, having stable employment and being financially self-sufficient is not the only factors that indicate resilience, especially for the group of participants who took part in this study. What emerged strongly from the participating young adult care leavers was a theme of achievement, acts of kindness, volunteer work, compassion, determination, parenting skills, optimism and accomplishments, as participants moved from 'learned helplessness' to 'learned resourcefulness'. The researcher suggests that these processes indicate resilience. A number of categories emerged with respect to factors contributing to participants' resourcefulness, including relationships with caring

²⁰⁵ "Ek was al so depressief en frustreerd dat ek al my testament geskryf het".

²⁰⁶ "Dit voel asof ek enige tyd hierdie jaar gaan doodgaan. Ek dink my tyd is naby, want ek voel so doelloos en dit voel vir my asof ek net niks bereik nie".

²⁰⁷ "Ek is nie baie lief vir uitgaan of vir maatjies te gaan sien en vêr gaan nie, ek dink dis wat bietjie my vrees is".

²⁰⁸ "Ek wil nie so tussen klomp mense wees en dit maak geraas, en dis woelig en deurmekaar, dan gaan ek op my senuwees raak".

²⁰⁹ "Ek doen soos 'n inventory oor fears, resentments and people I have hurt. Wat ek gedoen het om te vergewe en aan te beweeg".

²¹⁰ "Skryf, dis deel van terapie wat julle sielkundiges ook maar gebruik".

adults, being street-smart, learning from mistakes and incidences of adversity, religion and having goals for the future.

6.3.3.1 Category a: Relationships with caring adults

Dakota and Jake, who were high achievers in the group of participants spoke of special relationships that they had with significant people in their lives, outside the care system, who reportedly made time to listen to them and made them feel valued. Pertaining to this Dakota stated: *"I feel as though there's always been angels on my path, you know, when people ask me how you did it, my answer is I had good people on my path. Different people. They didn't really do a lot for me; well they did do small things that made a big difference for me"* (Session 1:382)²¹¹. Jake made a similar comment: *"Everyone helped with pieces here and there. It's a group of people"* (Session 2: 146)²¹². In this regard, Dakota reported on maintaining stable and trusting relationships with older female role models. She seemingly experienced a need for a responsible mother figure that could provide her with advice and support during times of difficulty.

Dakota and Jake namely reported on relationships with weekend carers who supported them during the post-transition phase. Pertaining to this, Dakota stated that her weekend carers provided her with stable and continuous relationships: *"They've always been there, so they were the only constant thing I had in my life"* (Session 2:389)²¹³. Jake similarly mentioned that his weekend father served as a role model for relationships. In this regard he revealed: *"We're very similar because I got everything from him since I spent a lot of time with him"* (Session 4:216)²¹⁴. As such, Jake reported that he identified with his weekend father's role as a husband and he often referred to the similarities between his weekend father's marriage, and his own.

In support, a secondary participant who provided social and financial support to a young adult care leaver, reported that care leavers should have mentors during adulthood that provide them with guidance regarding family roles. She expressed her thoughts in the following way: *"It is necessary for such a child to get involved in the community and to get a family that can act as a mentor for them. They will take responsibility; the child will eat with them tonight or spend the weekend with them. To see that interaction, of what happens in a family"* (Dyad interview: 35)²¹⁵. This participant also

²¹¹ "Ek voel of daar dalk net altyd engeltjies op my pad, jy weet, soos as mense my vra, hoe het jy dit gedoen, is my antwoord, ek het goeie mense op my pad gehad. Verskillende menses. Hulle het nie regtig baie vir my gedoen, wel hulle het baie vir my gedoen, maar klein goedjies, wat vir my baie saak gemaak het".

²¹² "Almal het maar met stukke goed gehelp. Dis 'n groep mense".

²¹³ "Hulle was nog altyd daar gewees, so hulle was die enigste constant wat ek in my lewe gehad het".

²¹⁴ "Hy en ons is baie dieselfde, want ek het my goeters by hom gekry omdat ek baie by hom was".

²¹⁵ "Dis nodig dat so 'n kind in 'n gemeenskap inskakel en 'n gesin kry wat as mentor vir hulle optree. Sê nou maar uhm haar gesin besluit om as mentor op te tree vir hierdie kind so hulle is vrywilligers, obviously gaan hulle aan die een kant verantwoordelikheid neem, die kind gaan nou vanaand by hulle gaan eet of die naweek daar spandeer, net om daai interaksie te sien wat gebeur in 'n gesin".

suggested that care leavers keep contact with responsible adults who set an example of a successful marriage and family life. Pertaining to this she stated: *"Something that will help them to have a successful marriage and family, as such a child comes out of a broken situation and they did not have examples of how it works in a family"* (Reflexive interview: 83)²¹⁶.

Participants across the various discussion groups stressed the importance of youth having caring, long-term relationships with rolemodels as they move into adulthood. As a social worker reflected: *"She needs someone who will pull her so that she can also make a success of her life, but she will need that person to walk the path with her"* (Dyad interview: 39)²¹⁷. To this end, stable, caring relationships were described as having the potential to provide continuity to young adult care leavers who typically experience changes in other aspects of their lives. Pertaining to this, a secondary participant who provided support to a young adult care leaver, when describing the key factors for resilience of care leavers, stated that: *"It's a continuing involvement with such a person many times, many times; as she has finished her studies she comes in different stages in her life where she needs adults. Asset builders. I think, that someone who helps you go through life. The secret then lies in getting further involved than just the studies because you need people throughout your life, whether you're forty or fifty or twenty, it's always good to have people who have more life experiences than you to ask for advice because most of us do not have the answers to all our questions and problems. Continued involvement with such a person"* (Reflexive interview: 83)²¹⁸. As such, the importance of caring and stable relationships with responsible adults was depicted as a foundation of trust upon which new relationships and future success could be formed. Sadly, the primary participants of the study mostly reported on the absence of such continued relationships, resulting in isolation and disconnection during the post-transition phase.

6.3.3.2 Category b: Being street-smart and learning from mistakes

Another factor that reportedly contributed to young adult care leavers' functioning during the post-transition phase relates to their abilities to display "street-smart" behaviour. In this regard, participants appeared to be hypo-alert and vigilant, which was seemingly connected to mistrust. As Dakota mentioned: *"I'm streetwise, I can look after myself in the world. I even hear when people put on their*

²¹⁶ "Iets wat maak dat 'n kind nou tot aan die einde wat 'n kind 'n suksesvolle huwelik en 'n suksesvolle gesin het, want so kind kom uit so 'n gebroke situasie en het nie voorbeelde van hoe dit werk in 'n gesin".

²¹⁷ "Sy gaan iemand nodig hê om haar te trek, so sy kan ook 'n sukses van haar lewe maak, maar sy gaan nodig hê dat iemand 'n pad saam haar gaan stap".

²¹⁸ "Dis 'n volgehoue betrokkenheid by so 'n persoon wat baie kere, want baie kere as sy nou klaar geswot het dan kom sy in ander fases in haar lewe waar sy ook volwassenes nodig het. Batebouers dink ek, waar iemand jou help om deur die lewe te gaan. Die geheim lê dan daarin om verder betrokke te wees as net die studies want mens het mense deur jou lewe nodig, of jy veertig of vyftig is of twintig dis altyd goed om mense te hê wat meer lewens ervaringe het as jy om te gaan vra vir raad, want meeste van ons het nie die antwoorde vir jou eie vrae en probleme nie. Volgehoue betrokkenheid by so 'n persoon".

lights at night or pull the toilet" (Session 2: 397)²¹⁹. Harmony shared this view: *"Do you know what we learned? To trust no one's opinion. We learned that wherever you go, you have to make absolutely sure that, that person's opinion is honest and authentic. Your guard is always up. Looking to see who is stabbing you in the back. Why are you telling me this? That is how we live; because that is the only way we survived. That is the only way we made it"* (Session 7:342)²²⁰. As such, it seemed that participants developed "street-smart" behaviour over the years as they were expected to survive through adverse circumstances. In addition, participants appeared to experience a sense of pride and achievement when they referred to their "street-smart" abilities as they apparently "earned" them during adverse experiences, and then applied them during their transition to independent living.

The participants of this study furthermore reflected on their learning as they explained key episodes in which they learned from their mistakes, as well as the words or behaviours of others. In some cases these episodes triggered pivotal insight and learning, as for example reported by Dakota: *"I made a decision on that day to be independent so that I would not need a man and not make the same mistakes as my mother"* (Lifestory: 506)²²¹. In other instances, participants actively observed and learned from the behaviour of others, and re-established what they have learned this learning in their own patterns of behaviours. Dakota for example explained how she learned from the mistakes that her weekend parents made: *"That's what I learned from them, through their mistakes too"* (Session 2: 402)²²². She also mentioned that she made a list of her own mistakes and lessons learned: *"What happened and what I was actually supposed to do. By admitting my weaknesses, being aware of it, and to change it"* (Session 3:429)²²³. As such, the participants were seemingly aware of their own and other individuals' mistakes, and reportedly used the lessons that was learned from mistakes, in an attempt to take informed action or to avoid repeating mistakes should they find themselves in similar situations.

6.3.3.3 Category c: Learning from incidences of adversity

Young adult care leavers who transitioned into independent living displayed the ability to transform negative attributes into positive ones, including being grateful for what they had learned from overcoming adversity. In support of this, Dakota reported: *"Every choice you make in life has to be aligned to a central life purpose. I believe that I have a spirit of an overcomer, and all my past misfortunes have made me more resilient"* (Dakota lifestory: 509). In addition, participants reportedly

²¹⁹ "Ek hoor even as mense hulle ligte aan sit of toilet trek in die aand".

²²⁰ "Weet jy wat het ons geleer? Om niemand se opinie te vertrou nie. Ons het geleer waar jy gaan moet jy gaan dubbel en dwars seker maak dat daai person se opinie is eerlik, en opreg. So jy trek alles in die twyfel. Jou guard is die healtyd op. Jy kyk die healtyd, wie is besig om jou te stab in die rug? Hoekom sê sy dit vir my? Is presies hoe ons lewe, want dis al hoe ek oorleef het. Dis al hoe ons dit gemaak het".

²²¹ "Dit was baie traumaties en ek het gevoel of ek in my ma se skoene staan. Toe maak ek daardie dag 'n besluit om so onafhanklik te word dat ek nooit 'n man sal nodig he nie en nie die selfde foute as my ma sal maak nie".

²²² "Dit is wat ek by hulle geleer het, deur hulle foute ook".

²²³ "Wat het gebeur en wat moes ek eintlik gedoen het. Deur my weaknesses te admit, being aware of it, to change it".

believed in achieved benefits from adverse circumstances. Dakota mentioned that she was for example grateful for harmful events as this encouraged her to participate in self-reflection. Pertaining to this, she said: *“That self-destructiveness also had a purpose to help me figure myself out. I think it was actually good for me. Not to use drugs or drink, but you know what, it took me to a dark place, to the bottom of myself. I had guilt feelings and it forced me to find out why I did those things in the first place”* (Session 3:431)²²⁴. Dakota furthermore seemingly believed that mistakes supported her character development. Pertaining to this she reported: *“There’s a lesson. Even if it’s something bad. You can draw strength from hurt, from pain, from trauma. It’s all about is character development and life experience. If they don’t reject me, maybe I would have been a snob”* (Session 3:422)²²⁵.

According to the results of this study, experiencing challenges seemingly initiated the emotional and psychological development of the participants. Pertaining to this, participants reported that they were functioning beyond previous levels of adaptation in the children’s homes and reached states of well-being that would not have been achieved without their transition to independent living. In this regard Skylar mentioned: *“The bad things help you grow. There are many things I can do now that I couldn’t do before; I was scared of many things. I was scared to go to class. Lately, I can do things, I’m not scared anymore, and I don’t have that fear anymore. I still have some fear left in me and afraid of the outside world, but not as much as I used to. I think I became strong”* (Session4:67)²²⁶; and *“I’ve become tough a bit, because I went through a lot of things lately. It was difficult and hard but I’m a bit better now, at least I can do some cooking now”* (Session 3:48)²²⁷. As such, the participants reported that they acquired skills and gained strength from adversities, which seemingly supported them during the post-transition phase to experience less fear and higher levels of mastery.

6.3.3.4 Category d: Having goals for the future

The participants displayed common goals for the future, such as the attainment of tertiary qualifications, stable employment, economic security and secure accommodation. In this regard Skylar mentioned: *“I want a lot of things, I want to study this, and I want to study that. I want to get somewhere in life. I want to achieve a lot still. I think of the best life, a better life”* (Session 4:70)²²⁸. She stated that she

²²⁴ “Daai self destructiveness, daar was ook ‘n doel daaraan gewees om myself uit te figure. Ek dink dit was eintlik goed vir my. Nie om die drugs te gebruik en te drink nie, nee, maar weet jy wat, it took me to a dark place, to the bottom of myself. Ek het skuldgevoelens gehad en dit het my geforce om te kyk hoekom doen ek daai goed in die eerste plek”.

²²⁵ “Daar is ‘n les. Al is dit iets sleg. You can draw strength from hurt, from pain, from trauma. Dis alles van character development en life experience. As hulle my nie reject het nie, dalk het ‘n snob geword”.

²²⁶ “Die slegte dinge help ‘n mens om te groei. Daar is baie goeters wat ek nou kan doen wat ek nie voorheen kon gedoen het nie, ek was bang vir baie goeters. Ek was bang om klas toe te gaan. Deesdae kan ek goed doen, ek is nie meer bang nie, ek het nie meer daai vrees nie. Ek het nog bietjie vrees in my en bietjie bang is vir die buite wêreld maar nou, ek is nie meer so baie nie. Ek dink ek het sterk geword”.

²²⁷ “Ek is al bietjie tough, want ek het al so baie deur gegaan die afgelope tyd. Dit was hard en tough maar ek is darem bietjie beter nou, ek kan nou darem bietjie kook”.

²²⁸ “Ek wil baie dinge hê, ek wil dit studeer, ek wil dat studeer, ek wil iewers kom. Ek wil nog baie bereik. Ek dink maar net vir die beste lewe, ‘n beter lewe”.

envisioned a better life for her children: *"I have many dreams. Children need to have a better life"* (Session 4:69)²²⁹. Similarly, Dakota reported on having dreams for the future although she had accomplished numerous life goals. She elaborated: *"I want to do yoga in India. I want to perform on stage. I want to plant a tree. I want to kiss someone in Venice. I want to skinny dip in the South of France. I want to swim with dolphins and then with sharks. I want to spend a lot of money. Okay, I already did that. I want to tango in Argentina. Ride a train through Europe. I've been to Europe but haven't driven through all of it. I want to be an expert. I want to buy a house, just sold"* (Session 3:428)²³⁰. As such, participants' goals were mostly grounded and attainable, with the exception of Dakota who envisaged additional idealistic goals as she seemingly had achieved or partially achieved most of her aspirations. Through these vignettes it can thus be seen that young adult care leavers in the post-transition phase strived towards obtaining goals, which seemingly kept them optimistic and hopeful for the future.

According to the results of the study participants displayed an optimistic, tenacious, committed and a never-give-up attitude where they continued to strive to reach their goals, regardless of the challenges encountered. In this regard Dakota stated: *"I have learned never to give up"*. Skylar displayed a similar attitude: *"It helps me a lot when I say tomorrow we start over again or if we fall down we get back up again and continue forward"* (Session 4:64)²³¹. Harmony also indicated a never-give-up attitude: *"Even though I also get depressed and tired and despondent, it doesn't mean that I just lie down"* (Session 5:330)²³². In this regard, Harmony displayed an optimistic attitude which seemingly protected her from the reality of her life. In this regard she mentioned: *"I tend to rather look at the positive side of things, to inspire myself to try again. That's why I can persevere for so long, because the negative don't necessarily pull me in"* (Session 5:330)²³³; and *"If you're positive and live cheerfully, and you see something in life, and not just focus on the bad and the sadness, then no one even notices it"* (Session 2: 385)²³⁴. As such, the participants of this study displayed a sense of endurance, optimism and hope - hope that things will get better, that life will work out and that they will reach their goals.

²²⁹ "Ek het baie drome. Kinders moet 'n beter lewe hê".

²³⁰ "Ek wil yoga in Indië gaan doen. Ek wil op stage perform. Ek wil 'n boom plant. Ek wil iemand in Venice soen. Ek wil skinny dip in die south of France. I want to swim with dolphins and then with sharks. I want to spend a lot of money. Ok, ek het dit al gedoen. I want to tango in Argentina. Ride a train through Europe. Ek was al in Europe, maar nie deur die hele een gery nie. Ek wil 'n expert wees. Ek wil 'n huis koop, just sold".

²³¹ "Dit help my baie om elke keer te sê more begin ons weer en ons begin van vooraf, of as ons geval het dan staan ons op en ons gaan weer aan".

²³² "Alhoewel ek ook depressief en ook moeg, en moedeloos raak, beteken dit nie dat ek nou net lê nie".

²³³ "Ek is geneig om eerder na die positiewe te kyk, om myself te inspireer om net weer te probeer. Dis hoekom ek so lank kan aanhou, want die negatiewe trek my nie noodwendig in nie".

²³⁴ "As jy positief en opgeruimd leef, en jy sien iets in die lewe, nie net fokus op die sleg en die hartseer nie, dan sien niemand eers dit raak nie".

6.3.3.5 Category e: Religion

Participants indicated that religious beliefs had supported them to manage adversity as they reportedly experienced a sense of protection from God during difficult life experiences while in care and also as young adults in transition. Participants stated that their religious beliefs seemingly pulled them through and helped them to survive as young independent adults. In this regard Dakota stated: *"Prayer helped me through it. I really feel that Jesus got me through this"* (Session 3:415)²³⁵.

Similar reports were made by Troy: *"It's through Him that I'm here and I've made it through all those challenges that I've faced"*. Skylar also seemingly turned to religion prior to decision making: *"With anything I do, I first pray, and then I wait on God. My whole life I stand and pray and that's why I'm still here today"* (Session 2: 54)²³⁶. In this regard Jake revealed: *"Everybody needs God"* (Session 1: 120)²³⁷. Harmony also stated: *"My core will always be God, even when I drift away I go close again, I go back up again, go down"* (Session 8:350)²³⁸.

6.4 FINDINGS ON POST-TRANSITION EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG ADULT CARE LEAVERS

In this section the researcher presents the findings of the study by situating the results in terms of related literature. She highlights congruent findings, contradictions and new insight gained from this study.

6.4.1 IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS FOLLOWING TRANSITION

A number of findings relate to the relationships that young adult care leavers had following their transition to independent living. These include the importance of biological families, challenges associated with close relationships and attachments, as well the establishment of new families.

6.4.1.1 Importance of biological families

Participants of this study experienced various challenges, and negative emotions during the post-transition phase of independence, concerning biological family relationships. Even though the participants experienced anger and sadness about their childhood experiences, the loneliness, stresses and crises they experienced as young independent adults often prompted them to attempt reconciliation with their families of origin. Pertaining to this, Gelling (2009) notes that young adult care leavers often return to their families of origin when they experience loneliness as they perceive that

²³⁵ "Wat my deur gekry het is gebed. Ek voel regtig Liewe Jesus het my hierdeur gekry".

²³⁶ "Enige ding wat ek doen dan bid ek eers, dan wag ek vir die Here. My hele lewe staan ek en bid dis hoekom ek vandag nog hier is".

²³⁷ "Almal het die Here nodig".

²³⁸ "My kern sal maar altyd die Here wees, al dryf ek weg kom ek weer naby, gaan ek weer op, gaan ek af".

they might receive practical and social support from biological family members. In further support of this finding, Jones (2002) as well as Biehal and Wade (2000) indicate that adult care leavers often attempt to reconcile relationships with biological family members due to them experiencing a need for family and a sense of belonging.

Adult care leavers who participated in this study attempted to initiate and maintain relationships with their biological family members based on experiences of uncertainty about their backgrounds and identities. Ince (1998) similarly found that adult care leavers often have the idea that relationships with biological family members might support them to develop a sense of identity. Despite the attempts of the participants of this study to form relationships with biological family members, it was found that they continued to experience fractured relationships with their families of origin and that family members did not support them in developing their sense of identities. The independent care leavers as a result experienced their relationships with biological parents and siblings as unsupportive. This finding is supported by a study conducted by Elsley, Backett-Milburn and Jamieson (2007), who found that the majority of adult care leavers will experience a lack of practical and social support from biological family members. Forbes and Inder (2006) similarly found in their study, that 43% of young adult care leavers experienced a lack of support from family members following their departure from care. Aldgate (1994) also indicates that adult care leavers generally lack functional family support networks upon which they can rely during adult independence. Therefore, the findings of this study supports related studies that describe care leavers facing independence alone and lacking a safety net of family and friends to whom they can turn as young adults (Biehal *et al.*, 1995; Aldgate, 1994).

The young adult care leavers that did have contact with their families of origin were primarily restricted to relationships where they had to provide financial care. In support of this finding, Skehill and Dima (2011) also indicate that the majority of young adult care leavers will not return to their biological families as circumstances typically do not change during care leavers' placement in care. Pertaining to this, the findings of this study found indicate that participants' family members continued to experience economic and social challenges during participants' care placement and following their departure from care. This complicated the relationships that young adult care leavers attempted to have with family members as participants were not only expected to provide financial support to biological parents but also to siblings who were experiencing economic instability. This caused conflict and tension within participants' relationships with their biological family members.

The findings of this study furthermore indicate that young adult care leavers' relationships with biological family members during the post-transition phase to independence were as a result often characterised by conflict, a lack of interest by family members or infrequent contact. As such, relationships with families of origin remained a source of considerable distress to participants during the

post-transition phase. Correlating with this finding, Stein (2006) and Paterson *et al.* (2003) emphasise that young adult care leavers are likely to experience relationship difficulties with biological family members as such relations typically involve conflict, instability and insecurity which in turn might have a negative influence on young adults' transition to independent living. In further support, Sinclair *et al.* (2005) show that family relationships remain a major dilemma for many adult care leavers as they need and want to have a sense of family – not surprising given the centrality of 'the family' in ideology, policy and practice – but instead experience conflict and difficulties in relationships with biological family members.

6.4.1.2 Challenges associated with close relationships and attachment

It is typically presumed that challenges faced by young adult care leavers are at least partially related to the lack of strong, healthy, and stable relationships, which are key ingredients for any young adult's successful transition to independent living (Spencer, Collins, Ward & Smashnaya, 2010). This study confirms existing literature based on the finding that young adult care leavers found it difficult to initiate and maintain stable relationships, negatively impacting on their transition to independence. In this regard it was found that the study participants experienced difficulty to fulfil their needs for stable belonging, attachment, security, connection, unconditional acceptance and social support through their relationships with caregivers, biological family members, peers and romantic partners.

The participants of this study experienced the need to form romantic relationships due to their experiences of loneliness. As such, an interesting finding of this study relate to young adult care leavers' needs to be involved in romantic relationships being exacerbated due to rejection by biological family members and a lack of social support from places of care. Being forced to move to independence at an early, with the threat of loneliness and economic insecurity that this can imply, created a more urgent need for young adult care leavers to select partners and start a family.

This study also indicates that participants felt pressurised to cohabit with romantic partners due to economic insecurity during the post-transition phase of independence. As such, although the participants experienced discontent in romantic relationships they could not end the relationships due to financial constraints. In support of this finding, Courtney and Dworsky (2005) as well as Broad (1998) found that young adult care leavers are often economically disadvantaged due to a lack of educational qualifications and may subsequently face difficulties in the labour market. This may explain why participants who lacked educational qualifications decided to stay in discontented romantic relationships, resulting in for example instances of infidelity.

Independent adult care leavers of this study attested to the higher levels of distress they experienced in romantic relationships, in addition to the difficulties to form and maintain intimate relationships. In

response, one adult care leaver lived on her own following multiple failed romantic relationships, experiences of mistrust and instances of infidelity. She placed her confidence in career accomplishments as this assured economic stability, and as a result neglected romantic relationships. In agreement with this finding, Van Breda, Marx and Kader (2012) reveal that adult care leavers often experience tension between dependence and independence as they mistrust the intentions of individuals who attempt to support them. Young adult care leavers therefore tend to rely on themselves, ultimately alienating members who might have supported them during their transition to independent living. In this regard, participants in this study resisted intimacy and experienced an inability to trust romantic partners due to previous instances of rejection and adverse childhood experiences. Elliott (1994) similarly found that young adults who are raised in children's homes often lack the essential ingredients for developing healthy relationships later in life, such as trust, attachment, intimacy and personal boundary setting.

In applying psychosocial development theory to this study, the researcher found that the participants were in the *Intimacy versus Isolation (Young Adulthood)* stage during the post-transition phase to independent living. During this stage, individuals have to establish close, secure, romantic and committed relationships in order to experience satisfying development. Failure to do so might lead to a sense of isolation, loneliness and depression (Erikson, 1963). The young adult care leavers who participated in this study experienced loneliness and isolation during the post-transition phase as they found it challenging to maintain stable relationships due to previous experiences of mistreatment. As a result participants often resisted attachment and closeness, in turn influencing the relationships they attempted to establish as young adults. As such, the researcher found that participants experienced isolation and loneliness in the post-transition phase due to a lack of satisfying relationships.

Downes (1992) who carried out one of a few studies of care leavers' experiences grounded within attachment theory offers a framework for understanding young care leavers' attachment in relationships. Her findings show the difficulties many care leavers experience in accepting help from others and committing themselves to close relationships, ascribing this challenge to past difficulties, including rejection by birth families. In this regard Downes (1992) indicate that adolescent care leavers will become either highly dependent on others or highly independent, keeping people who are important to them at arm's length. Closely related, Van Breda (2012) states that young adult care leavers' attempts to form relationships are often complicated by lack of trust and fear of abandonment, abuse and violence. As such, although young adult care leavers do experience a need for stable relationships, they often display ambivalence in their behaviour, moving both toward and away from stable relationships due to distrust and fear of abandonment (Van Breda, 2012).

Broderick and Blewitt (2003) similarly state that early attachment experiences can influence intimacy with others later in life and in turn have a negative influence on romantic relationships. In support, participants of this study experienced an abrupt end of relationships with biological family members, caregivers and care residents. Existing studies regarding this trend (Lips, 2007; Ward, 2000) suggests that young adult care leavers experiencing a lack of social support from caregivers, may experience a detrimental effect in terms of their intimacy, sense of self and trust. Similar reports made by Fleming and Adolph (1986) emphasise that a lack of support from caregivers may cause young adult care leavers to experience rejection, which may prevent them from forming new relationships as they fear similar experiences of abandonment.

Possible explanations for young adult care leavers' lack of intimacy and attachment in romantic relationships might thus be found in earlier childhood experiences, not having a nurturing relationship with a primary caregiver. In support of this finding Courtney and Dworsky (2006) as well as Leathers (2006) indicate that young adult care leavers often experience changes in placement and break-ups in relationships, leading to insecure attachments. All these factors put them at greater risk of experiencing difficulties in relationships. As such, care leavers generally experience difficulty to develop secure and long lasting attachments based on multiple family difficulties, termination of relationships with biological parents and disconnection from supportive adults (Attar-Schwartz, 2008; Shin, 2005).

Only one participant was able to establish and maintain a stable family life that provided him with a sense of belonging. Having a stable relationship with a romantic partner supported the participant in the post-transition phase to manage life challenges. In agreement with this finding, Jahnukainen (2007) as well as Dumaret and Coppel-Batsch (1998) indicate that stable romantic relationships and attachment may provide young adult care leavers with protective resources which in turn can support them with transitional problems. The findings of this study indicate that strong friendships can further support young adult care leavers in the post-transition phase, offering a sense of social support during adulthood.

6.4.1.3 Establishing new families

The findings of this study indicate that a high number of young adult care leavers became parents at the young age of 19 to 20 years. Three out of the five primary participants had children within 24 months following their discharge from care. In support of this finding, Biehal and Wade (2000) found that young adult care leavers often move from residential care to independent accommodation, set up home with partners and become parents, within 18 to 24 months after leaving care. This is at a far earlier age on average when compared with young people in the general population (Biehal & Wade, 2000). Similar patterns are indicated by a study conducted by Cook (1994) who found that 60% of female care leavers gave birth to at least one child in this time compared to 24% of young women in

the general population. The findings of this study are in agreement with Shirk and Stangler (2004) as well as Allen and Nixon (2000) which document that early pregnancy and parenthood is particularly common among young people leaving care, especially among young women who have experienced sexual abuse, a lack of sex education, loneliness and isolation.

The findings of this study furthermore show that three participants became parents while enrolled at tertiary education institutions. In agreement with this finding, a study by Pinkerton (2011) highlight that young adult care leavers often do not complete their tertiary studies due to unplanned pregnancies and early parenthood. In this regard, Cashmore, Paxman and Townsend (2007) similarly found that young adult care leavers often discontinue tertiary studies due to change in circumstances, such as becoming pregnant. However, the participants of this study were not in a financial position to have children as they were in the process of completing tertiary qualifications, resulting in them trying to manage early parenthood with limited financial resources.

In terms of their attachment with and nurturing of their children, several participants found it difficult to form strong attachments with first born children. Participants particularly experienced a lack of knowledge on parenting skills following the birth of their first born children. In support of this finding, Loman and Siegel (2000) note that care leavers often lack the necessary competence and knowledge for parenting and having children. As a result, one participant of this study sent her first born child to live with a biological family member for a period of time in order to obtain parenting skills and participate in career related activities.

However, different findings were obtained following the birth of second children, as participants experienced more fulfilment from nurturing these children and believed that they had more knowledge about parenting skills the second time around. In addition, during the post-transition phase, the participants eventually found comfort and meaning in the relationships with their children, and reported that they were emotionally attached to their children. Pertaining to this, Biehal and Wade (2000) found that young adult care leavers gain a sense of purpose in life following the birth of their children. Without clear alternatives this is one potential way of accessing a more socially valued adult identity (Hudson & Ineichen, 1991; Phoenix, 1991; Musick, 1993).

Concerning child rearing practices, young adult care leavers experienced the parenting of their children as challenging as they were often primarily responsible for the task. They received little support from their romantic partners who were not actively involved in child rearing practices which aligns with Biehal and Wade (2000) who found that care leavers will display commitment to care for their children even if it is as single parents. Two thirds of the participants in Biehal and Wade's (2000) study managed this quite successfully despite struggling with low incomes.

Biehal and Wade (2000) found that care leavers are typically good and caring parents, despite restrictions and the loss of freedom implied by early parenting. Other studies indicate high rates of parents having been abused when coming from residential care which has implications for child rearing (Courtney & Dworsky, 2006; Reilly, 2003; Courtney *et al.*, 2001; Cook, 1994). The participants of this study did however not report on instances of abuse and therefore contradicts studies indicating high rates of parental abuse among this group of care leavers. The contradictions may perhaps be attributed to differences between the participants of this study and those of other studies. To this end, this aspect requires further investigation.

Finally, this study found that participants were actively involved in their children's lives and concerned about the financial well-being of their children. Participants consequently worked long hours to provide for their children's financial needs, and wanted their children to become responsible and independent. Fulfilling their parental roles encouraged them to remain responsible and subsequently had a positive effect on their lives during the post-transition phase, driving them to maintain stable employment and accommodation. Therefore, the findings of this study indicate a level of resilience amongst the participants in fulfilling their parental roles, considering that they did not receive the ordinary resources of good parenting in preparation of this task. However, participants did experience difficulty in fulfilling their parenting tasks, such as bonding with first born children, having parenting skills and not being overly-strict and over-protective in their roles as parents. In this regard Quinton (1987) similarly indicate that mothers who have been raised in care often experience some difficulty with parenting their children.

6.4.2 CORE TASKS FACED BY YOUNG ADULT CARE LEAVERS DURING THE POST-TRANSITION PHASE

In this section the researcher presents the findings of the study by situating the results in terms of related literature. She purposively describes the core tasks expected of young adult care leavers during the post-transition phase, namely to secure employment, find accommodation and access to mental health care support. She highlights congruent findings, contradictions and new insight gained from this study.

6.4.2.1 Finding stable employment

The findings of this study indicate that the young adult care leavers all obtained employment which varied in terms of skill level from unskilled labour to highly trained positions and professional roles. The multiplicity can be attributed to a range of factors including participants' educational qualifications, their immediate care leaving experiences and the labour market. The risk of being unemployed and/or employed in low skilled and menial employment was found to be particularly high for young adult care leavers during the post-transition phase. Furthermore, several participants had past instances of

unemployment. In agreement with this finding, Barnardo (1996) indicate that more than 75% of care leavers typically have no academic qualifications and that between 50% and 80% of care leavers will end up unemployed. Owen (2000) as well as Cashmore and Paxman (1996) affirm that more than half of young adult care leavers will remain unemployed.

In contrast to the array of studies that highlight the relative high rate of unemployment amongst former children's home residents (Kaminsky, 1998; Wurtele, Wilson & Prentice-Dunn, 1983; Schulman, 1975; Maluccio, 1974), the participants of this study were employed at various points throughout their adult lives, including periods of part-time employment. This difference in findings might be explained by the participants' educational qualifications, their specific needs when exiting care and the quantity and quality of support available to them, which may undermine educational and employment opportunities. In this regard, participants of this study did not report on experiencing a lack of stability and continuity during their placement in care, such as many care leavers who have participated in related studies, which document high rates of unemployment. However, similar results were found in this study regarding participants' being sporadically employed, resulting in a lack of financial security during the post-transition phase of independence. In support of this finding, Buehle, Orme, Post and Patterson (2000) as well as Aldgate (1994) indicate that adult care leavers often become dependent on social security and will experience acute poverty.

This study furthermore indicates that young adult care leavers may be unemployed due to a lack of motivation, responsibility, commitment and perseverance. In addition, they may be forced to obtain low-paid temporary employment if they lack tertiary qualifications. Furthermore, young adult care leavers were occasionally forced to leave employment due to retrenchment and company bankruptcy. Participants had to then search for new employment and often experienced difficulty to obtain this. In support of this, an array of literature suggests that young adult care leavers typically do not complete formal education and as a result will not possess the necessary skills to find stable employment (Atkinson, 2008; Courtney & Dworsky, 2006).

Lenz-Rashid (2006) and Curtain (2003) similarly found that adult care leavers often experience difficulty in gaining employment due to a lack of educational qualifications, which may be caused by a number of factors, such as stressful pre-care and care experiences, lack of continuity in placement and schools, and low expectations from social workers and carers. The findings of this study are in agreement with those results of Lenz-Rashid (2006), also highlighting stressful pre-care experiences and occasionally low expectations when leaving care, especially after attending schools for learners with special needs. Pertaining to this, the findings of this study indicate that participants who depart from care without an adequate education may experience limited employment opportunities which in turn will have a negative effect on their functioning within the post-transition phase.

An interesting finding from this study relates to the minority of young adult care leavers who achieve academically on a tertiary level despite expectations that they typically won't. If this is the case however chances of gaining employment and a positive future perspective in the post-transition phase of independence are greater. In support of this finding, Zetlin, Weinberg and Shea (2006) indicate that positive educational and career experiences may contribute to resilience and recovery amongst vulnerable individuals in contexts of adversity.

6.4.2.2 Securing accommodation

The findings of this study indicate that the majority of the participants in the post-transition phase occupied accommodation in economically deprived neighbourhoods. As such, participants experienced discontent with their accommodation and aspired to obtain better quality homes in future. In support of this finding Clayden and Stein (2005) emphasise that adult care leavers are often discontent with their accommodation and typically wish to transfer from apartments to houses.

Lindsey and Ahmed (1999) as well as Mallon (1998) report on a high correlation between young adult care leavers and later homelessness. In support of this, Child Welfare League of America (1999) found that 41% of homeless young people had spent time in children's homes. Similarly, Centrepont (2001) indicate that 30% of 758 young people participating in that study who were admitted to housing projects between April 2000 and March 2001 had a care history. As such, several studies highlight care leavers' high levels of housing instability and youth homelessness during adulthood (Lenz-Rachid, 2008). In this study however, no findings were obtained for homelessness of young adult care leavers. Possible reasons for this contradiction may be found in the fact that the participants in this study received support from romantic partners and landlords that made it possible for participants to purchase and/or maintain accommodation.

According to Atkinson (2008), adult care leavers will experience less difficulties when they receive support from concerned others who assist them to secure accommodation despite suitable housing remaining a problem for them. Adding to this, this study indicates that one participant was able to obtain a home in a good neighbourhood. As such, this study indicates that young adult care leavers who attained a high quality education and employment do not necessarily experience difficulties in finding and maintaining accommodation, as in the case of those not having a stable income. In support of this finding Atkinson (2008), Courtney and Dworsky (2006) as well as Lenz-Rashid (2006) found that the attainment of employment and accommodation outcomes is linked to the educational level that adult care leavers attained during and following placement in care.

Closely related, Biehal and Wade (2000) found that a number of care leavers will seek accommodation near their families of origin as this makes it possible to maintain or renew family relationships. The

findings of this study do not confirm this trend, perhaps due to the dynamics of family relationships that the independent care leavers reported on. In this regard, during the post-transition phase, adult care leavers re-evaluated their relationships with their families of origin due to instances of familial conflict and stressors. As such, according to the findings of this study the participating adult care leavers did not move close to their families of origin as their relationships reportedly remained a source of considerable distress during the post-transition phase.

6.4.2.3 Accessing mental healthcare services

In this study it was found that the distress and adversity that young adults care leavers had experienced prior to care placement, continued to have a negative effect on their mental health as young adults during the post-transition phase. In support of this finding, related studies indicate that care leavers often present with unique psychological and behavioural challenges as adults, due to various traumatic experiences, such as abuse, neglect, rejection, family dysfunction and abandonment which they experience prior to placement in care (Stein, 2006; Dixon & Stein, 2005; Yates, 2001; Kelleher, Kelleher & Corbett, 2000; Biehal, Clayden, Stein & Wade, 1995). Associated challenges include coping with separation from biological families, making peace with their families, relating to new families and establishing connections with new significant adults (Maluccio, 1974). As such, experiences of childhood separation and rejection may contribute to ongoing social and emotional disturbances, developmental delays and behavioural difficulties during adulthood (Stein, 2006). The participants of this study however did not receive therapeutic intervention during placement in care, possibly contributing to mental health challenges experienced during the post-transition phase of independence. Coleman and Hendry (1999) similarly found that care leavers often experience psychological challenges during their transition to independence as this period typically implies challenging experiences that can induce memories of previous trauma and separation.

This study furthermore found that depression and suicidal tendencies occurred amongst three female participants, who for example used prescription medication to relieve symptoms of insomnia, sleepwalking, hyperactivity, anxiety and night fear. One of the participants displayed symptoms of a bipolar mood disorder and reported on suicidal thoughts. In agreement with this finding, Broad (2005) and West (1995) indicate that the effects of physical, emotional and sexual abuse often predispose adult care leavers towards psychological disruption, depression and suicide. In this regard existing studies found that 15% of adult care leavers will either attempt suicide or contemplate to do so attempting suicide (Casey Family Programs, 2001), and that one in six care leavers may develop a chronic mental illness (Saunders & Broad, 1998).

An interesting finding from this study relate to two of the participants experiencing social anxiety and in turn avoiding interpersonal contact with individuals from the “outside world”. Participants subsequently

preferred not to be socially involved with people and activities. In support of this finding existing studies indicate that coupled with the negative impact of long-term care, low levels of education, unemployment, economic insecurity, lack of social support and unstable accommodation, this might cause ongoing mental health difficulties, such as social anxiety and depression during adulthood (Maposa, 2010 & Lenz-Rashid, 2006). As such, providing mental health services for adult care leavers is imperative and cogent for several reasons.

In this study it was found that only one participant sought and received psychological counselling for the difficulties faced. Two participants mentioned a lack of financial resources as reason for not affording counselling fees. In support of this finding Atkinson (2008) states that adult care leavers often do not receive therapeutic intervention as they typically do not have financial resources to seek help for mental health problems. Closely related, the participants of this study started participating in a range of self-reflective activities in an attempt to address mental health difficulties, and to maintain a predominantly positive outlook on life.

6.5 PROTECTIVE RESOURCES THAT COULD POTENTIALLY PROMOTE THE RESILIENCE OF ADULT CARE LEAVERS

Resilience can be defined as a process that enables some people to find fulfilment despite disadvantaged backgrounds, adversity or pressures they may experience (Stein, 2006). Resilience is often associated with individuals who overcome the odds and recover from life stressors. Overall, theoretical frameworks guiding the development of resilience theory have included the three-level (community, family and child) 'protective' and 'risk' factor model, ecological perspectives identifying the influence of different contexts (culture, neighbourhood and family) varying in proximity to the individual, and a structural organisational perspective, which views individual choice and self-organisation as critical factors to the development of resilience over time (Luthar *et al.*, 2000). Researchers therefore recognise that resilience often result from a triad of protective processes (Luthar *et al.*, 2000), found in the individual, social relationships and environmental factors, from the perspective of a systems theory (Donald *et al.*, 2010).

The significance of this more recent transactional ecosystemic understanding of resilience has direct implications for the focus of this study, as the researcher was concerned about the conceptualisation and promotion of protective processes that might support young adult care leavers to move from risk and dependence to adaptation and independence. Pertaining to this, the researcher found a gap in the literature regarding resilience processes of young adult care leavers. Many of the studies that describe resilience may be applied to the findings of this study, as resilience studies focus mainly on the experiences of individuals who are exposed to adverse circumstances including poverty, maltreatment and traumatic life events (Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000) which were also experienced by the

participants of this study. In the next section the researcher describes protective processes that could potentially promote resilient adaptation of care leavers during the post-transition phase of independent living. Resilient processes include relationships with responsible adults, reflexive learning and vigilant behaviour, adverse circumstances providing opportunities for thriving, attainment of future goals and religious beliefs.

6.5.1 RELATIONSHIPS WITH RESPONSIBLE ADULTS

A salient finding of this study relates to the importance of relationships with responsible adults who may have a positive influence in the post-transition lives of young adult care leavers. Pertaining to this, two high achievers in the group of five participants referred to close relationships they had with at least one significant person, outside the care system, who encouraged them to participate in educational activities and acted as role-models for parenting, and romantic relationships. Participants referred to these responsible adults as mentors, who with their acts of kindness had a positive ripple effect on their functioning as independent adults during the post-transition phase. These acts of kindness included the provision of a supportive relationship, offering financial help, providing educational encouragement and helping with accommodation. Each had the capacity to steer participants' post-care pathways in a more encouraging direction, potentially triggering a series of positive chain reactions which in turn helped care leavers to adapt during the post-transition phase. In support of this finding, Geenen and Powers (2007) found that foster parents could be such a valuable resource to help care leavers overcome adversities and reach successful outcomes as adults.

Positive outcomes for young adult care leavers can be explained by means of existing research on resilience (Shiner *et al.*, 2004; Thompson & Kelly-Vance, 2001; Turner & Scherman 1996; Zippay 1995) that indicate a number of factors that may protect youth from poor adult outcomes. Existing studies namely propose that mentoring can for example support adult care leavers to develop positive self-concepts (Turner & Scherman, 1996), promote educational attainment (Shiner *et al.*, 2004; Thompson & Kelly-Vance, 2001) and lead to better parent-child and peer relationships (Grossman & Tierney, 1998). Studies further found that having a role model or mentor can decrease the likelihood of adult care leavers' use of drugs, alcohol and violence (Turner & Scherman 1996; Zippay, 1995).

The findings of this study similarly indicate that young adult care leavers who experienced a stable relationship with a responsible adult were more resilient in the post-transition phase, in terms of relationships, employment, educational attainment and economic stability, when compared to participants who did not have close relationships with responsible adults. As such, this study found that the presence or absence of responsible adults defined which adult care leavers were progressing well, who was just about surviving, and who was struggling, during the post-transition phase to independence. In support of this finding, Green and Jones (1999) as well as Cashmore and Paxman

(1996) indicate that adult care leavers who experience supportive and stable relationships are far more likely to overcome adversities resulting from pre-care and in-care experiences, and to prosper following their departure from care.

6.5.2 REFLEXIVE LEARNING AND VIGILANT BEHAVIOUR

An interesting finding from this study relates to participants being “street-smart”, which can be seen as a protective process for young adult care leavers when exposed to challenging situations. Pertaining to this, Van Breda, Marx and Kader (2012) describe “street-smarts” as an ability to assess the environment and to recognise danger. This study namely indicate that participants’ “street-smart” abilities developed prior to and during their transition to independence as participants had to rely on themselves for protection and survival in an unfamiliar context. In this regard, participants appeared to be attentive, alert and vigilant as well as connected with social contexts. In agreement with this finding, Elsay, Beckett-Milburn and Jamieson (2007) found that adult care leavers will develop “street-smart” abilities following previous experiences of trauma and as a result may find it difficult to trust people and systems.

The participants of this study displayed a sense of pride and achievement when referring to their “street-smart” abilities as they apparently “earned” these abilities whilst overcoming adverse experiences. In support of this, Van Breda (2012) states that the social environments of adult care leavers are filled with threats and that surviving without support, can be considered as a major success by young adult care leavers. Pertaining to this, Van Breda (2012) found that adolescent care leavers can display remarkable “street-smarts” with the ability to assess environments and recognise when circumstances might be harmful or beneficial to them. As such, being “street-smart” is seemingly not an intrapersonal protective process related to the self but rather skills that operate at the interface between person and environment (Van Breda, 2012).

Another interesting finding of this study indicates that young adult care leavers displayed reflexive learning. They referred to experiences where they learned from their own mistakes, as well as the words and/or behaviours of others. This triggered pivotal insight and learning which often resulted in changed patterns of behaviour. As such, participants seemingly used life lessons to make informed decisions and prevent further experiences of adversity. The researcher identified a gap in existing literature regarding young adult care leavers’ abilities for reflexive learning. As such, this finding adds to existing literature, and may with further investigation, reveal some of the abilities that care leavers typically develop during unfavourable life experiences and then apply in a range of social contexts as young adults.

6.5.3 HANDLING ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES AS OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW

Participants of this study displayed the capacity to transform negative attributes into positive ones, including being grateful for what they have learned from overcoming adversity. As such, participants achieved benefits from the adversities they experienced as they gained emotional maturity from traumatic life events. Pertaining to this, participants believed that harmful behaviour supported them to broaden their self-knowledge, develop resilience and heal from adverse childhood experiences. In support of this, Ickovics and Park (1998) also found that adult care leavers will perceive that they can overcome adverse circumstances and perhaps transform adversity into opportunities for thriving. In this regard, adversities seemingly propelled participants towards achieving emotional and psychological development. Participants subsequently functioned beyond previous levels of adaptation in the children's home and reached states of well-being in the post-transition phase that would not have been reached without the challenges they experienced whilst making the transition to independent living.

Participants' perceptions that they could gain from dealing with adversities may be an indication of resilience. In this regard, Newman (2004) as well as Newman and Blackburn (2002) focus on individuals' capacities to re-frame adversities so that both the beneficial and damaging effects are recognised, as protective processes. In addition, participants of this study gained emotional maturity from traumatic life events, which is seen as a protective process and indicative of resilience (Newman, 2004).

6.5.4 REACHING FUTURE GOALS

The findings of this study indicate that goals for the future helped young adult care leavers to remain optimistic and hopeful for the future. Theron and Theron (2011) similarly found that youth who display resilience in adverse environments pursue long-term goals that have the potential to improve their futures. Participants had an array of future goals, such as attainment of tertiary qualifications, economic stability, stable employment and secure accommodation. In this regard, the participants displayed an optimistic, tenacious, committed and never-give-up attitude where they continued to strive towards their goals, regardless of the challenges encountered. As such, study participants' sense of endurance and hope - hope that things will get better, that life will work out and that they will achieve goals, supported them to focus on positive opportunities in their post-transition lives. In support of this, Gelling (2009) also indicates that young adult care leavers who are motivated to reach goals, will be able to focus on positive opportunities in their environments and as a result plan for their futures.

6.5.5 RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AS SUPPORTIVE FACTOR

This study found that religious beliefs supported adult care leavers to manage adversities. Pertaining to this, prior studies of resilience associate religious beliefs with positive adjustment during hardship (Anderson, 2008; Kumpfer, 1999). In support of this, Masten and Wright (2010) found that young people who are raised in religious communities are socialised towards hopefulness and a sense of belonging to a community, both of which support hopeful meaning of life events. Anderson (2008) similarly found that young care leavers who are connected to a religious community will experience comfort and validation of their worthiness. The participants of this study experienced a sense of protection from God especially during times of hardship. As such, it was found that adult care leavers' religious beliefs often "pulled them through" and helped them to survive during adverse experiences. In support of this finding, Masten *et al.* (2009) and Kumpfer (1999) refer to religious and spiritual beliefs as interpersonal protective resources that may promote resilience in adverse circumstances.

6.6 REVISITING THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THEME 3

In this section the researcher situates the findings on Theme 3 in terms of the theoretical perspectives that she regarded as central to the relevance and understanding of this study.

Although the researcher did not discuss the findings of Bridges (2002) in the conceptual framework of the study, his findings were relevant to the understanding of the study. Bridges (2002) document that a prerequisite for young adult care leavers' transition to independent living is conversion from "old" identities as "children's homes children" to forming "new" identities as "members of society". Relating Bridges (2002) theory to this study, the participants reportedly experienced challenges with the formation of their identities during the pre-transition and transition phase due to stressful experiences and feelings of confusion, uncertainty, anxiety and ambiguity. Based on the findings of this study, participants self-descriptions were generally based on their positive relationships that they experienced with off-spring and peers, and they also described themselves in terms of their educational and career accomplishments.

Keyes (2007) *well-being theory* describes *social contribution* as one dimension of *psychological well-being*. This entails the evaluation of one's social value and includes the belief that one is a vital member of society, with something of value to give to the world. In applying *Social contribution* to this study, one participant reportedly perceived herself to be a vital member of society as she attained educational and occupational success. In addition, she seemingly experienced high levels of social contribution due to the social roles which she fulfilled as mentor and role model for individuals who were experiencing adversity.

Keyes (2007) describes *vowed quality of life* as one component of *emotional* well-being, which refers to an emotional state of being satisfied with various domains of living. Although the participants of the study experienced a range of negative emotions, some also found satisfaction in their relationships with off-spring and romantic partners. In this regard, two participants found fulfillment in relationships with friends and one other through career accomplishments. Participants reportedly experienced high levels of satisfaction with their lives, due to the *positive relationships that they had with others*, which is one element of *psychological* well-being (Keyes, 2007). During the post-transition phase to independent living participants also displayed high levels of *autonomy*, which is one element of *psychological* well-being (Keyes, 2007), specifically referring to their self-determining and independent behavior, whilst resisting social pressures.

One other *psychological* well-being element described by Keyes (2007) is *purpose in life* which entails setting life goals, having a sense of directedness, finding meaning and purpose in the present and past life, and having objectives and aims for living. The participants of the study reportedly had an array of future goals which seemingly supported them to remain optimistic and hopeful for the future. Finally, Keyes (2007) describe *personal growth* as a element of *psychological* well-being, referring to feelings of continued development, seeing the self as growing and expanding, being open to new experiences, experiencing a sense of realising potential, self-improvement and self-knowledge. In this regard, participants of the study reported on their abilities to transform negative experiences to positive life lessons, including being grateful for what they learned from adversity. These experiences reportedly had a positive effect on their psychological development as they were functioning beyond their prior levels of functioning during the transition phase, reporting on higher dimensions of well-being in the post-transition phase.

Keyes (2007) well-being theory describes flourishing as a state of complete mental health, subjective well-being, positive functioning in life and positive feelings toward life. Individuals who flourish generally display low levels of perceived helplessness (high perceived control in life), high levels of functional goals (knowing what they want from life), high levels of self-reported resilience (learning from adversities) and high levels of intimacy (feeling very close with family and friends) (Keyes 2007). According to the findings of the study, participants reported on experiences of goal attainment, learning from adversities and forming close relationships with off-spring and peers, especially during the post-transition phase of independence. However, participants also reported on overcoming a range of environmental challenges and developing survival strategies during the transition process. As such, for the participants of this study, flourishing entailed a gradual process which was intertwined with environmental factors.

According to the results of this study participants experiences of well-being included psychological, emotional and social dimensions of Keyes (2007) well-being theory and entailed a gradual and flexible process that could not be defined as a single event. Pertaining to this, strategies and activities activating the process of flourishing included systematic and intentional conduct in all three dimensions. As such, the psychological, social and emotional well-being factors described in this study might offer constructs and psychological mechanisms for the development of psychosocial health in young adult care leavers.

Unger's (2008) *resilience theory* shifts the focus from attributes of exposure to stressful environments, to the individual characteristics and social processes associated with unexpectedly positive psychosocial development. In applying resilience theory to this study, the participants reportedly learned from incidences of adversity which may be an indication of resilience. Participants reframed the adversities they experienced and recognised the beneficial as well as the damaging effects thereof, which can be seen as a protective process. Participants also gained emotional maturity from traumatic life events which is a protective process and indicative of resilience (Newman, 2004). Moreover, the resilient processes for participants included relationships with responsible adults, learning from mistakes, having goals for the future and religious beliefs. These protective processes contributed to participants flourishing in the context of adversity despite exposure to transitional challenges and risk. As such, Unger's (2008) resilience theory provided insight into the particular constellation of resources and opportunities present in the transition experiences of young adult care leavers.

6.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher reported on the results and findings of Theme 3 that emerged during the thematic analysis and interpretation phase of the current study. She presented insight regarding the *post-transition experiences associated with young adult care leavers*. She made use of participants' narrative accounts and verbatim quotations, to enrich and authenticate the results she presented. She presented the sub-themes and categories that emerged following a process of inductive thematic analysis in order to indicate the results she obtained. After presenting the results, the researcher situated these against the background of existing literature, thereby foregrounding the findings she obtained. She highlighted congruent findings between what she found and what existing literature reflects, as well as contradictions she identified.

In chapter 7, the researcher presents guiding principles, based on the transition experiences of young adult care leavers that may support professionals in their facilitation of support for youth who are in the process of transition from residential care to independent living.

CHAPTER 7

GUIDELINES TO SUPPORT THE TRANSITION OF RESIDENTIAL CARE LEAVERS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In the three preceding chapters, the researcher outlined the results and findings of the study by presenting the three themes and related sub-themes that emerged as a result of inductive thematic analysis of the raw data. The researcher thus discussed the experiences of care leavers prior to, during and after their transition to independent living.

In this chapter the researcher proposes guidelines that children's homes may implement in support of the transition for the facilitation of the transition to independent living. Based on the previous chapters and the findings of the study the researcher describes principles that may guide professionals when supporting young care leavers who reside in residential care. In her discussion, the researcher also draws on related studies, particularly those that describe initiatives of guiding professionals to promote healthy adult outcomes in youth residing in residential care.

7.2 EXISTING PROGRAMMES FOR YOUTH LEAVING THE CARE SYSTEM

Leaving Care Act (2000) of England places a duty on children's homes to advise, assist and befriend young adult care leavers following their departure from care. In this regard legislators propose that places of care maintain responsible for the well-being of care leavers by providing them with aftercare advice, personal support, educational aid, financial assistance and accommodation. This is indicative of awareness about planned care-leaving processes for young adult care leavers. However, existing studies (Atkinson, 2008; Stein, 2005) describe youth leaving the care system as typically unprepared for independent living. In support, Ucembe, Magoni and Bambino (2009) as well as Loman and Siegel (2000) found that care leavers generally lack competence in finding accommodation, managing money, doing career planning and implementing parenting skills. In addition Mares (2010) notes that care leavers may experience financial, vocational, employment, interpersonal and transportation needs following their departure from children's homes.

Despite a wealth of evidence on legislative and policy frameworks many youth leaving the care system are not prepared for the transition to independent living (Stein, 2005). This may be attributed to a number of factors ranging from insufficient post-care services to a lack of expertise to address the complex needs of young adult care leavers. In addition, children's homes often experience a lack of resources and as a result may overlook the needs of youth leaving the care system (Mendes & Moslehuddin, 2006). Young adult care leavers could perhaps also choose to decline after-care services

as they experience a need for ending care following in-care experiences of restrictive regulations. As such, a number of factors might lead to a disparity between legislative frameworks and practice (National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children, 2010).

Atkinson (2008), Mallon (2007) as well as Barth (1990) emphasise the importance of preparation programmes for youth leaving the care system. In this regard, Pokempner and Rosado (2003) document legislation stipulating a written independent living plan for care residents who are 16 years and older, in preparation for their transition to adulthood. Although a number of interventions on independent living have been implemented with youth leaving the care system over the years, Courtney *et al.* (2001) as well as Allen and Nixon (2000) posits that programmes often fail due to a lack of post-care services that may provide assistance with accommodation, employment and education.

Even though programme designs may differ, programmes generally focus on the development of personal and independent living skills (Donkoh, Underhill & Montgomery, 2006). Development of personal skills may include a focus on effective communication, decision making and anger management. Skills for independent living potentially include guidance on employment, budgeting, accommodation and utilisation of community resources (USGAO, 1999; Cook, 1994). In addition, programmes on independent living programmes may include sections on interpersonal skills, experiential activities, such as role-play and computer training moving beyond independent living skills, interventions may also entail educational and vocational assistance in a transition placement, following departure from care (Biehal *et al.*, 1995; Meston, 1988). As such, leaving care interventions can involve various modes of delivery and may be conducted in group settings or on an individual basis.

Although several interventions on leaving care are in the infant stage of development and implementation, many show promising results. In addition, each adds valuable experience to working with youth leaving the care system. However, Mendes *et al.* (2011) as well as Foster and Gifford (2004) report on only a small number of satisfactory results for such interventions, as far as the preparation for transition is concerned. Pertaining to this, Freundlich and Avery (2006) affirm that programmes on independent living programmes often do not reflect actual life challenges that youth leaving the care system experience. Similarly, Courtney, Lee and Perez (2011) document that one-third of young adult care leavers do not receive guidance in areas of preparation mandated by law. As such, placement disruption and unplanned discharge of care residents may serve as barriers to programmes on independent living (Harder, Kalverboer & Knorth, 2011).

Successful programmes on independent living have been found to address a variety of transition needs aimed at improving care leavers' outcomes during adulthood (Mendes, 2009; Cashmore & Paxman, 1996; Mech *et al.*, 1995). Pinkerton (2011) proposes a timely and planned preparation process for youth leaving the care system. Similarly, Freundlich and Avery (2006) propagate supervised transition

programmes that include opportunities during placement to practice and demonstrate independent living skills. As such, care residents may receive opportunities to explore boundaries and learn from their mistakes in supervised safe spaces prior to departure from care (Freundlich & Avery, 2006; Meston, 1988; Mauzerall, 1983). The use of contextually relevant programmes is thus suggested allowing care leavers to apply the skills they gather in practice (Mendes *et al.*, 2011).

According to Stein (2006), interventions on transition ought to be presented holistically as this could potentially enable youth leaving care to solve actual life challenges during their transition to independence. In this regard, Stein and Wade (2000) as well as Stein and Carey (1986) confirm that independent living programmes should attach equal importance to practical, emotional and psychological skills – and not just, as in the past, practical independence training for youth leaving the care system at a young age. As such, programmes can include components of social transition (relationships, community participation, housing, health and well-being), economic transition (education, employment and income) as well as practical skills (Stein & Carey, 1986). In support of this, Stein and Wade (2000) recommend the inclusion of self-care skills, educational training, cultural knowledge and identity development in such programmes on independent living.

A range of studies (Atkinson, 2008; Mallon, 2007; Barth, 1990) document the preparation process for youth leaving care in western societies. However, a gap seemingly exists in literature regarding interventions on transition of care residents in developing countries, such as South Africa. As such, this study could add to literature on the process of leaving care, providing guidelines on how to support the transition based on the experiences of young adult care leavers.

7.3 A TRANSITION FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH LEAVING CARE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Young adult care leavers who participated in this study described a transition process which seemingly had a fluid nature and spanned over an extended period of time. In support of this finding, Mendes and Moslehuddin (2006) document care transition as a gradual and flexible process, that cannot be defined as a single event. McDowall (2009), Mendes (2008) and Maunders (1999) affirm a period of transition spanning the age range of 15 to 25 years, commencing with preparation for leaving care and ceasing at the point of independent adulthood.

Maunders, Liddell, Liddell and Green (1999) describe care leaving as a process comprising of a series of “phases” occurring along a continuum. The first phase endorses provision of high quality and stable care during residency in places of care. During the second phase, care leavers are encouraged to develop personal and social networks, and are provided with information regarding future options. The third phase includes continued after-care support, provision of resources and interest from care agencies (Maunders, 1999). The findings of this study indicate a process of transition that resonates

with the three phases, indicating the pre-transition phase (in-care experiences), transition phase (transition itself) and post-transition phase (independent living) as parts of the process of transition.

In the next section the researcher discusses young adult care leavers' experiences of their transition in each of the three phases, and then based on their experiences, develop guiding principles to facilitate support services or provide interventions in children's homes. The guiding principles are compiled based on the various sources, and supported by the findings described in chapters 4, 5 and 6. Although the guiding principles are presented in phases, the researcher is aware that transition interventions ought to be tailored to meet the needs of individual care residents as rigid working practices and defined categories will not support care leavers effectively (Mendes & Moslehuddin, 2006). Therefore, the researcher also draws on other studies, including initiatives designed to support young adult care leavers' transition to independent living.

7.3.1 PRE-TRANSITION PHASE

In this section the researcher provides guidelines in support of the transition for care leavers in the pre-transition phase. During the pre-transition phase care leavers are preparing for the transition whilst residing in residential care and typically attending pre-primary, primary and secondary school. The process includes stability and continuity in care, educational attainment, participation in extra-curricular activities, developing skills for independent living, career guidance, youth engagement, relationships with responsible adults and emotional health. Figure 7.1 provides an overview of the principles that may guide professionals in supporting care leavers during the pre-transition phase.

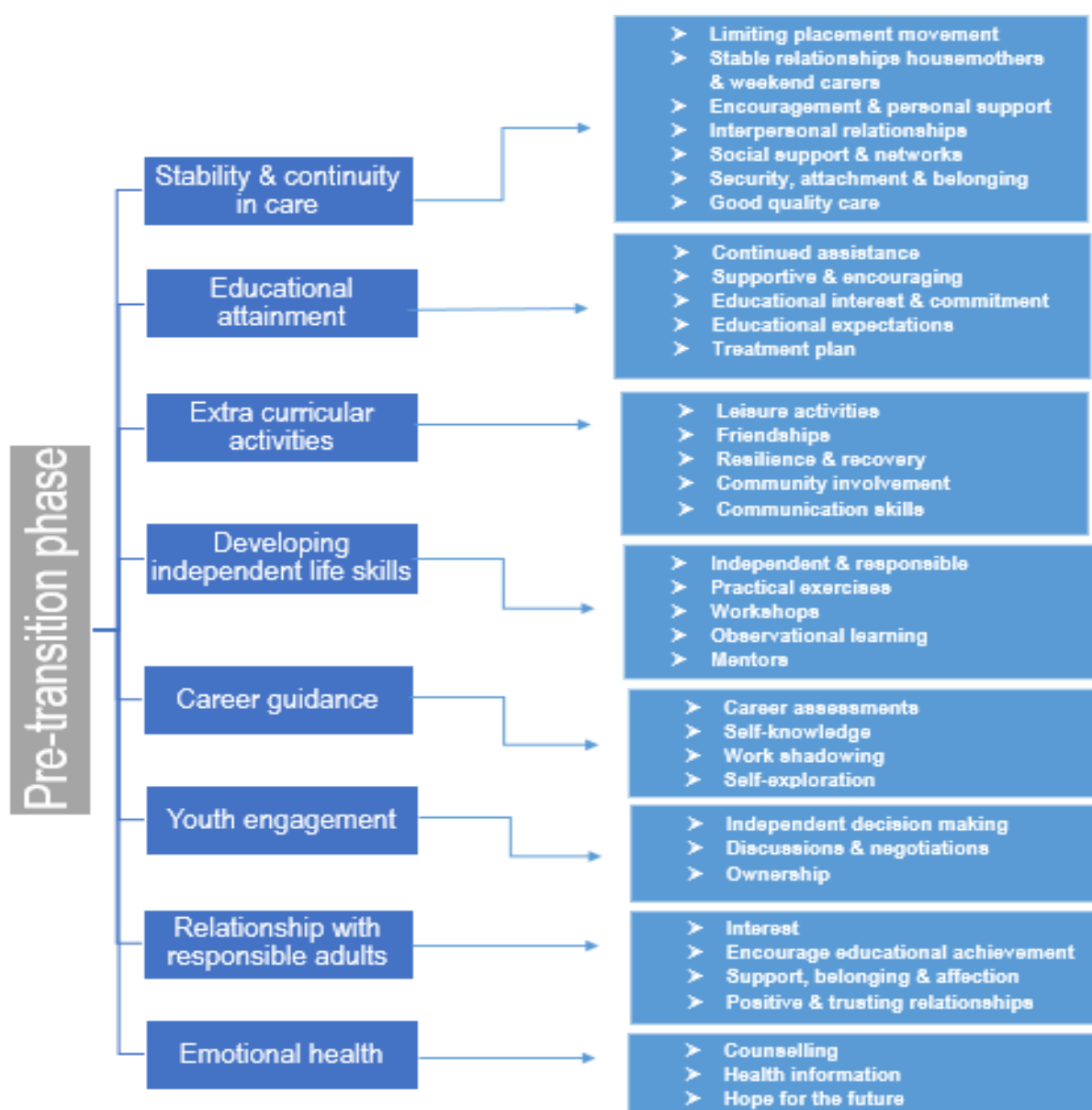


Figure 7.1: Guiding principles for professionals supporting care leavers during the pre-transition phase

7.3.1.1 Stability and continuity in care

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher proposes that places of care should have systems and procedures in place that promotes stability and continuity in care as this may provide care residents with opportunities for an extended range of interpersonal relationships, social support and networks. In support of this suggestion, Andersson (2005) as well as Stein (2005) found that stable relationships with dependable adults during placement in care might assist care leavers to develop a sense of attachment and belonging during adulthood (Andersson, 2005; Stein, 1994). As such, continuity of housemothers should be encouraged as various research studies document that care

residents who receive personal support from a dependable adult during placement in care, will be more resilient when compared to care leavers who do not form stable relationships with adult role models (Broad, 2005; Biehal *et al.*, 1995).

According to the findings of this study, stability in care has the potential of promoting care leavers' levels of resilience in terms of two respects. Firstly, care residents may have opportunities to develop warm and redeeming relationships with carers when in stable care (Rutter *et al.*, 1998; Howe, 1995). Secondly, this may contribute to positive educational and career outcomes (Ajayi & Quigley, 2006; Jackson, 2002). In support of this, recent studies indicate that care residents who have at least one positive and significant mentoring relationship tend to fare better as young adults (Ahrens, DuBois, Richardson, Fan & Lozano, 2008; Drapeau, Saint-Jacques, Lépine, Bégin & Bernard, 2007; Hines *et al.*, 2005). Pertaining to this, Gilligan (2006) documented that stable relationships and social support should ideally continue post-care placement, as care leavers experience an ongoing need for secure and supportive relationships during adulthood.

7.3.1.2 Educational attainment

The majority of participants of this study experienced academic success during formal schooling. Despite evidence of participants who attended several primary schools prior to residency in care, they achieved educational success during their placement in care. In this regard, stability of placement was a great advantage as participants then attended one school and could receive continued assistance from housemothers, and weekend carers during their placement in care, which seemingly enabled them to achieve academically. In support of this, good educational outcomes for care residents are typically associated with placement stability, gender (young women do better than young men); carers who are committed to helping the care residents, and a supportive and encouraging environment for study (Stein, 2006; Jackson, Ajayi, & Quigley, 2003; Biehal *et al.*, 1995).

Harker (2003) studied the views of 80 care residents aged 10 to 18 years, finding that 78% of care residents identified and nominated various roleplayers as supporting their educational progress. Teachers received 41 nominations from the 62 care residents; foster carers received 24 nominations and peers 11. In addition, residential carers received seven nominations and family members, as well as social workers, four each. Similar findings are indicated by this study as participants reported that weekend carers and housemothers provided an environment in which educational participation and success were valued, and educational resources were made available to encourage participants to complete formal schooling. Participants also made reference to educators and their importance to support care residents with career choices and employment opportunities. As such, a range of adults might contribute to care residents' educational progress.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher thus propose that responsible adults, such as weekend carers, educators, social workers and housemothers should display a considerable degree of interest and commitment in care residents' educational progress, as this seemingly encouraged the participants of this study to achieve educationally. Care leavers might as a result experience fewer difficulties during their transition to independence specifically in terms of educational attainment and employment. In this regard it has been well established that parental interest and belief in the value of education is of great importance to educational attainment (Lucey & Walkerdine, 2000; Taylor, 1991; Osborn 1990). As such, the researcher posits that places of care may utilise weekend carers as potential allies that may encourage care residents to academically perform. Pertaining to this suggestion, weekend carers ought to be informed that promoting care residents' educational attainment is imperative. Carers should be supported in achieving this aim by – for example ensuring financial resources for additional tuition and educational activities.

The finding that education is essential for social inclusion and a good quality of adult life is supported by Heath *et al.* (1994), indicating that educational attainment is a significant factor in enabling young adult care leavers' transition to independence. Pertaining to this, the findings of this study indicate that participants who did not obtain tertiary qualifications experienced limited career options and as a result reportedly adversity and economic instability during adulthood. As such, the researcher proposes that the completion of secondary school should be an expectation for all care residents as the likelihood of participation in tertiary education and employment opportunities will be less without this. In support of this suggestion, Collins (2004) report that care residents who transition out of care without basic education often do not gain entry to post-secondary education.

The researcher suggests that places of care recognise the importance of education and maintain an awareness of factors that may support or impede care residents' educational progress. Pertaining to this suggestion, the results of the study indicate that participants who were placed in schools for learners with special needs received less encouragement for educational attainment. To this end, the researcher proposes that regardless a care resident's level of educational achievement, places of care should have educational expectations of all residents to complete secondary school and if possible go on to further education and training. Although care residents who are placed in schools for learners with special needs may not meet the minimal entry requirements for tertiary education facilities, places of care ought to provide them with the same level of practical support, resources and encouragement than what a good parent would.

Johansson, Andersson and Hwang (2008) suggest that children's homes develop a treatment to support educational achievement of residents. Care residents might receive information on tertiary education, including possible study choices and the duration of tertiary qualifications. Participants of

this study further suggested that housemothers' should promote educational attainment and assistance, regardless of residents' current level of academic achievement. In addition, participants recommended that housemothers are appointed who have educational qualifications themselves as this may further enable them to promote young care residents' educational attainment. As such, professional role-players at places of care should display an active interest in residents' education whilst providing positive encouragement for educational success. This finding is supported by studies documenting a correlation between educational success and committed carers in supportive and encouraging educational contexts (Stein, 2005; Jackson *et al.*, 2003; Department of Health, 2001).

Encouraging a learning culture at places of care and ensuring care residents' educational participation can be seen as condition of being a 'corporate parent' (Stein, 2005). The researcher recommends that places of care promote the development of a learning environment that will contribute to residents' educational attainment. This might be achieved by encouraging educational knowledge and performance, or by developing a culture in which learning is valued (Osborn, 1990). However, promoting a culture of achievement (Blyth, 2001) at places of care depends on the interest and encouragement of adults important to the care resident (Harker, 2003). Pertaining to this, the researcher suggests that housemothers and weekend carers provide practical support for educational attainment which might include encouragement for educational achievement and assistance with homework. Residents should also be provided with a private desk in a quiet and comfortable setting for completion of academic tasks, and receive opportunities to use the local library and visit educational sites, such as museums.

7.3.1.3 Participation in extra-curricular activities

Study participants participated in a range of leisure activities arranged by housemothers, for instance camping- and day trips, sport activities and after-school activities. Participants valued these activities, which seemingly normalised their day-to-day lives. In support of this, Gilligan (2006, 2001) documents leisure activities and friendships as factors that can lead to positive outcomes for care leavers during their transition to independence. Adding to this Kavanagh (1972) found that positive educational and leisure experiences will contribute to resilience and recovery in contexts of adversity. Closely related, Routt (1996) reports on correlations between experiences of belonging within the school and good mental health outcomes.

Although the participants reported on their participation in a range of leisure activities they had limited opportunities to meet peers outside of the children's home as most activities involved socialising with other care residents. This had a negative effect on participants' identity formation as they were primarily participating in activities within groups of care residents. Pertaining to this, the researcher advises places of care to make provision for leisure activities within communities as this may facilitate the

development of friendships and improve care residents' sense of belonging, which in turn may have a positive effect on their transition to adulthood. Furthermore, participation in leisure activities outside of the care system may provide care residents with opportunities to form relationships with caring adults and assist them with the development of communication skills.

The United Nations (2005) in this regard advises places of care to provide care residents with opportunities to integrate fully into communities as this might assist in the acquisition of social and life skills. Forming relationships with community members may promote care residents levels of resilience, emotional maturity and identity formation (Newman & Blackburn, 2002). In this regard the researcher suggests that places of care should provide care residents with opportunities to participate in activities outside of the care system, not only for enjoyment purposes but also for formal coaching, which may enable residents to increase their levels of competencies. Formal coaching and participation in sport is considered to be valuable as it will typically provide opportunities for the development of interests and improved self-esteem (Gilligan, 2006, 2001).

7.3.1.4 Developing independent life skills

Legislation entitles care residents to be prepared for transition, which includes exposure to skills suitable for independent living during their placement in care (Stein & Wade, 2000; Stein & Carey, 1986). Pertaining to this, Pokempner and Rosado (2003) refer to legislation stipulating that care residents, who are 16 years and older, should each have a written independent living plan in preparation for the transition to independence. However, this study found that children's homes generally did not succeed in transferring life skills for independent living to care leavers as staff was reportedly responsible for participants' daily needs, such as grocery shopping, cooking and washing. A range of studies indicate that care residents are often not provided with opportunities to develop skills for independent living due to care regulations, which are put in place for the practical management of children's homes (Mamelani, 2013; Tanur 2012; Massinga & Pecora, 2004). This in turn seemingly prevented participants from developing skills for independent living, which negatively impacted on the transition process as care leavers reportedly found it difficult to adapt into society following their departure from care.

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher concurs with a study by Demont (2002) pronouncing that care leavers ought to be empowered by independent living programmes, exposing them to skills pertaining to employment, tertiary education, budgeting, healthy relationships, legal rights, time management, goal setting, substance abuse, criminal behaviour, sexually transmitted diseases, relationship abuse, driving, healthcare, medical aid, accommodation, bank accounts, identification documents (driver's license, library card, birth certificate) and transport options. In support of this, Adejuwon and Oki (2011) suggest transition programmes that include information on investment, the

cycle of poverty, loans, managing debt, gambling, identity theft, mortgages, utility bills, shopping, eating habits and voting.

The Mamelani Project (Mamelani Projects Annual Report, 2009) provides one example of a well-established programme that offers support to young adults to become independent, responsible and contributing members of society. The programme focuses on demonstrations, facilitated by staff that educates care residents about a range of skills for independent living, such as creating grocery lists and preparing nutritional meals. Care residents are provided with weekly food vouchers and rotate responsibilities for shopping and cleaning. They are allocated with a budget and are expected to prepare meals according to a menu they themselves design. As such, care residents are exposed to money management, grocery shopping and budgeting skills. Care leavers also participate in a range of creative activities, such as drama and photography, and attend computer and literacy classes. In additions, residents are provided with opportunities to practice time management and communication skills, whilst being exposed to positive relationships (Mamelani, 2009).

Another well-established care leaving programme in South Africa is Project Lungisela. This programme was initiated in 2007 in response to the need for care leaving support services for young men between the ages of 16 and 17 years who reside at the Khayelitsha's Homestead Children's Home (Tanur, 2012). Project Lungisela is presented over eighteen months on a weekly basis for 18 months. The programme includes practical exercises on time management, communication skills, conflict resolution and goal setting. Guest presenters, who consist mostly of former graduates, are invited to share their experiences and as such, workshops are conducted from open-ended discussions.

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that places of care afford care residents with opportunities to implement skills for independent living as this may enable them to transfer skills in real life settings. Pertaining to this, care residents might participate in a range of sensible activities, such as gardening, child minding, driving, decision-making, conflict resolution, boundary setting, cooking, baking, cleaning and shopping, all of which are skills generally learned through observation and practice. Care residents should preferably establish relationships with community volunteers who might assist them to develop these. This may include the development of self-care skills (personal hygiene, diet and sexual health); practical skills (budgeting, shopping, cooking and cleaning) and interpersonal skills (managing a range of formal and informal relationships). Dependable adults might also act as role models and verbalise steps to be taken in completion of specific tasks. Pertaining to this, volunteers should be trained not to foster dependence, but rather to facilitate independent living.

In this regard, the researcher suggests that dependable adults assist care residents with practical support, such as accessing records and birth certificates. In addition, responsible adults might provide

care leavers with information on substance abuse, sex education and the choice of romantic partner's choices. However, training on independent living skills ought to be tailored to meet the needs of individual care residents as some may need assistance with careers and bursaries, while others with driving and setting up appointments. In support of this, Stein and Wade (2000) as well as Stein and Carey (1986) postulate the use of a holistic approach pertaining to independent living skills, attaching equal importance to practical and psychological skills. Programmes focusing on independent living might also provide residents with opportunities for planning, problem solving and development of competencies, which may all promote resilience (Newman & Blackburn, 2002; Rutter *et al.*, 1998).

7.3.1.5 Career guidance

Levine and Sutherland (2008) document that care residents generally experience a lack of career exposure due to social factors related to their family, school and community relationships. Pertaining to this, this study found that care residents did not receive career guidance and as a result made uninformed career decisions often based on personal interest. As such, the researcher suggests that care residents complete career assessments prior to departure from care, focusing on interest, personality, study methods and aptitude. Due to care residents' adverse backgrounds it might however be important to consider their emotional state prior to completion of career assessments. Pertaining to this, universities in the vicinity of children's homes can potentially conduct career assessments and provide professional career guidance to residents. Career exploration might support residents to better their self-knowledge and information on career choices. To strengthen the importance of this recommendation, Wade and Dixon (2006) emphasise the value of sound career planning for care leavers as this may have a helpful effect on their transition to independent living.

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that educators at schools should also assist care residents with career knowledge, guidance and exposure. Participants could also visit tertiary educational facilities and career expositions, obtaining information regarding specific careers and supporting them to develop employment goals (Atkinson, 2008; Courtney & Dworsky, 2006). In addition, care residents can develop a network of contacts assisting them with internship and employment opportunities. This may encourage care residents to improve their school grades should they be made aware of the entrance levels of chosen career paths. As such, the researcher suggests that care leavers attend at least one career exposition prior to their departure from care as this can potentially support educational performance and in the long term lead to successful employment.

The researcher proposes that care residents should also gain exposure to a range of career fields during school holidays. This can be implemented following their completion of career assessments so that work shadowing can be based on the care resident's determined areas of interests. The researcher furthermore recommends the use of the internet to enable care residents to gain further

information regarding the required qualifications to follow a specific career. As such, the findings of this study imply that care leavers should be provided with a range of opportunities for self-exploration and career exposure prior to making career decisions as this might support them to make informed decisions, and experience positive emotions such as hope, encouragement, and joy associated with improved levels of self-efficacy.

7.3.1.6 Youth engagement

According to the findings of the study, participants' day-to-day activities were planned and decided on for them. They were not provided with opportunities to make decisions about education, food consumption, personal hygiene or attendance of social gatherings. As such, participants felt excluded from decisions leaving them with experiences of indecisiveness and uncertainty, when they were expected to be in control following their departure from care. They seemingly also experienced imposed decisions regarding career choices, tertiary education training and accommodation, which reportedly resulted in negative adult outcomes, such as discontinuing tertiary studies. Pertaining to this, the researcher emphasises the importance of care residents participating in decisions that impact their lives.

Care residents should thus be provided with opportunities to take ownership of their future as this might support the attainment of goals. To this end, Stein and Wade (2000) suggest care residents' involvement in discussions and negotiations as this might support them to accept responsibility and take ownership following their departure from care. In addition, the researcher recommends that professional role players at children's homes should value the development of care residents' self-reliance, autonomy and self-determination. In this regard, care residents should be provided with opportunities for planning, decision making and problem solving, which in turn may lead to positive emotions linked to improved levels of self-efficacy. Decision making opportunities may also promote care leavers' resilience and successful adaptation in adulthood (Newman & Blackburn, 2002).

7.3.1.7 Relationships with responsible adults

An array of studies report on the importance of relationships for optimal human development (Stein, 2005; Stein, Allen, Allen, Koontz & Wisman, 2000). Individuals usually fulfil their needs for belonging, love, affection, connection and support within relationships. Similarly, care residents experience needs for encouragement and belonging but due to previous experiences of abuse, mistrust and frequent relocations, they may find it hard to form and maintain relationships (Stein, 2005). Without stable relationships care residents might become disengaged and experience a lack of engagement which might hinder their transition to independence.

Participants in this study experienced positive relationships with housemothers and weekend carers who seemingly displayed an interest in their development and encouraged educational success. Participants however, reported low levels of relational well-being even though they viewed the relationships as significant and positive. In this regard participants expressed a sense of gratitude towards housemothers for providing homes reflecting traditional family rituals. Moreover, assigned leadership roles seemingly provided participants with a sense of meaning and purpose during their placement in care.

Dubois, Holloway, Valentine and Cooper (2002) indicate that vulnerable youth will display positive outcomes as young adults when they experience trusting relationships with supportive adults during placement in care. Positive outcomes include academic achievement, a strong sense of self-worth, sound relations with peers, decreased alcohol and drug abuse, less absenteeism from school and lower levels of aggressive behaviour. As such, the researcher advises places of care to have personalised support in place for residents to form and maintain relationships with mentors, carers, educators, social workers and youth workers. In support of this recommendation, Schofield (2002) views stable relationships with responsible adults during placement in care, as a key factor for the transition success of care residents.

7.3.1.8 Emotional health

Participants experienced numerous instances of abuse, neglect, rejection and abandonment prior to their placement in care. Despite experiencing childhood adversity and presenting with therapeutic needs only one participant in the group of five reported on receiving counselling to deal with painful emotional matters, during placement in care. As such, the researcher urges places of care to provide care residents with psychological counselling, even if they do not present with behavioural or academic challenges. In this regard the researcher believes that most child care residents experience a need for relieve pertaining to instances of abuse and fractured family relationships. Pertaining to this, Mamelani (2009) suggests that places of care present therapy camps to provide residents with counselling and opportunities to share their concerns regarding the transition process. Residents are in this way made aware of what they are leaving behind, as well as what they have achieved which may support them in future (Mamelani Programme Feedback, 2009).

The researcher is aware of the financial constraints typically present in children's homes and therefore recommends the assistance of housemothers. Social workers and personal advisers might also pro-actively monitor care residents' perceptions regarding their backgrounds, clarify misunderstandings and support them to fill gaps in their knowledge regarding their life histories. As such, the researcher recommends that care residents not only attend counselling to assist them in overcoming adversities,

but also to gain a level of understanding regarding their pre-care and in-care experiences as this may enable them to overcome intense negative emotions.

7.3.2 TRANSITION PHASE

In this section the researcher describes principles that may guide professionals in supporting young care leavers during the transition phase. During the transition phase care leavers typically attend tertiary education facilities and/or are involved in skills training following their care departure. Throughout the transition phase, care leavers are adjusting to society and attempting to create sustainable livelihoods. This process involves several main considerations or tasks, namely age of leaving care, housing, tertiary education, contact with residential care, identity formation, physical and mental health, and extended and graduated transition. Figure 7.2 provides an overview of the principles that may guide professionals in supporting care leavers during the transition phase.

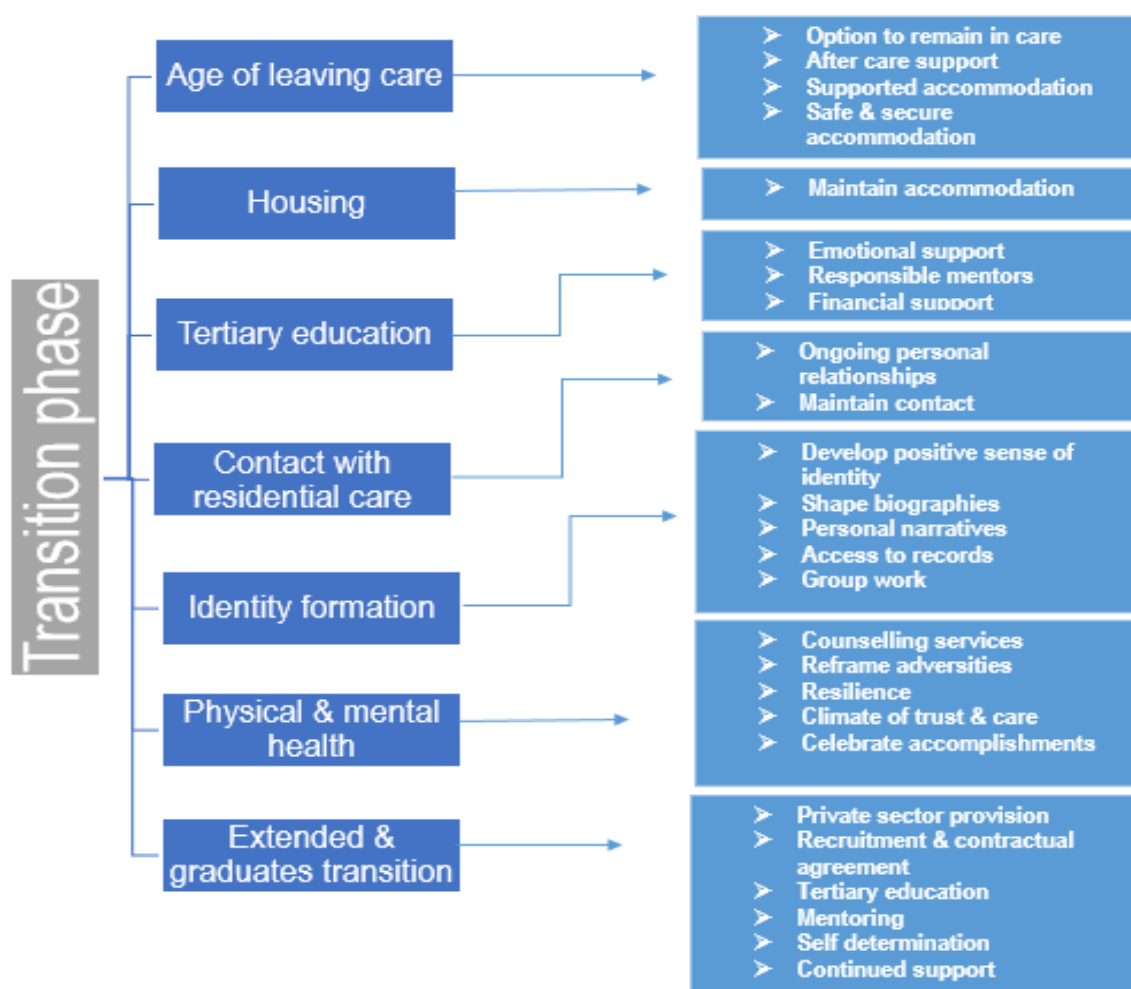


Figure 7.2: Guiding principles for professionals supporting care leavers during the transition phase

7.3.2.1 Age of leaving care

Participants of this study were reportedly forced to depart from care at a young age, just after completing school. In this regard participants experienced an abrupt end of care process as they were not adequately prepared for this change. Although the participants experienced the need to continue residency in care settings, this was not permitted, although one of the places of care had an existing transition home. In this regard, Broad (2005) and Stein (2005) report that young adult care leavers are expected to depart from care at 18 years of age or on completion of secondary schooling, even though they are unprepared for independent living. To this end, participants of this study questioned existing social welfare policies that encourage discharge of youth from children's homes on completion of secondary schooling.

This study thus found that participants had the need for after-care support services, such as a transition home accommodating them during their transition to independence. A range of research studies report on the positive outcomes for young adult care leavers who remain in care following completion of secondary school (Broad, 2005; Stein, 2005). Stein (2005) for example found that care leavers are more likely to complete tertiary studies and have increased economic stability should they remain in care. In addition, young adult care leavers who are supported longer may refrain from criminal activities and early parenthood (Broad 2005; Stein 2005) due to extended placement in care. In support of this, Huston (1995) indicates that young adult care leavers will experience less poverty and isolation when they reside in supported accommodation.

The researcher proposes that places of care should consider young adult care leavers' requests to remain in residential care following completion of secondary school. Pertaining to this, the researcher concurs with the findings of Stein (2005) indicating that the continuation of residency at places of care might improve the educational outcomes and skill development of young adult care leavers. The researcher is however aware of the lack of resources at places of care in South Africa and that children's home are unable to provide accommodation for extended periods of time (Sinclair *et al.*, 2005). Moreover, some young adult care leavers may also prefer to depart from care due to the need for emancipation from children's homes, which they may perceive as restrictive. In this regard, for care residents who cannot or do not wish to continue living at places of care, the most immediate concern is finding appropriate and secure accommodation, whilst ensuring ongoing financial support and mentoring in order to assist care leavers during the transition phase (Broad 2005; Stein 2005).

7.3.2.2 Housing

According to the findings of this study, places of care arranged accommodation for care leavers, ranging from a single room, university hostel, student commune and family home to an apartment. The

participant who resided in a university hostel reported on less instances of isolation and successfully completed three tertiary degrees during placement at a university hostel. Even though children's homes provided participants with financial assistance for accommodation whilst enrolled for tertiary studies they withdrew financial support when participants did not progress academically. Pertaining to this, Tweddle (2007) proposes that children's homes assist care leavers with housing options as accommodation challenges might result in higher levels of distress and homelessness.

Finding suitable accommodation remains a major challenge for most youth development programmes (Atkinson, 2008; Lenz-Rashid, 2006). Pertaining to this, the Mamelani Project (Mamelani Projects Annual Report, 2009) responded to what was identified as a severe lack of housing options for young people exiting care, and supports young adult care leavers to maintain accommodation in youth homes or rented rooms. In support, the Mamelani Project (2009) reports that care leavers residing in youth homes for at least three years tend to display more positive adult outcomes when compared to peers residing in independent accommodation, as they reportedly receive higher levels of structured assistance.

Project Lungisela (Mamelani Projects Annual Report, 2009) provides another example of a well-established programme that offers accommodation support to young adult care leavers. Project Lungisela implements an accommodation activity during the last six months of an 18 month programme, guiding care leavers to find suitable accommodation and providing funds for accommodation whilst care leavers gain employment. Care leavers typically rent a room, reside in a hostel or build a house in an informal settlement (Maposa, 2010). To this end, the researcher advises places of care to provide care leavers with additional support for rent, furnishing, security, home repairs, energy saving, recycling and living with neighbours as this might support their adaptation.

7.3.2.3 Tertiary education

According to this study, two of the five participants did not complete tertiary qualifications. Factors which influenced educational success included a lack of interest in career choice, substance abuse, untimely responsibilities in terms of relationships, a lack of social support from places of care and having children at an early age. In support of this, a study conducted by Pinkerton (2011) also indicate that young adult care leavers often do not complete tertiary studies due to unplanned pregnancies and early parenthood.

An interesting finding from this study relates to participants becoming involved in romantic relationships and having children based on experiences of loneliness and isolation following their departure from care. Pertaining to this, participants reported a lack of involvement and monitoring from places of care, which intensified their experiences of loneliness and despondency during the transition phase. A lack of

social support and contact from places of care seems to be a key contributory factor to poor educational outcomes for many young adult care leavers in South Africa (Meyer, 2003). As such, the researcher concurs with Stein's (2006) report that places of care ought to provide higher levels of support and monitoring whilst care leavers are enrolled for tertiary education, as successful completion of tertiary studies is not only related to financial resources but also to effective dealing with negative emotions, coping and problem-solving.

Another factor that reportedly influenced young adult care leavers' educational attainment was participation in at-risk behaviour, such as alcohol and drug abuse, which reportedly had a negative effect on participants' tertiary education endeavours. In support of this finding, several studies highlight the impact of alcohol and drug dependency on young adult care leaver's success at educational institutions (Lenz-Rachid, 2008). As such, the researcher recommends that places of care educate care leavers about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, and monitor their participation in at-risk behaviour. Children's homes can encourage care leavers to build trusting relationships with responsible mentors who preferably have tertiary qualifications themselves; as such mentors may have insight regarding the value of tertiary educational qualifications. In this regard the researcher suggests the involvement of responsible adults outside the care system, who can take on this task and form special relationships with care residents.

On a positive note, participants who succeeded educationally valued the financial support received from places of care, which assisted them to complete tertiary qualifications. Pertaining to this, this study indicate that educational attainment was one of the indicators for care leavers' future success, specifically referring to employment status, income, goal attainment and lifestyle. However, care leavers may experience challenges to complete tertiary studies without the support of places of care. This can imply that children's homes should provide care leavers with practical support, financial resources, encouragement and accommodation. The researcher suggests that places of care recognise their responsibility as corporate parent to celebrate educational achievements of young adult care leavers and thereby support social inclusion where care leavers can feel competent and capable.

7.3.2.4 Contact with residential care

Participants reported a lack of social support, supervision and contact with children's homes following their departure from care. Pertaining to this, participants reported experiences of sadness, loneliness, abandonment, vulnerability and rejection as they experienced a lack of formalised support from residential staff as well as from biological family members. In support of this finding, Foster (2002) found that care leavers often experience a lack of social support from places of care, which may leave them feeling vulnerable, especially during times of adversity. Participants as a result attempted to gain support from their families of origin, but their efforts were reportedly often unsuccessful. Stein (2005)

similarly reports that young adult care leavers are often deprived of emotional and practical support from biological families as circumstances typically do not change during care leavers' placement in care.

Cashmore and Paxman (1996) as well as Green and Jones (1999) suggest that when care residents experience continued positive relationships with social workers, housemothers and weekend carers they may prosper following their departure from care. Consequently, one of the recommendations, based on the evidence of this study, is that housemothers should maintain contact with care leavers whilst also serving as a communication link between young adults and social workers. Should continued relationships not be possible, alternative provisions might be made, such as linking young adult care leavers with personal advisers, mentors and/or weekend carers who can provide emotional and practical support to care leavers during the transition phase (Broad 2005; Stein 2005).

7.3.2.5 Identity formation

The finding of this study indicates that participants struggled to form a sense of self during the transition phase to independence. In support of this finding, a study conducted by Van Breda, Marx and Kader (2012) indicate that young adult care leavers' experiences of disruption and instability prior, during and following departure from children's homes may interrupt their identity formation. In addition, participants of this study recalled limited childhood memories which did not support their identity formation as they experienced a lack of knowledge regarding their personal histories. In support of this, Stein (2005) describes young adult care leavers experiences of confusion regarding pre-care experiences, which then have a negative effect on the development of a sense of self (Stein, 2005). As such, care leavers should be provided with opportunities to gain knowledge and insight on their childhood histories and the possible reasons for parental abuse, rejection and neglect (Biehal *et al.*, 1995).

The researcher suggests that care leavers are provided with opportunities to connect their past, present and anticipated future, to make it possible for them to see identity as a personal narrative or developing story. However, as detailed above, many young people in care have disrupted lives and as such their personal histories may be lost or confused. Despite this, care leavers could potentially be assisted with the development of their personal narratives through, for example, the use of life-story books, mementos, photographs, greater access to records and maintaining family relations. During activities emphasis can be placed on discussions instead of explanations, thereby actively involving care leavers.

Mamelani (2009) suggests that young adult care leavers should be provided with opportunities to participate in groupwork as this might support them to develop a sense of identity. During groupwork care leavers may be provided with opportunities to increase self-awareness and learn new skills.

Pertaining to this, group sessions can provide young adult care leavers with opportunities for leadership, responsibility and decision making which may in turn support them to gain self knowledge, to build self-esteem and develop improved levels of self-efficacy. Group sessions may also focus on celebrating victories, marking transitional growth, encouraging contact between care leavers and serving as a support space where young adult care leavers can share information about challenges, and provide each other with advice. In support of this, Stein (1994) reports that groupwork may serve as an empowering practice for identify development, whilst assisting care leavers to increase responsibility as they negotiate relationships with other care residents (Stein, 1994).

Gilligan (2006) contends that if care leavers are assisted with the formation of their identities their levels of resilience may be improved. Although the researcher is aware that some aspects of identity are fixed, important shifts may take place allowing individuals to build and restore a more preferable sense of self. Pertaining to this, the researcher suggests that young adult care leavers should be assisted with opportunities to form a sense of self during the transition phase to independence. In this regard, Triseliotis (1984) report that assistance to care leavers in developing their sense of self is linked to knowledge and understanding of their background and personal histories. Care leavers' identities are also formed by the perceptions they have of themselves and by opportunities where they influence, and shape their own biographies (Triseliotis, 1984).

Based on the findings of this study the researcher proposes that young adult care leavers should therefore receive opportunities to shape their biographies through educational attainment and to form stable relationships, as this may have a positive effect on their identity formation. In this regard, the results of this study indicate that participants who attained educational success and/or experienced healthy romantic relationships developed a sense of self based on positive experiences. As such, care leavers in the transition phase could be assisted to form a positive sense of self if they are provided with new opportunities and experiential learning.

The researcher suggests that young adult care leavers are encouraged to attain educational success, establish friendships and form trusting relationships as this can support them to develop a positive sense of self as they are provided with opportunities to reshape their biographies. In addition, educational attainment and establishing new relationships can support young adult care leavers to look to the future, making it possible for them to rewrite their identifies of being "children's home children" to productive members of society. Having a positive sense of self may also enable care leavers to experience helpful experiences in their relationships and communities, as others may perceive and respond differently to them, which according to Triseliotis (1984), is linked to identity formation.

7.3.2.6 Physical and mental health

Participants of this study experienced a number of negative emotions during the transition phase towards independence such as insomnia, social anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts. They also participated in at risk behaviour, such as promiscuity and drug abuse, which reportedly had a negative effect on their educational attainment and the forming of romantic relationships. In support of this, a range of studies document young adult care leavers' experiences of physical and mental health difficulties and report engagement in harmful behaviour (Courtney & Dworsky, 2005; Courtney, Piliavin, Grogan-Kaylor & Nesmith, 2001; Maunders, Liddell, Liddell & Green, 1999; Fowler, Harwood & Meegan, 1996; Cook, 1994; Barth, 1990; Festinger, 1983). Negative outcomes are compounded by the fact that care residents' transition to independence earlier than their counterparts in the general population, and retain little or no financial, emotional, or social support from biological families (Cashmore & Paxman, 1996; Courtney & Barth, 1996; Morrow & Richards, 1996).

Participants of this study reported that they were in need of mental health care but did not have the financial resources to obtain this. The researcher is aware that mental health services in South Africa are severely under-resourced and as such proposes that care leavers should gain access to leisure centres and counselling facilities offering health care and youth services on a drop-in basis. Clinics may follow a flexible and informal approach to working with care leavers and provide them with information on substance use, mental health, dealing with anger, self-esteem and sexual health information. In addition, the researcher suggests that intervention programmes involve professional service providers who are willing to assist care leavers. Children's homes can also involve personal advisors, voluntary organisations or leaving care teams who provide counselling services on a regular basis to care leavers during the transition phase.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher advises places of care also employ nursing staff on a part-time basis who may provide care leavers with health advice or do referrals for specialist health services. Nurses should be skilful in gaining care leavers' trust and cooperation, encouraging them to accept treatment and medication. Care leavers may also be assigned to mentors who receive training in counselling and/or health matters (Ofsted, 2009). Pertaining to this, establishing relationships with responsible mentors and nurses can potentially enhance care residents' self esteem, coping strategies and problem-solving skills especially if relationships are based on a climate of trust and caring.

7.3.2.7 Extended and graduated transition

In South Africa, as in other jurisdictions, there is an assumption that care leavers move out of care placements on completion of secondary schooling. This is an assumption that is being challenged on an international level and as Sinclair *et al.* (2005) and Schofield (2003) point out, it is likely that more

places of care would allow care residents to continue placement if expectations were changed and support provided. This study found that participants experienced a need for aftercare homes as they were not prepared to make the transition to independent living so abruptly. In support of this, Demont (2002:22) affirms: *“as long as there are children in residential care, instead of family care, and residential care does not adequately prepare the child for re-entry into the community, there is a need for a halfway house or aftercare homes”*. However, as seen in Table 2.3 of the study, which provides a summary of organisations and partnerships in South Africa that provide services for care leavers, there is a limited number of aftercare homes available. The Mamelani Projects (2009) similarly report that most provinces in South Africa have limited youth homes for care leavers who are older than 18 years.

The researcher is aware that most places of care do not have access to long-term independent accommodation and as such need to depend on private sector provision to meet the needs of care leavers. In this regard, this study provides evidence that a small number of places of care, in partnership with the private sector, have yet established aftercare homes to support young adult care leavers during the transition to independence. The Umicare Project (Refer to Addendum B for transcript of reflexive interviews), also mentioned in Table 2.3, provides one example of an established programme that offers support to young adult care leavers who experience a need for continued placement in care. The Umicare Project has been active in this area of work for several years, providing an aftercare home in response to what was identified as a severe lack of options for young people exiting care. The programme focuses on consolidating existing practices as well as discovering and implementing new ways to ensure that more care leaving youth make a successful transition out of care. Even though the aftercare home employs a housemother, care leavers are responsible for meal menus, purchasing groceries, budgeting, cooking, laundry and cleaning. As such, care leavers are primarily responsible for themselves and learn from the consequences of their decisions and daily actions in a supportive environment (Kroner, 1999). This serves to prepare them for the transition process to independence.

Based on the findings of this study the researcher recommends that more places of care consider the establishment of transition homes, possibly on the premises of children's homes in support of young adult care leavers. Transition homes should preferably provide young adult care leavers with a sheltered environment and opportunities to develop independent living skills. Rules and regulations of aftercare homes might differ from children's homes as young adult care are provided with opportunities to develop self-determination and gain a sense of responsibility. Moreover, after-care support should preferably be provided over an extended period of time and continue following the care leavers departure from the transition home.

7.3.3 POST-TRANSITION PHASE

In this section the researcher describes guidelines for supporting the transition of care leavers in the post-transition phase. The post-transition phase includes after-care support for care leavers who have completed skills training and/or tertiary education. Specific emphasis is placed on developing a network of support and on strengthening care leavers' interpersonal relationships. The post-transition phase includes aspects of employment, parental guidance, psychological counselling and community service participation. Figure 7.3 provides an overview of the principles that may guide professionals in supporting care leavers during the post-transition phase.

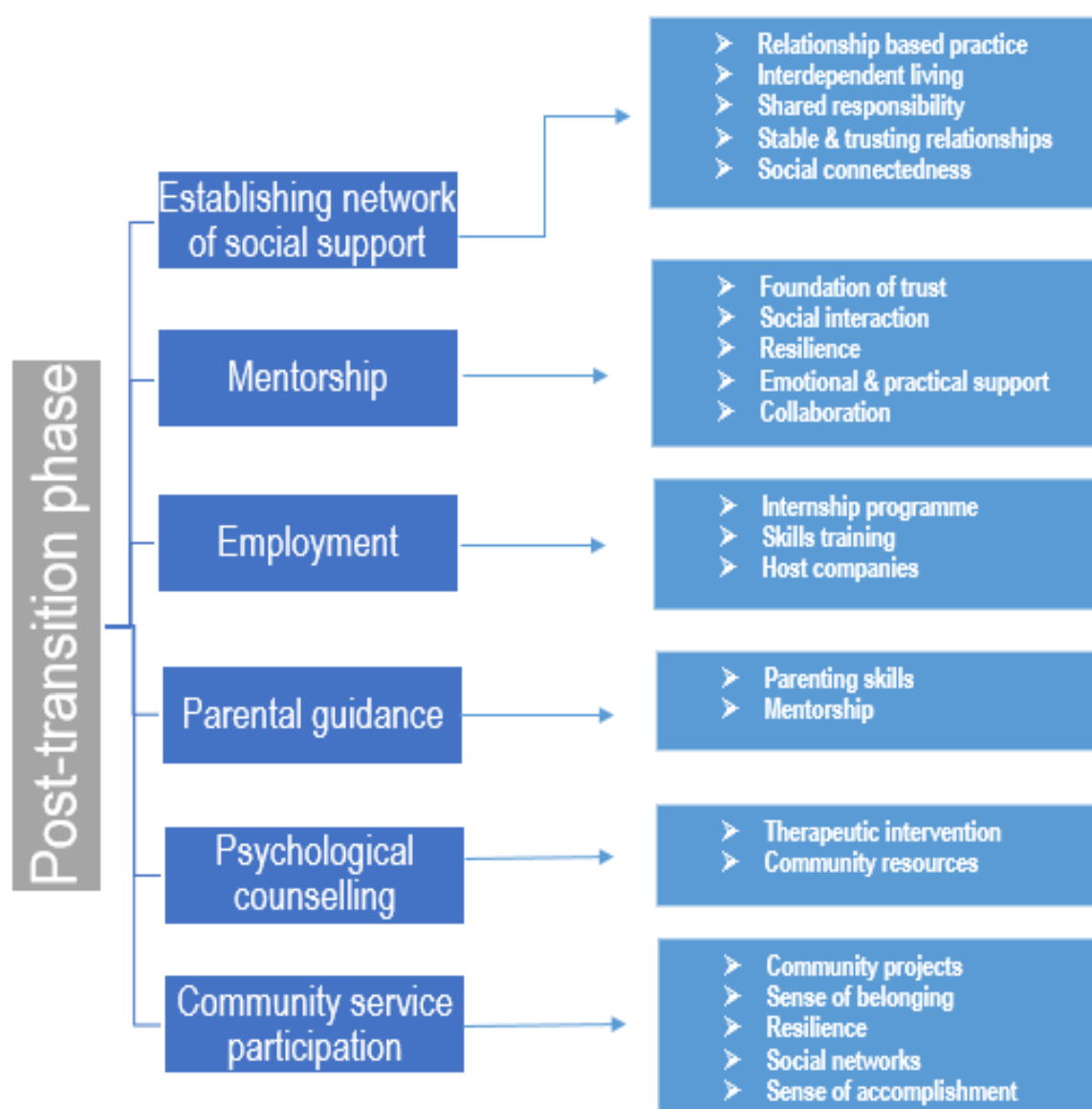


Figure 7.3: Guiding principles for professionals supporting care leavers during the post-transition phase

7.3.3.1 Network of social support

Research consistently highlights the importance of a relationship-based practice in support of positive adult outcomes for care leavers (Staying Put Scotland, 2013). Pertaining to this, participants experienced a need for supportive relationships during the post-transition phase. In this regard the researcher proposes an approach of interdependent living based on shared responsibilities between young adult care leavers, mentors, former caregivers and community members (Antle, Johnson, Barbee & Sullivan, 2009; Propp, Ortega & NewHeart, 2003). The researcher specifically suggest that young adult care leavers form and maintain positive relationships with responsible adults from their community as this might provide a sense of social connectedness. Relationships can include mentoring and consistent connections with caring adults (Munson & McMillen, 2009). Therefore, care leavers should be supported during the post-transition phase, to identify and build a network of support which may include extended family members, peers, cultural organisations and churches.

The young adult care leavers who participated in this study displayed considerable skills in creating social networks that comprised of romantic partners, responsible adults and peers. New networks compensated for the absence of supportive birth parents and constituted an important supportive factor in the post-transitional phase from care to adulthood. Pertaining to this, participants found it difficult to maintain relationships with biological family members and as such experienced a lack of practical and social support from families of origin. In support of this, Aldgate (1994) found that adult care leavers tend to lack a functional family support network upon which they may rely during adult independence.

This study found those participants' experienced difficulties in maintaining relationships with biological family members as relationships were often characterised by conflict, a lack of interest by family members or infrequent contact. As such, relationships with the families of origin remained a source of distress to participants during the post-transition phase. Young adult care leavers may as a result continue to need support, advice and guidance from responsible adults regarding family relationships and conflict resolution. Care leavers may also need guidance on practical strategies that can support them to manage family distress. In this regard they might be encouraged to visit family homes or attend family-based outings.

One out of the group of five participants was able to create a stable family life that provided him with a sense of belonging. Having a stable relationship with a romantic partner seemingly supported the participant to manage post-transition life challenges. In support of this finding, Jahnukainen (2007) as well as Dumaret and Coppel-Batsch (1998) indicate that stable romantic relationships and attachment may provide young adult care leavers with protective resources, which in turn can support them with transitional problems. The researcher proposes that young adult care leavers should maintain healthy friendships and romantic relationships, as stable relationships may support them to overcome

experiences of adversity during the post-transition phase. Sound relationships can also contribute to care leavers' personal development, influencing their sense of self-worth and belonging. In support of this, Andersson (2005) and Schofield (2003) report that supportive and trusting relationships can provide young adult care leavers with a secure base and a sense of belonging.

7.3.3.2 Mentorship

Participants emphasised the importance of young adult care leavers having caring and long-term relationships with responsible adults, who may provide guidance to care leavers who can no longer gain access to resources from places of care. The importance of caring, stable relationships was depicted as foundation of trust upon which new relationships can be formed. However, the majority of the participants referred to the absence of such caring, stable relationships in their lives and to the isolation, and disconnection that they experienced as a result.

The use of mentoring programmes to improve adult outcomes for at-risk youth has grown steadily in recent years (Rhodes & Roffman, 2003). This renewed interest in mentoring is partly fuelled by research on the process of resilience, identifying the importance of a supportive and caring non-parental adult with youth who succeed despite adversity and hardship (Werner 1996; Masten & Garmezy 1985). Several models of mentoring exist, including one-on-one mentoring, peer mentoring, group mentoring and teams of mentors. The researcher suggests that young adult care leavers participate in a mentoring process that suit their individual needs.

The researcher suggests that young adult care leavers should have stable relationships with mentors, role models, educators, counsellors and/or weekend carers who can provide them with different forms of support. Mentors are most helpful when they are perceived to be non-judgmental and caring. Support can be emotional, such as having someone to share and understand emotions with, or informational, such as being offered advice, information or guidance. Young adult care leavers may also receive affectionate support, including being shown love and warmth. As such, support might include positive social interaction and the availability of mentors who are willing to participate in recreational as well as task-orientated activities with care leavers. Pertaining to this, Gilligan (2006) found that when young adult care leavers connect with natural mentors and supportive adults, it may have a positive effect on the transition to adulthood (Ahrens, DuBois, Richardson, Fan & Lozano, 2008; Drapeau, Saint-Jacques, Lépine, Bégin & Bernard, 2007; Hines *et al.*, 2005).

Grossman and Rhodes (2002) report that care leavers who have experienced abuse are more likely to have short-term relationships with mentors in comparison to young adults who had not been maltreated. Possible reasons for this might be that care leavers who have experienced abuse are less trusting and as a result find it difficult to establish close relationships with mentors. As such, the

researcher urges mentors who work with adult care leavers to form relationships with them during placement in care as this may support the development of stable, supportive and trusting relationships during the post-transition phase. In this regard, the level of trust between mentor and care leaver, as well as the overall intensity and duration of the mentoring relationship might play an important role in the success of mentoring (DuBois *et al.*, 2002; Grossman & Rhodes 2002). Mentors can also assist young adult care leavers to continue their development of independent living skills, such as filling in tax forms, tertiary education and gaining employment (Rhodes 2002; Mech *et al.*, 1995).

7.3.3.3 Employment

Literature suggests that care leavers often do not have the skills required to gain employment as they typically do not receive skilled training (Atkinson, 2008; Courtney & Dworsky, 2006). To avoid unemployment an increased emphasis has been placed on training for care leavers to assist them to live and function independently in society (Atkinson, 2008; Rashid, 2004). Pertaining to this, care leavers may be assisted to find part-time employment at the age of 16 years. This may support them to gain work experience prior to departure from care and to experience a sense of confidence and maturity (Atkinson, 2008).

The Mamelani Project (2013) proposes that places of care implement an internship programme to assist adult care leavers with stable employment. Pertaining to this, Mamelani (2009) developed a work readiness programme which includes career guidance. Care leavers attend a skills training programme to gain technical experience which supports them to develop employment skills. Care leavers who are unable to attend skills training programmes, due to for example low levels of education, are provided with apprenticeships and work-shadow opportunities. Following completion of the skills training programme, care leavers are offered internship placements in host companies. Care leavers are also assisted to develop resumes and attend mock interview sessions. Such as in the case of this study, Mamelani (2009) also found that care leavers are often eager to work but lack the skills to find work themselves. Pertaining to this, the organisation supports them in identifying areas where they would like to work and discuss the required steps to enter specific career fields.

During internship placements, care leavers are provided with opportunities to gain skills and experience required to sustain employment. Internships also assist care leavers to gain work experience and to seek future job opportunities. The ultimate goal is for host companies to offer care leavers with full-time employment at the end of their internships. Should care leavers not continue employment at host companies, they are provided with a reference letter to assist them in finding work (Mamelani, 2009). In addition, Mamelani (2013) initiated a work-support space where care leavers can meet once a month to discuss work-related challenges, employment opportunities, coping skills and attitudes in the work place. As such, internship sessions may potentially encourage care leavers to maintain employment

and a positive work ethic. Following programme completion, staff monitor care leavers' progress and support them to maintain employment.

7.3.3.4 Parental guidance

Findings of this study indicate that young adult care leavers experienced difficulties relating to parenting tasks. One participant reportedly experienced post-natal depression and two participants found it difficult to form attachments with first born children. In addition, participants experienced a lack of knowledge regarding parenting skills following the birth of their first born children. In terms of child rearing practices, participants reported that although they had romantic partners, parenting children was challenging. This was attributed to the lack of support from romantic partners who were not actively involved in child rearing practices. In this regard the researcher recommends that places of care should network with community centres where young adult care leavers may gain access to support and guidance regarding parenting skills.

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher proposes that mentors and responsible adults should also provide continued support and advise to care leavers regarding parenting skills. In this regard mentors could be older care leavers who had been through similar experiences and are parents themselves. Mentors might also act as role models and provide suggestions, parental guidance, instruction and encouragement (Rhodes, 2002).

7.3.3.5 Psychological counselling

According to the findings of the study, the distress and adversity that young adults care leavers experienced prior to care placement, continued to have a negative effect on their mental health as young adults. Based on these findings, the researcher advises places of care to employ counselors, involve community members and/or make counselling services available at health care centres.

Interventions focusing on mental and physical health should ideally address a number of key areas, such as ongoing counselling and support in times of isolation and depression; helping care residents celebrate major life-cycle accomplishments, such as birthdays, birth of children, Christmas, marriage and relationships; drug and alcohol rehabilitation programmes; assistance to renegotiate relationships with family members and developing informal support networks; resources to help with basic financial difficulties and access to benefits; assistance and advocacy with accommodation; education and training. Areas of support may also include a designated after-care worker and unlimited time-frame for the support of young adult care leavers (Broad, 2005; Mendes & Goddard, 2000).

7.3.3.6 Community service participation

The researcher concurs with Lakin and Mahoney (2006) who suggest young adult care leavers' participation in community service projects, as this may assist them to develop a positive sense of self. Pertaining to this, the Mamelani Projects (2013) facilitate community development projects involving care leavers at underprivileged schools and old-age homes. They also arrange social events where older care leavers act as mentors for youth residing in care. In this regard research has shown that community involvement may foster a sense of empowerment and community, and provide social support structures other than immediate family (Atkinson, 2008).

The researcher suggests that young adult care leavers participate in various developmental opportunities, community leisure activities and volunteer in training programmes as this may support them to integrate into the community and to experience higher levels of accomplishment. Participation in projects can potentially provide them with networks of social support and increase their sense of belonging in communities (Mamelani, 2013).

7.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher proposed guidelines for supporting transition based on the experiences of young adult care leavers who have transitioned to independent living. The researcher reported on other studies, including those that describe initiatives guiding professionals to promote healthy adult outcomes in youth residing in residential care. In the next chapter she considers the potential contributions of the study and offer recommendations for future research.

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CHAPTER 8

SUMMATIVE OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

8.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 7 the researcher formulated guiding principles to facilitate support services or interventions in children's homes, based on the findings of the study. In this chapter, she firstly provides a brief overview of the previous chapters. She then presents a synopsis of her findings in terms of the research questions formulated in chapter 1. Hereafter, she comes to final conclusions, and indicates the limitations and possible contributions of the study. She concludes by formulating recommendations based on the findings of the study.

8.2 OVERVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 served the purpose of orientating the reader for the study and what to expect in the thesis. The researcher informed the reader about the nature of her study, and presented an overview of the rationale for undertaking the study. She discussed the aims and objectives of the study as well as the assumptions that she made at the onset of her study. She formulated the research questions and stated the purpose of the study. She also briefly defined the concepts *young adults*, *residential care*, *care leavers*, *transition experiences* and *independent living*, to better orientate the reader with regard to the meanings she ascribed to these concepts within the context of the study. She briefly introduced the paradigmatic perspective from which her study took its stance, and clarified her research design, data collection and documentation methods, and data analysis and interpretation strategies. She reflected on her role as researcher, and briefly discussed the ethical considerations, and rigour of the study. She also provided the reader with a layout of the thesis, as an overview of what was to follow in chapters 2 to 8.

As this study was informed by literature regarding residential care, care leavers, transition experiences and independent living programmes, the researcher explored existing literature related to these topics in **Chapter 2**, in order to locate the study theoretically. She commenced the chapter by providing the theoretical perspectives that informed the study, and integrated existing theories in developing a conceptual framework, in order to provide a clear understanding of young adults' experiences of transition from residential care to independent living. Thereafter the researcher described children's homes and the different types of childcare institutions which exist in South Africa. She also identified the main reasons for admission to registered children's homes. She then discussed the typical transition to independence for young adults who are raised in traditional family homes. Next, she

explored the same process of transition to independence for young adult care leavers. Thereafter she described care leaving as a process and discussed the psychological and social challenges typically faced by care leavers during the transition to independence. She explored resilience in terms of resilient adaptation and protective resources that could potentially promote resilience. Finally, she identified and discussed existing independent living programmes for South African youth leaving the care system, indicating limitations in this regard, and the need for more research in this field.

In **Chapter 3** the researcher explained the manner in which she planned and conducted her empirical study. She commenced the chapter by discussing the qualitative approach, anchored in an interpretivist paradigm as the selected paradigmatic perspective underlying her study. She described the research methodology that she implemented in terms of her selected research design, namely an instrumental case study research design. For the purpose of this study, she purposefully selected five young adult care leavers between the ages of 24-34 years (young adults), as primary participants, who had resided in children's homes until they completed secondary school and/or reached the age of 17 years. The secondary participants in her study included professionals, such as social workers, houseparent's and other roleplayers who had been involved at different children's homes. Thereafter, she discussed the various data collection and documentation strategies that she employed in three distinctive phases of the study.

In the first phase of the study, the researcher conducted semi-structured telephonic interviews with eight prospective participants. Based on the data collected from these semi-structured telephonic interviews, the researcher purposively selected five primary participants to participate in the research study. During the second phase of the study she used multiple data collection methods, such as semi-structured interviews, narrative case inquiries, post-modern data collection methods, analysis of existing material and documents (archival research), observations, auditory data capturing, field notes and a reflective diary. During the third phase of the research process, the researcher conducted reflective and dyad interviews with secondary participants. Following her discussion of data collection, she explained the manner in which she thematically analysed and interpreted the data, as well as her attempts to enhance the rigour of her study. She concluded the chapter by explaining the ethical principles that she adhered to in planning and undertaking her study.

In **Chapters 4, 5 and 6** the researcher reported on the results and findings of her study, discussing the three themes and related sub-themes that emerged in separate chapters. Chapter 4 focuses on the pre-transition experiences of young adult care leavers prior to and during their placement in care. She commenced the chapter by introducing the primary participants with specific reference to the pre-transition phase. She provided narrative accounts of each of the primary participants, compiled from all data sources described in chapter 3 of the study. Thereafter, she presented the results of Theme 1

discussing the sub-themes and related categories that emerged. The two sub-themes relate to the pre-transition experiences that influenced young adult care leavers' transition to independence. In the next section, she interpreted and discussed the results in the light of relevant literature, thereby presenting the findings of the study with specific reference to the pre-transition phase.

In **Chapter 5** she reported on the results and findings of Theme 2, which relates to the experiences of young adult care leavers in the transition phase to independence. She commenced the chapter by revisiting the primary participants with specific reference to the transition phase, providing her own narrative accounts of each of the participants, based on all data sources described in chapter 3. The researcher specifically described primary participants' immediate experiences when leaving care as well as the tasks and challenges associated with the middle stage of independence. She then presented the results of Theme 2 discussing them in terms of three sub-themes and related categories. In the next section, she interpreted and discussed the sub-themes against the background of existing literature, presenting the findings of the study with specific reference to the transition phase.

In **Chapter 6** the researcher reported on the results and findings of Theme 3, pertaining the experiences of young adult care leavers in the post-transition phase to independence thus specifically focused on the experiences associated with young adult care leavers during the final stage of independence. She commenced the chapter by introducing the primary participants with her own narrative accounts of each of the participants, compiled from all data sources described in chapter 3 of the study. Here, the researcher specifically described primary participants' post-transition experiences following their transition to independent living, as well as the tasks and challenges associated with the final stage of independence. Thereafter, she presented the results of Theme 3 discussing the sub-themes and related categories that emerged. The three subthemes relate to the importance of relationships, experiences of young adult care leavers during the post-transition phase and resilience factors impacting on young adult care leavers. She then interpreted and discussed the results in terms of related literature, thereby presenting the findings of the study with specific reference to the post-transition phase.

In **Chapter 7** the researcher provided guidelines for the facilitation of a positive transition based on the experiences of young adult care leavers who have transitioned to independent living. She commenced the chapter revisiting existing independent living programmes for youth leaving the care system. She then formulated a transition framework for youth leaving care in South Africa based on the primary participants' experiences of their transition in the pre-transition (Theme 1), transition (Theme 2) and post-transition (Theme 3) phases. Based on the findings of the empirical study and other studies on care leaving initiatives, the researcher provides principles that may guide professionals in their

facilitation of support for young care leavers who have resided in residential care and then transition to independence.

8.3 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the study was to investigate young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living, and then based on their experiences; develop guiding principles to provide services or interventions in children's homes in support of the transition. In this section the researcher answers the secondary questions formulated in chapter 1 in terms of the findings she obtained, thereby subsequently also addressing the primary research questions.

8.3.1 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 1

What constitutes young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living?

Young adult care leavers who participated in this study described a transition process which seemingly had a fluid nature and progressed over an extended period of time. As such, young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living could not be defined as a single event. The process typically commenced with in-care experiences and ceased at the point of independent adulthood. In this regard the researcher found that care leaving was a timely process consisting of three related phases: the pre-transition phase (in-care experiences), transition phase (transition itself) and post-transition phase (independent living). The participants reported an array of experiences in each of these phases, all contributing to their transition and experience of the process of transition.

Young adult care leavers care leavers experienced continuity and security during the pre-transition phase despite their experiences of loneliness and sadness. Pertaining to this, it was found that professional role-players at children's homes promoted stability by limiting placement movements from one care context to another. This provided participants with a sense of security, attachment and belonging during the pre-transition phase, amidst the negative emotions associated with removal from home. In this regard, the researcher found that continuity in care had a positive effect on care leavers as they had opportunities to develop stable relationships with housemothers and weekend carers who encouraged them to perform academically, and in turn had a positive influence on their transition to independence.

The majority of the participants in this study experienced academic success during formal schooling. In this regard, stability of placement was an advantage as participants attended one school and received continued assistance from housemothers, and weekend carers, which supported participants' academic achievements. Young adult care leavers of this study also reported on participation in a

range of leisure activities arranged by housemothers, and that this seemingly normalised their day-to-day lives.

As stated, the majority of the participants experienced positive relationships with housemothers and weekend carers who displayed an interest in their development and achievement. However, participants often experienced a lack of emotional nurturing and affection from housemothers in these relationships. The researcher posits that a lack of emotional closeness in relationships with housemothers however did not have a great influence on participants' perceptions of housemothers as they were thankful for housemothers creating homes that reflected some family rituals.

The researcher further found that children's homes however generally did not succeed in transferring life skills for independent living to care leavers. Staff rather took responsibility providing in participants' daily needs. This prevented the participants to obtain independent living skills from their places of care, having a negative effect on the transition process and resulting in care leavers finding it hard to adapt to society after leaving care. The young adult care leavers also commented that they did not receive career guidance and as a result made uninformed career decisions based on personal interest.

During their placement in care, participants' day-to-day activities were planned for them and as a result they were not provided with opportunities to make decisions about day-to-day functioning. A lack of opportunities to make decisions left the participants feeling excluded and had a negative effect on their development of self-determination as prerequisite for adult independent living. The young adult care leavers also experienced imposed decisions regarding career choices, tertiary education training and accommodation, which often resulted in negative outcomes, such as discontinuing tertiary studies. Furthermore, participants did not receive sufficient therapy during placement in care to address the e.g. the abuse, neglect, rejection and abandonment experienced prior to placement in care. Only one care resident who displayed overt problems, such as destructive behaviour and academic challenges received psychological services.

During the transition phase to independent living, participants were forced to depart from care at age of 17 to 19 years. As such, the young adult care leavers experienced an abrupt end of care process as they were not adequately prepared for leaving care. Participants experienced a need to continue residency in their care settings but this was not permitted. Places of care arranged accommodation for care leavers, and housing included single room accommodation, university hostels, a student commune, a family home and an apartment. The children's homes provided participants with financial assistance for accommodation whilst they were enrolled for tertiary studies but withdrew financial support when participants displayed a lack of educational progress. However, no provision was made for participants residing in university hostels during holiday times, resulting in the participants having

nowhere to go during these times, with hostels closing and them not being allowed to return to children's homes.

The young adult care leavers participating in this study reportedly isolated themselves as they experienced vulnerability due to a lack of family protection. A lack of parental support caused feeling of anxiety and shame amongst them. Participants reportedly also feared community members as they thought they may take advantage of them, should they become aware that participants did not have family members who could protect them.

Two out of the group of five participants did not complete their tertiary qualifications. Factors that influenced educational success included a lack of interest in the selected qualification, substance abuse, untimely responsibilities in terms of relationships, a lack of social support from places of care and having children at an early age. The young adult care leavers in this study also reported on a lack of social support, supervision and contact with children's homes following their departure from care. In this regard participants experienced sadness, loneliness, abandonment, vulnerability and rejection as they experienced a lack of formalised support from residential staff as well from biological family members.

Young adult care leavers as a result generally struggled to form a sense of self during their transition to independence. However, participants who attained educational success and/or experienced healthy romantic relationships found it easier to develop a positive sense of self based on their relationships, employment and academic achievements. This trend was however limited to selected participants.

Despite success in terms of qualifications and relationships for some participants, a number of them also reported on participation in harmful behaviour, such as promiscuity and drug abuse, which had a negative effect on educational attainment and romantic relationships. Alcohol abuse and drug use was also prevalent for this group of participants especially within the first three years following departure from care. Young adult care leavers also participated in sexually promiscuous behaviour whilst abusing substances and one participant had a criminal record for driving under the influence of alcohol. In addition, young adult care leavers experienced a number of negative emotions during the transition phase, such as insomnia, social anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts.

In general, participants experienced a need for supportive relationships during the post-transition phase. They displayed the necessary skills to establish social networks that comprised of romantic partners, adults and peers. Participants however found it difficult to maintain relationships with their biological family members and as such experienced a lack of practical and social support from their families of origin. The working lives of the young adult care leavers varied from unskilled employment to highly trained positions and professional roles. Based on the findings of the study the researcher

concludes that multiplicity was attributed to a range of factors such as participants' educational qualifications, immediate care leaving experiences and the labour market. Pertaining to this, the young adult care leavers reported that they at times ended up unemployed due to retrenchment and company bankruptcy.

Even though three of the five participants became parents soon after living residential care, they experienced difficulty relating to the task of parenting. One participant suffered from post-natal depression and two participants found it difficult to form attachments with their first born children. Participants experienced a lack of knowledge in terms of parenting skills, which resulted in some of them sending their children to others to take care of them. They also commented that the distress and adversity they experienced prior to their placement in care, continued to have a negative effect on their mental health as young adults. Depression, anxiety and suicidal tendencies were prevalent amongst the three female participants, and one participant displayed symptoms of a bipolar mood disorder. In general, young adult care leavers of this study attested to many stresses they experienced in romantic relationships during the post-transition phase of independence. They specifically experienced difficulty to initiate and maintain stable relationships, due to factors such as a lack of intimacy, trust and personal boundary setting issues.

8.3.2 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 2

How can the experiences and narratives of young adults contribute to both the understanding and promotion of healthy adult outcomes in youth residing in residential care?

Experiences of young adult care leavers in the pre-transition, transition and post-transition phases contributed to the development of guidelines for support services and interventions with youth leaving care in South Africa. As such, participants of this study participated in the design of a potential supportive framework, as their narratives provided deeper insight and understanding pertaining to the transition experiences of young adult care leavers.

Findings indicate that bold and innovative strategies must be considered and evaluated against the experiences of young adult care leavers. Based on the participants' narratives and reported experiences the researcher recommended a number of innovative strategies for promoting young adult care leavers' transition to independent living. The following components are regarded as basic requirements for successful transition to independent living: (a) personally relevant, individualised transition planning; (b) stability and continuity in care; (c) psychological counselling; (d) participation and engagement in general education, including extracurricular activities; (e) instruction in skills, such as independent living and self-determination; (f) student-centred career planning and work experience in career areas chosen by the care leaver; (g) age of leaving care; (h) accommodation; (i) emotional

and financial support; (j) participation in post-secondary education; (k) extended and graduated transitions; (l) identity formation; (m) mentorship experiences/positive relationship with a responsible adult and (n) interagency collaboration.

The researcher posit that the findings of this study on young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living, contribute to a better dispensation for care residents who are in the process of transitioning from residential care to independent living. As such, the researcher proposes posits that the experiences and narratives of the participants might support professional role-players to improve the quality of life for care leavers, and to assist them to make successful transitions into adulthood and becoming independent. However, the guidelines recommended for a supportive programme requires further research against the background of contextually relevant programmes.

8.3.3 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 3

Which recurring patterns are revealed in the life experiences of young adults who resided in residential care?

A number of patters were identified in terms of participants' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living. Young adult care leavers all reported related reasons for placement in care, referring to instances of neglect, poverty, parental mental illness and alcohol dependency. Two participants were placed in care due to experiences of sexual, emotional and physical abuse.

Following their placement in care, the young adult care leavers reportedly experienced continuity and stability. Professional role-players at children's homes promoted permanence by limiting placement moves from one context to another. According to the findings, this provided participants with opportunities to develop stable relationships with housemothers and weekend carers who encouraged them to perform academically, which in turn had a positive effect on their transition to independence. However, the young adult care leavers did not receive opportunities to participate in decisions that affected their lives, specifically related to educational attainment and accommodation. In addition, the participants obtained limited skills for independent living as staff at children's completed most daily tasks, such as cooking, shopping and budgeting.

A number of recurring patterns emerged related to the transition phase to independence. Young adult care leavers experienced loneliness and isolation following their departure from care, which was reportedly brought on by numerous losses, such as the giving up of valued relationships with peers and staff. In addition, participants commented that they were not accustomed to living unaccompanied as they had spent most of their childhood years in the presence of care residents and housemothers. Furthermore, participants were lonely and felt isolated due to the lack of social support, involvement

and monitoring they received from places of care following their departure from care. Participants' echoed anger and disappointment experienced due to a lack of social support from places of care. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher theorises that young adult care leavers as a result may tend to get involved in romantic relationships, in an attempt to overcome loneliness and isolation. This may have a negative influence on the transition to adulthood, and as a result in unplanned pregnancies at a young age.

In some of the participants' experiences, loneliness were also associated with not being familiar with the social rules and skills of a society they experienced as new and their fear of being discriminated against. The young adult care leavers found it difficult to learn about society's norms as they had limited contact with the "outside" world prior to exiting their placements in care. In addition, a number of participants referred to themselves as "*children's home children*", "*orphans*" and "*abandoned children*". As such, their experiences of loneliness were further exacerbated by their perceptions of being different and atypical from society members who were not raised in care. The researcher theorises that young adult care leavers' perception of having a "tainted identity of being a children's home child" may affect their economic circumstances, sense of self and relationships.

Two young adult care leavers in this study did not complete tertiary education qualifications although they enrolled for tertiary degrees following their departure from care. One participant reportedly halted his pursuit of further education following the birth of his first born child. Following discontinuation of formal studies he completed short vocational courses but did not gain further qualifications beyond short courses. The other participant who discontinued tertiary studies was not interested in her degree specialisation and started abusing alcohol and drugs, which seemingly had a further negative effect on her academic performance. She did not pursue any further tertiary training following her discontinuation of her studies. As such, the educational success of young adult care leavers were impacted on by untimely responsibilities in terms of relationships, drug and alcohol abuse and having children at an early age.

Young adult care leavers in the study found it challenging to maintain romantic relationships, due to reasons such as a lack of trust, intimacy, self-disclosure and personal boundary setting. In this regard the researcher posits that care leavers childhood adversities will have a negative effect on their attempts to maintain warm and trusting relationships as young adults. Moreover, in this study, it was found that participants experienced a range of psychological challenges whilst making the transition to independence, such as depression, anxiety, insomnia, suicidal thoughts and participation in promiscuous behaviour.

Participants also reported on challenges, negative emotions and false beliefs regarding relationships with biological family members. Based on the findings, although participants experienced anger and

sadness about their childhood experiences, the loneliness they experienced as young independent adults often prompted them to attempt rapprochement with their families of origin. Moreover, adult care leavers attempted to initiate and re-establish relationships with biological family members as they experienced higher levels of uncertainty about their personal backgrounds and identities. However, as biological members did not provide care leavers with support, they continued experiencing fractured relationships with their families of origin.

As stated, participants experienced a lack of knowledge regarding their personal histories, which hindered the formation of their identities. Participants were not provided with sufficient time to develop their identities in the pre-transition phase as they experienced a lack of self-determination during placement in care. Next, participants ascribed their difficulty to form identities during the transition phase to the challenges of trying to manage accommodation, finances, employment, early parenthood and educational needs at this time. As such, a number of participants attempted to form new identities in the post-transition phase, based on their academic achievements, parenting roles, romantic partnerships, career accomplishments and economic stability. In this regard, the researcher theorises that young adult care leavers will form “new” identities over a prolonged period of time as they adjust into independent living and explore adult roles and responsibilities. Pertaining to this, the researcher posits that young adult care leavers are capable of developing positive identities through success experiences, such as educational attainment, employment and relationships with co-workers, romantic partners and children.

8.3.4 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 4

Which psychosocial characteristics and protective resources can be identified among adults who resided in children’s homes and have made a successful transition into independent living?

In this study, stability in care supposedly promoted care leavers’ resilience as this provided participants with opportunities to develop warm and redeeming relationships with housemothers and weekend carers. In addition, continuity in care contributed to participants’ educational attendance and achievement during placement in care as the young adult care leavers reported on relationships with responsible adults who encouraged their educational participation. The young adult care leavers were also informed that financial support for tertiary studies was dependent on academic progress during placement in care. This seemingly encouraged participants for educational achievement during formal schooling as they experienced a need for tertiary educational attainment, which they associated with successful adult outcomes.

A salient finding of the study relates to the importance of relationships with responsible adults who had a significant influence on the transition process of young adult care leavers. Two high achievers in the

group of five participants referred to a close relationship with at least one significant person each, outside the care system, who encouraged them to participate in educational activities and acted as role models for parenting and romantic relationships. Young adult care leavers who experienced stable relationships with responsible adults displayed higher levels of resilience in the post-transition phase, in terms of relationships, employment, educational attainment and economic stability, when compared to participants who did not report on having close relationships with responsible adults. In this manner close relationships with responsible adults served as a protective factor for them when facing challenges associated with the transition process.

One of the participants was able to maintain a loving relationship with his romantic partner. For this participant, parenting was a protective factor which played a crucial part in how he managed to establish himself whilst making the transition to independent living. In this regard, a stable romantic partner may have a positive impact on young adult care leavers' transition to independent living pertaining to identity development, maintaining accommodation and gaining economic security. To this end, the researcher theorises that stable romantic relationships may be protective resources that can support young adult care leavers to manage transitional problems.

One of the most prominent findings in this study was that young adult care leavers who completed formal tertiary qualifications reached better outcomes in terms of employment and economic stability during adulthood. Educational and employment success for example supported one participant to integrate into the community and experience higher levels of accomplishment, allowing her to reach her goals and maintain hope for the future. As such, the researcher posits that participation in educational projects and academic achievement may become protective resources for young adult care leavers, allowing for opportunities to develop positive identities, form networks of social support and increase their sense of belonging in communities.

Participants furthermore displayed a capacity to transform negative attributes into positive ones, including being grateful for what they have learned while overcoming adversity. To this end, the researcher posits that young adult care leavers' ability to transform adversity into opportunities for thriving can be a protective resource during the transition process. In this study, participants seemingly achieved benefits from the adversities they experienced by gaining emotional maturity from traumatic life events. Moreover, participants believed that participation in harmful behaviour could support them to broaden their self-knowledge, develop resilience and heal from adverse childhood experiences.

Closely related, the young adult care leavers who participated in this study reported that goals for the future supported them to remain optimistic and hopeful for the future. Participants namely had an array of future goals which encouraged them to maintain an optimistic and never-give-up attitude. As such, the researcher found that young adult care leavers continued to strive to reach goals, regardless of the

challenges they encountered. This contributed to their resilience as they experienced a sense of endurance and hope, supporting them to focus on positive opportunities during their transition to independence. The researcher also found that participants' religious beliefs supported them to manage adversities. Pertaining to this, participants experienced a sense of spiritual protection, especially during times of difficulty. Their religious beliefs often "pulled them through" and helped them to survive during adverse experiences.

8.3.5 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 5

What are the intervention needs in children's homes and how can these be addressed to promote healthy adult outcomes in youth residing in residential care?

Young adult care leavers in this study were discharged from care at the young age of 17 to 19 years on completion of secondary school. A number of participants were reportedly forced to leave care with limited resources, unprepared for ending the care process. At that stage, the young adult care leavers experienced limited skills for independent living and restricted knowledge about the "outside world". As such, the young adult care leavers who participated in this study experienced abandonment and fear, as they were expected to leave care at a young age, with limited preparation for independent living. Based on these findings the researcher proposes that children's homes provide care residents with extended and graduated transitions from care, permitting them to depart from care following a preparation process for independent living.

Participants reported that some housemothers did take initiative in organising leisure activities as children's homes had restrictions in terms of routine, resources and discipline. Pertaining to this, the young adult care leavers reported that care structures made it hard for them to attend activities that were not presented at children's homes. As such, they primarily participated in activities within a group of care residents. Based on these findings, the researcher theorises that this could have a negative effect on the development of care residents' identities and as such posits that places of care should make provision for leisure activities within communities as this might promote more healthy outcomes for youth residing in care.

Closely related, participants also received little or no opportunities to practice decision making skills during their placement in care as they were overly dependent on others to make decisions for them. This seemingly had a detrimental effect on young adult care leavers' development of self-determination and autonomy. Based on these findings the researcher posits that children's homes should provide care residents with opportunities to take ownership and responsibility for their decisions during placement in care as this might support them to develop higher levels of self-reliance and self-determination which in turn could have a positive effect on their transition to independent living.

According to this study, children's homes do not typically provide participants with opportunities to develop skills for independent living prior to their departure from care, which reportedly had a negative influence on the young adult care leavers' transition to independent living. Participants were seemingly not provided with opportunities to develop basic skills, had to adhere to strict rules that were put in place for the practical running of children's homes, did not receive sex education and were not prepared for parenthood.

Firstly, the young adult care leavers indicated a need for psychological support for difficulties due to traumatic experiences, such as abuse, neglect, rejection, family dysfunction and abandonment, which they experienced prior to care placement. Participants for example required support for depression, insomnia, suicidal thoughts, promiscuous sexual behaviour and anxiety, which in many cases developed prior to and during their placement in care. As such, the researcher posits that psychological counselling is needed in children's homes. In this regard she theorises that the majority of care residents' experience a need for relieve pertaining to adversity and fractured family relationships which is typical reasons for placing children in care. As such, based on the findings of the study the researcher suggests that care residents' psychological needs be addressed during placement in care as this could promote healthy adult outcomes among youth residing in residential care.

8.3.6 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 6

How can the members of children's home communities be equipped to contribute to the successful independence of care leavers?

Young adult care leavers reported on positive relationships with housemothers and weekend carers during their placement in care, who displayed an interest in their personal and academic development. This appeared to enhance participants' educational attendance and progress. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher thus suggests that housemothers and weekend carers recognise the long-term value of their active involvement and encouragement in terms of care residents' educational attainment. The researcher further suggests that caregivers provide residents with a content home life which may support them to experience a sense of belonging and being cared for. As such, the researcher proposes that places of care should have personalised support in place for residents to form and maintain relationships with mentors, carers, educators, social workers and youth workers according to the findings of this study. Stable relationships in this study with dependable others was a key factor for the transition success of young adult care leavers, specifically in terms of their educational attainment and maintaining stable relationships.

The young adult care leavers commented that their day-to-day activities were planned and decided for by children's home staff. Pertaining to this, the researcher recommends that professional role players at children's homes value the development of care residents' self-reliance, autonomy and self-

determination. In this end, the researcher proposes that care residents are provided with opportunities for planning, decision making and problem solving, which in turn may have a positive influence on their transition to independent living.

Based on the findings of the study, young adult care leavers experienced a need for independent life skills that could bring real world relevance into their lives. As such, the researcher suggests that care leavers attend independent living programmes, exposing them to a number of real-life skills. In addition, the researcher proposes that intervention programmes at children's homes should include comprehensive therapeutic services that may provide care residents with support, hope and a feeling of continuity. This recommendation is based on the findings of the study which indicated the lack of therapeutic services offered to care residents at places of care, which in turn seemingly had a negative influence on young participants' transition to independence.

In this study participants also indicated a lack of career guidance when selecting tertiary programmes to pursue. To this end, the researcher proposes that care residents gain exposure to a range of career activities prior to choosing tertiary courses. This could also include opportunities for self-exploration, professional career assessments and assistance from educators focusing specifically on career knowledge, guidance and exposure. Closely related, based on the findings of the study the researcher recommends that members of children's home communities also provide residents with opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding regarding their own background and personal histories. In this regard the researcher recommends that social workers and personal advisers pro-actively monitor care residents' perceptions regarding their backgrounds, clarify misunderstandings and support them to fill gaps in their knowledge pertaining to their life histories. This recommendation is based on evidence that a lack of knowledge regarding childhood histories could have a negative influence on care residents' identity development as young adults.

A number of young adult care leavers were expected to depart from care at a young age and were seemingly expected to live alone or were sent to unstable family homes. Two participants in the study were placed in student hostels and as such were not expected to live alone, but reportedly experienced loneliness and abandonment as they were provided with minimal social support from their places of care. Based on the findings of the study the researcher proposes that places of care should consider young adult care leavers' requests to remain in residential care following completion of secondary school, or return to care in times of crises or for example during holidays if residing in university hostels. The researcher is aware of the lack of resources at places of care and as such children's homes are not always able to provide accommodation for extended periods of time. The researcher however proposes that should extended residency not be possible, places of care should support young adult care leavers

to find appropriate and secure accommodation, whilst ensuring ongoing financial and social support as well as a mentoring service during young adult care leavers' transition to independent living.

The young adult care leavers in this study specifically experienced a lack of emotional and practical support from children's homes following their departure from care. Participants had some contact with housemothers but this was seemingly restricted in duration. In addition, based on the findings, places of care seemed unhelpful when approached and displayed a lack of interest in care leavers. As such, the researcher recommends that housemothers maintain contact with care leavers whilst also serving as a communication link between young adults and social workers. Should continued relationships not be possible, alternative provisions could be made, such as linking young adult care leavers with personal advisers, mentors and/or weekend carers who might provide emotional and practical support to care leavers during the transition to independent living.

8.4 POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

This study holds potential value for various reasons. Firstly, the findings of the study contribute to the literature base on young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living. The researcher's study could further add value to emerging literature pertaining to programmes and interventions that may prepare youth for the transition to adulthood. In this regard literature indicates that children's homes generally do not provide programmes and interventions to sufficiently prepare youth for their transition to adulthood (Van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012; Heath, Toste & Zinck, 2008; Meintjes, Moses, Berry & Mampane, 2007). As such, the researcher's study may thus provide insight into services or interventions that children's homes could provide, while young people are still in care, or in the form of aftercare services, which could facilitate their transitioning into independent living.

The need to understand transition intervention practices provided at children's homes and for practitioners to explore the application of such practices seems evident in South Africa. As such, the findings of this study could potentially support professionals to improve the quality of life for care leavers and assist them in making successful transitions into adulthood and to becoming independent. In this regard practitioners may start exploring and considering the implementation of transition programmes and interventions, possibly within diverse contexts, as well as support repertoires already available to youth transitioning from care. Professionals, such as social workers, educators, counsellors, weekend carers and psychologists, who are involved at children's homes, may thus benefit from the findings and conclusions of this proposed study, gaining ideas for practical implementation.

As little attention has been given to young adult care leavers' transition experiences, with specific reference to the development of transition programmes, in the past, the findings of this study add to

existing literature on an integrated intervention approach. Such an approach needs to be based on the experiences of young adult care leavers, as this may lead to the approach accommodating the specific needs of care leavers transitioning to independent living. The researcher believes that the findings of her study could be used to promote healthy adult outcomes among youth residing in residential care, supporting their successful transition to independent living.

Furthermore, the researcher obtained elaborate and in-depth information regarding young adult care leavers' experiences in the pre-transition, transition and post-transition phases. Findings focus on young adult care leaver's mental health, accommodation needs, employment skills for independent life, sexual behavior, children and parenting, educational attainment, relationships and cohabitation. This information provides insight into the process of transitional change as experienced by young adult care leavers who transitioned to independent living. Therefore, the findings of her study might contribute to a better dispensation for young adults who are in the process of transitioning from residential care to independent living, as the study provides an integrated approach to improve adult outcomes of youth residing in residential care. The framework and guidelines provided in support of the transition process may be of value for both facilitators of such an intervention (example children's homes), and children residing in care.

As such, the information that the researcher obtained could yield clinically useful information, as the themes and sub-themes that emerged might provide a foundation for designing and testing transition interventions within the context of places of care. In addition, the researcher's findings can offer useful advice on ways to improve practices at children's homes, and improve the quality of life and opportunities for children and adolescents, whilst they are residing at children's homes as well as to prepare them for when they leave the setting.

8.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher identified a number of potential limitations during her study. Firstly, as she fulfilled the role of observer, she faced the potential challenge of being influenced by her own perceptions. She furthermore served as a single research source – subject to her personality and thought processes. In this manner, she experienced some difficulty in detecting and preventing research-induced bias in her study. As a qualitative researcher, she was often susceptible to subjectivity, as a close link was formed between the primary participants and herself (the researcher). Despite the fact that this might appear to be a limitation, she did not strive for objectivity (based on her selected paradigm). Instead, she strove to gain insight into the five primary participants' life-worlds, experiences and perceptions. She remained aware of this potential limitation throughout her study, and constantly reflected on her role as researcher and the possibility of researcher-bias. In addition, she aimed to counteract this potential

limitation by undertaking a comprehensive literature study, by having ongoing discussions with her supervisors, and by reflecting in a researcher journal.

Secondly, the study involved only five case studies, which were limited to young adult care leavers who transitioned to independent living, who performed relatively well while in care and subsequently received financial support from the residences of care when leaving the children's homes, for different periods of time. In this manner, her results will only be credible in terms of this selected group. Although the challenge of generalisability of the findings might be mentioned, generalisability was not the aim of her study, as she selected to employ an interpretivist stance. Instead, she aimed to provide in-depth descriptions of five cases, in order to gain elaborate data on the perceptions and experiences of the five primary participants. Further research would be required if the findings were to be applied on a larger scale. The researcher believes that she however provided sufficient evidence that may be utilised by readers for transferability purposes.

Thirdly, her selected data collection methods provided a vast amount of raw data, and led to her analysis being time-consuming. Although this might be regarded as a challenge, the fact that the study is based on only five case studies, allowed time for thorough data collection and in-depth analysis. The fact that these activities were time-consuming adds a certain value to the study, as the time spent on data collection and analysis contributed to the quality of the relationships with participants, and the depth of analysis, potentially contributing to a deep understanding of the phenomenon under study.

Fourthly, the audio-recordings that the researcher made might have altered or restricted the normal interaction between the participants and herself. In an attempt to minimise this potential limitation, she showed the recording device to the participants prior to using it, in an attempt to enable them to get used to the audio-recorder. She also remained alert to observe if the device were to create a barrier in open communication.

Next, a degree of emotional involvement developed between the five primary participants the researcher. In response, she regularly reflected on her emotions, and guarded against becoming too emotionally involved. Her training in Educational Psychology assisted her in addressing this challenge. She further faced the challenge of fulfilling the dual role of researcher and psychologist as the primary participants occasionally presented with emotional concerns. In an attempt to address this challenge, she continuously reflected on her dual role, and constantly kept in mind that her primary role was that of researcher, which entailed observation, participation, attentive listening, and abiding by ethical guidelines. In cases where she deemed it necessary she referred the participants for professional intervention, in order to address the emotional challenges they faced.

Finally, as the researcher grew up in a children's home, her own background and experiences may have influenced her perceptions and understanding of the young adult care leavers. She had to constantly remain conscious of this potential limitation, and aimed to monitor her "lived-experiences" during the research process by means of a researcher journal. In addition, she reminded herself of her primary role of researcher and the fact that she needed to interpret the progress and outcomes of the research process in its various phases, whilst allowing for alternative explanations.

8.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section the researcher makes recommendations with regard to training, practice, potential policy change and further research.

8.6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRAINING AND PRACTICE

The researcher recommend that the guiding principles in this study, based on youngadults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living, be included in the practical training of professionals, such as social workers, educators, counsellors and psychologists, who may become involved in children's homes. The researcher proposes that children's homes should also train responsible mentors who could provide care leavers with support, advice and stability during care placement and following their departure from care. If professional role-players at children's homes are made aware of the findings of this study, it may create the possibility of programmes and interventions being offered that could prepare and support youth for their transition to adulthood.

The researcher recommends that places of care increase the availability of transition services for children in their care by developing transitional programmes to assist children leaving the facility after they reach the age of 18 years. In this regard the researcher propose that children's homes should promote the best interests of children in their care through the provision of integrated services in the pre-transition, transition and post-transition phases, specifically designed to assist them with transition to independent living.

Pertaining to this, children's homes might inspire the development and expansion of leaving care programmes focusing on accommodation, education, training, financial support, psychological intervention, social networks, personal relationships and practical life skills, as this could improve the adult outcomes of care leavers (Stein & Wade, 2000). Finally, practitioners might start exploring and considering the implementation of integrated modes of providing support to young adult care leavers during their transition to independent living, possibly within diverse contexts.

8.6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY ON LEGISLATION FOR CHILDREN'S HOMES IN SOUTH AFRICA

South African legislation, in particular the Children's Act of South Africa 1983, calls on children's homes to offer transitional support to youth leaving care. Section 191(3) (e) states that children's homes should offer programmes either for children in their care or for children living at home that include *"transitional programmes to assist children leaving the facility after they reach the age of 18"*. Regulations 69_71 of this act also states that children's homes should promote the best interests of children in their care through the provision of prescribed types of services, specifically services that *"assist a young person with the transition when leaving care after reaching the age of 18"*.

It is important to note that the Children's Act of South Africa 1983 mentions preparation and support for transition from care but does not depict specific services that could provide adequate after-care support for young adult care leavers. In this regard the discretionary aspects of the Children's Act of South Africa 1983 imply considerable variations in the transitional support offered to care leavers within and between local authorities. As such, although preparation for transition and after-care support is mentioned in the legislation, these represent underdeveloped areas of work in South Africa (Mamelani Projects Annual Report, 2009) implying that young people who transition out of children's homes are often unprepared for the realities of life's challenges (Williams, 2011; Atkinson, 2008; Tweddle, 2007).

Based on the findings of the study, a need for structural and social policy changes affecting young adult care leavers seems evident (Stein, 2005; 1994). The first step may be to interrogate current policies on stability in care, age of leaving care, independent living skills, mental health support, career guidance and educational participation from the perspective of care leavers who have had first-hand experience of trying to negotiate pathways towards independence. Legislation may in turn potentially inspire the development and expansion of leaving care programmes focusing on accommodation, social networks, personal relationships and practical life skills, as this could improve the adult outcomes of care leavers (Stein & Wade, 2000).

The researcher urge policy makers to provide stronger legal frameworks for care leavers, including a description of specific services in terms of social support and financial obligations pertaining to care leavers who are enrolled for part-time and full-time educational opportunities. Legislation may perhaps propose that children's homes conduct needs assessments with eligible care leavers regarding education, training, accommodation, financial support, independent life skills and psychological intervention, followed by the development and implementation of a "pathway plan" which include the provision of a personal advisor (Department of Health, 2001). In this regard the researcher appeal to legislation to encourage places of care to connect young adult care leavers with personal advisers until they are 21 years old who could coordinate the services required to meet care leavers' pathway plans.

The researcher furthermore recommends that legislation suggest the facilitation of transitional years between ages 18 and 21 (Barth, 1990) and focuses on strengthening the assessment, preparation and planning for leaving care by commending better personal support for young people following their departure from care. The researcher therefore suggests that policies include specific guidelines regarding educational participation during placement and following departure from care. Pertaining to this, definite strategies may be included relating to financial support and suitable accommodation, also for times during higher education institutions vacation periods (Broad, 2005).

8.6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As mentioned previously, limited research has been undertaken in the field of programmes and interventions to sufficiently prepare youth for their transition to adulthood, based on the experiences of young adults who have transitioned to independence. The researcher recommends further research in this field, with the purpose of extending the current knowledge base. The following areas of interest may be explored in future research:

- The application potential of the findings of this study in the form of an intervention programme with a larger sample of care residents residing in places of care across different cultures, languages, ages and genders.
- The application potential of other forms of transition programmes and interventions for care residents in preparation for the transition process.
- Comparative research regarding the effectiveness of independent living programmes implemented with care leavers, as opposed to the effectiveness of integrated guidelines implemented during the pre-transition, transition and post-transition phase.
- The pre-care experiences (namely abuse, neglect and abandonment) of youth in care that may have an impact on the emotional, interpersonal, cognitive and behavioural consequences for young adult care leavers during the transition to independent living.
- The possibility of social workers, educators, counsellors, mentors, weekend carers and psychologists being trained in and applying the principles of this study at children's homes, places of safety, children's villages, children's shelters and schools of industry (reform schools).
- The effect of transition programmes and interventions on resilience and the emotional well-being of young adult care leavers.

- Comparative research on the transition experiences of young adult care leavers who display successful outcomes as young adults, as opposed to the experiences of young adult care leavers who display negative outcomes.
- The implications of policy frameworks and legislation on young adult care leavers' transition to independent living.

8.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The aim of this research was to investigate young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living, and then based on their experiences; develop guiding principles for support services or interventions with children in care. As such, the researcher explored the experiences of young adult care leavers for the purpose of improving interventions offered to care residents residing in residential care, in preparation for their transition to independence when they leave care.

Reflecting on the results and findings of the study the researcher concludes that the lived experiences of young adult care leavers provided valuable insight, which could be used to formulate guidelines in support of the transition process of youth leaving care in South Africa. This reflects a significant shift for transition frameworks, from programme-centred to care leaver-centred and therefore implies extensive potential value.

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ADDENDA

Addendum A

Informed consent*

Addendum B

Introducing the primary participants*

Addendum C

Transcripts of reflexive interviews: Umicare project

Data analysis*

Addendum D

Transcripts of primary participants: Individual interviews

Data analysis*

Addendum E

Transcripts of secondary participants: Dyad interviews

Data analysis*

Addendum F

Transcripts of secondary participants: Reflexive interviews

Data analysis*

Addendum G

Visual data of post-modern data collection techniques*

* *Included as hard copy*

* *Included as hard copy and on compact disc*

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Addendum A

Informed consent*

Informed Consent

Dear Participant

I am a Philosophiae Doctor student at the University of the North West and I am currently conducting a research project on **young adults' experiences of their transition from residential care to independent living**. For this purpose I have selected you as a participant to the study. The study will take place during 2014.

For the purpose of the study, I kindly request you to participate in discussions and interviews with me. Data for this research project will be collected by means of audio recordings and photographs, of both the process and the products of the process. Therefore, I further request your permission for audio recordings and photographs and that it may be used with the researcher's discretion, as long as it contributes to the positive value of the research project.

During my study, the following ethical principles will apply:

1. You are free to withdraw from the project at any stage if you wish to do so.
2. You will at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes.
3. You will not be placed at risk or harm of any kind.
4. All information provided by you will be treated confidentially and anonymously.
5. You will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

If you are willing to assist me, please complete the form attached and return it to me.

Kind regards

Melanie Oelofsen

Researcher

Addendum B

Introducing the primary participants*

INTRODUCING THE PRIMARY PARTICIPANTS

In this section the researcher provides the narrative accounts of each of the primary participants, compiled from all data sources described in chapter 3 of the study.

DAKOTA¹

Dakota was born in July 1982. Following her birth she resided with her mother, father and later two younger brothers. Her father was diagnosed with schizophrenia and her mother displayed suicidal tendencies. She could recollect very few memories of her childhood but what she could remember told a story of neglect, physical abuse, parental alcohol addiction, poverty and family violence. When Dakota was eight years old her mother left their family to be with her boyfriend. The following year Dakota's mother and father were divorced. Dakota and her two younger brothers were placed in their father's custody. During Dakota's residency with her father she experienced physical, sexual and emotional abuse. One of her close relatives also suffered a brutal attack and he died in her arms, whilst they were waiting for an ambulance to arrive.

At the age of 12 years Dakota saw an advertisement on television for child line and she contacted them in an attempt to escape adverse family circumstances. A social worker then placed her with a compassionate foster mother whom provided her with a sense of safety and care. This was a temporary living arrangement as she was placed in a children's home a couple of months later. At first she experienced that she did not belong at the children's home as she struggled to build friendships with residents. Her peer group reportedly rejected and bullied her as she focused more on her academic work than socialising with them. However, she reported that overall she was happy at the children's home as they provided her with a sense of safety, shelter, food, clothes and educational opportunities. She also had a considerate housemother who encouraged her to perform academically.

During her placement in care Dakota performed well academically and as a result received a tertiary education bursary from the children's home. She reportedly experienced feelings of uncertainty about career options and subsequently enrolled for a BA degree as she believed that this qualification would eventually provide her with an opportunity to specialise in a specific career field when she was prepared to make an occupational decision. Dakota was placed in a university hostel when pursuing tertiary studies, entering the hostel at the age of 18 years and on completion of grade 12.

While in the hostel Dakota reportedly contacted her place of care for social support, however they were seemingly not prepared to provide in this need. Although she did not experience difficulty to initiate friendships while at university she seemingly found it challenging to maintain peer relationships due to instances of conflict. In an attempt to shield herself from rejection and emotional upset she apparently

¹ Pseudonyms are used, in order to protect the participants' and other role-players' identities.

started isolating herself from her peers at university. As a result she experienced high levels of despondency, loneliness and melancholy during her residency in the university hostel. During this time she attempted to commit suicide, participated in unsafe sexual practices and experimented with alcohol and drugs. She supposedly participated in harmful behaviour in an attempt of gaining acceptance from her peer group and filling a void that she was experiencing at the time.

During Dakota's enrolment at university she had regular contact with her biological mother. Following a disagreement between them however ceased contact with her mother. Shortly after this incident her mother passed away. As a young adult Dakota continued to blame herself for her mother's death and became involved in dysfunctional sexual relationships that often involved physical abuse, promiscuity, infidelity and violence. She also reportedly abused alcohol and drugs on a regular basis at the time. However, despite this harmful behaviour Dakota continued to perform academically based on her belief that intellectual accomplishments could provide her with economic stability and support her in gaining acceptance, respect and acknowledgement.

After graduating from university Dakota reportedly gained employment, bought a car, rented an apartment in an affluent neighbourhood and completed a doctorate degree on a part-time basis. As a young independent adult she seemingly used career achievements to define herself, and to gain acceptance, respect and acknowledgment from community members. She maintained contact with her younger brothers and searched for her biological father as her mother told her that he resided abroad. She did not have stable relationships with her biological family members she seemingly had close relationships with a group of friends with whom she found comfort and acceptance. They were supposedly aware of her adverse childhood experiences and occasionally supported her when she experienced despondency, related to insomnia, depression and anxiety. She reported that her peer group provided her with comfort and support as they were aware of the psychological difficulties that she occasionally experienced.

As a young independent adult, Dakota reunited with her housemother and maintained a stable relationship with a weekend carer. She apparently experienced secure relationships with older females who were in positions of authority. She perceived older females as role models and relied on them for advice, guidance and support. As such, she seemingly experienced stable relationships with mother figures that consoled her in times of challenging life experiences.

Dakota reportedly had a promising professional career that provided her with economic stability and opportunities to travel the world. She purchased an apartment in a prosperous neighbourhood and preferred living on her own as this reportedly provided her with a controlled living environment. Although she experienced the need for a stable romantic relationship, she had difficulty to maintain relationships and subsequently had multiple sexual partners. Even though she abused alcohol and

drugs during the completion of her tertiary qualifications, she seemingly did not participate in substance abuse after receiving a criminal record for drinking whilst under the influence of alcohol.

Dakota indicated that her childhood years shaped and moulded her. However, as a young adult who made the transition into adulthood, she had to accept responsibility for her future. In this regard she mentioned that healing began when she realised that she was not responsible for her adverse childhood experiences. She chose forgiveness and personal well-being over resentment. However, this was reportedly an ongoing journey for her during the post-transition phase as she continued to struggle to respect herself whilst releasing shame, guilt and anger. As a young independent adult she continued to seek a sense of belonging, stable relationships and success experiences.

HARMONY

Harmony was born in July 1978 and she was adopted three days after her birth. Following her adoption she resided with her mother, father and older brother. Her father was reportedly addicted to alcohol and he displayed violent tendencies. Her mother was seemingly depressed and she often attempted to commit suicide. As her father struggled with an alcohol addiction he frequently lost employment. As a result Harmony's family often had to move in search of employment for him. Although Harmony found it difficult to adapt following relocation, her father apparently made new friends with ease. Whilst her father was socialising he left her with the responsibility of taking care of her mother who also abused alcohol and prescription medication. During her childhood years she often experienced sleep difficulties as she seemingly feared that her father might commit family murder. She frequently hid firearms in their home to prevent her father from committing family murder. During this time she also had to endure sexual abuse from a cousin.

Soon after Harmony's eighth birthday her adoptive mother attempted suicide and due to this her mother was placed in a psychiatric hospital. Harmony was sent to live with her aunt who told her that her adoptive father was in fact her biological father. Her father seemingly had an extra marital affair with her biological mother. She felt ashamed as she perceived herself to be a child born out of infidelity. Soon after this her father was arrested for attempting to commit family violence. Whilst Harmony visited him in jail a police officer contacted a social worker. Harmony asked the social worker to place her in a children's home as she did not want to live in poverty, fear and despair. At the age of 13 years Harmony was placed in children's home and a few weeks later her adoptive mother died. Harmony continues to believe that if she resided with her family, her adoptive mother would not have passed away.

Following Harmony's placement in care she reportedly experienced safety and stability. Within three months of her placement in care she apparently stopped biting her nails and experienced less anxiety and fear. She reported that she experienced the children's home as a safe haven that provided her

with opportunities to participate in various school, social and sport activities. However, she seemingly experienced stigma and discrimination at school due to her care residency. During these experiences she attempted to focus on her academic and sport performances, in an attempt to avoid despair and depression.

During her placement in care she performed well academically and as a result received a bursary from the children's home to continue with tertiary studies. Even though she planned to enrol for a degree in law the children's home allegedly required of her to change her choice of study to drama, as they seemingly believed that this suited her better. The children's home arranged lodging for her and she was subsequently placed in a student commune.

Following Harmony's departure from care the children's home provided her with financial support. However, she reported that she experienced abandonment and loneliness as she did not receive social support from the children's home. Due to her need for belonging and acceptance she formed friendships with peers who lived with her at the student commune, and with fellow students. She reportedly abused alcohol, participated in unsafe sexual behaviour and used drugs in an attempt to gain peer acceptance. This apparently had a detrimental effect on her academic performance, resulting in a lack of academic performance and the children's home withdrawing financial support. Following this, she learned that she was pregnant. As she did not have contact with the children's home anymore or with her biological family members, she moved in with the father of her first born child. After the birth of their child they got married but soon divorced due to her husband apparently being unfaithful in their marriage.

Following Harmony's divorce from her first husband, she entered into another romantic relationship and fell pregnant with her second child. The father of this child apparently requested her to have an abortion but she was willing to raise their child as a single mother. After giving birth Harmony married the father of her second born child, who however did not inform his parents about their marriage. Harmony experienced intense sadness and disappointment as she perceived her second husband to be ashamed of her. As a result, she again experienced rejection and loneliness which in turn exacerbated her feelings of vulnerability due to a lack of family support. Adding to this, she was disappointed with herself for not completing her tertiary education qualification.

As a young independent adult, Harmony subsequently resided in an office space with her second husband and her two children. They allegedly lost their home due to damage caused by a storm. She was concerned about the well-being of her children whom she maintained stable relationships with. She seemingly participated in various part-time employment opportunities but could not maintain employment for extended periods of time as she preferred not to work in controlled environments. Following various failed employment opportunities, she eventually worked as an administrative

assistant for her second husband at his carpentry business. She apparently experienced disappointment as she did not receive recognition or financial reimbursement for this employment position.

Harmony and her second husband therefore experienced financial difficulties and even though she was apparently not happy in her marriage, she decided to stay in the relationship as she was concerned about the well-being of her children. She believed that if she had an education and support network she would not need a romantic relationship. Pertaining to this, when she was 24 years old, she located her biological mother but did not develop a stable relationship with her as her. She did not have contact with her family of origin or other extended family members.

Harmony reported that she perceived her childhood years and subsequent adverse experiences as valuable learning tools. She reportedly struggled with depression and even though she displayed optimism and hope for the future, this was not always sustainable. She often participated in self-reflection activities and wrote poems about experiences which seemingly made an impact on her life. She became passionate about children's rights and although she wanted to pursue a degree in law or counselling, financial constraints prevented her from furthering tertiary studies.

SKYLAR

Skylar was born in February 1987. Following her birth she resided with her mother, aunt and two older sisters in poverty. They lived in an economically disadvantaged neighbourhood and slept on cardboard boxes. Although her basic needs for food and clothes were not met, her mother often purchased and abused alcohol. Due to adverse experiences her older sister contacted a social worker. Skylar was eight years old at the time and she remembers the day that she was placed in a children's home. She recalled memories of her mother bathing her and her two siblings, and then packing their clothes in a single suitcase. After spending a day in court, her mother greeted her and she left Skylar and her two older siblings at the courtroom. Thereafter they were taken to a children's home and Skylar seemingly believed that this was a temporary living arrangement.

On the day that Skylar arrived at the children's home she seemingly experienced safety and care as she received food, clothes, a bed and an opportunity to bathe. During her placement in care she occasionally experienced loneliness and despondency as she did not have contact with her biological mother. Her experiences of loneliness were exacerbated during weekends and holidays when she had to remain in care due to not having weekend carers. She however had a devoted housemother who provided her with opportunities to participate in everyday activities during which she occasionally felt like an "ordinary" child.

During Skylar's grade six year the children's home placed her in a school for learners with special needs. She seemingly pleaded with them to avoid this placement but her housemother apparently said that she will be placed back with her biological mother to live in poverty, should she not agree to the placement. She obeyed their request in an attempt to avoid placement with her biological mother. She performed well academically at the school for learners with special needs, as she believed that this might lead to her placement back in a mainstream school. Although she passed all her subjects with distinction and was chosen as head girl at her school, she was not placed back in a mainstream school. The children's home allegedly did not provide an explanation for the school placement and she continued to believe that she had the necessary academic potential to succeed successfully in a mainstream school.

At the age of 17 years and on completion of grade ten, Skylar was forced to depart from the children's home. During this time she reportedly experienced fear and uncertainty due to a lack of knowledge regarding the world that existed outside the children's home. She was not prepared to make the transition to independence, seemingly due to a lack of independent living skills and emotional maturity. Although she expressed the need to continued placement in care the children's home did not permit this. She was expected to depart from care with hardly any material resources, as well as a lack of social support. As such, Skylar reportedly experienced a sudden loss of childhood, which was just as abrupt as her placement in care.

As Skylar was the youngest of three siblings, her older sisters departed from care earlier. Her siblings returned to the family home from which they were initially removed. As the children's home arranged accommodation for Skylar and provided her with financial support for 12 months following departure from care, she did not have to return to her family home. The children's home provided her with curtains, bed linen and crockery. Following her departure from care she lived in a diminutive room at a boarding house in an economically disadvantaged area, with adult community members who reportedly experienced financial difficulties. During this time she experienced loneliness, fear and isolation especially as she did not receive social support from her place of care.

Although Skylar reportedly wanted to obtain a tertiary education qualification, this was not probable due to her graduation from a school for learners with special needs, providing schooling up to grade ten. Despite this situation, the children's home provided Skylar with financial assistance to complete short-term vocational courses. She passed the vocational courses with the exception of a computer skills course as she apparently did not have a computer to practice on. Although she contacted the children's home in an attempt to gain practical support for this, they were not perceived by her to be interested in her academic, social or emotional progress.

The children's home withdrew financial support after 12 months and Skylar then found employment as a waitress. She worked during the evenings at a restaurant that was located in close proximity to the boarding house where she stayed as she was uncertain how to use public transport. This part-time position resulted in her forming friendships with individuals who were not raised in care. Upon successful completion of a computer skill course, Skylar sought employment as an administrative assistant at a law firm. At the age of 19 years she started working as an administrative assistant at a law firm during the day and continued her employment as a waitress in the evenings. She worked long hours for a feeble income but was apparently uninformed about salaries and employment benefits.

As Skylar experienced loneliness she got drawn into a romantic relationship. She was however unaware of safe sex practices and fell pregnant. She left the boarding house to move into an apartment with the father of her first born child. For her, this arrangement implied the promise of financial, practical and social support. Following the birth of her daughter, her romantic partner abandoned them, and as a result she could not afford to live in the apartment any longer. She moved back to the boarding house where she had stayed before. Skylar asked her older sister to live with them as she apparently struggled to form a bond with her daughter. She also experienced the need to focus on her career and obtain financial stability, which seemingly made it difficult for her to take care of her first born child.

When her daughter was seven months old, Skylar formed another romantic relationship. She sent her daughter to live with her older sibling at their family home, and moved into an apartment with her partner while continuing to work as an administrative assistant. She had another daughter out of this relationship and following the birth of her second child, her first born daughter moved back into their home. She reportedly experienced a lack of independent living skills, such as cooking and cleaning. She however also lived a separate life from her romantic partner as he frequently worked away from home. Although she was not happy in her romantic relationship, she decided to stay as she believed that she would not be able to survive without her romantic partner's financial support.

As a young independent adult, Skylar seemingly blamed the children's home for the economic difficulties she was experiencing during the post-transition phase of independence. Pertaining to this she reportedly believed that she was not able to attain tertiary qualifications and in turn professional employment as she did not complete grade 12. Due to this she preferred not to visit the children's home. She also expressed concerns regarding her mother and two siblings as they continued to live in poverty and despair. She occasionally provided her family of origin financial assistance and reported that they contacted her when they were in need of financial support. These circumstances seemingly made it difficult for her to build relationships with her family of origin.

Skylar participated in various part-time employment opportunities during this time. At the time of data collection she was employed at a debt collection company and did not earn a fixed income but worked

for commission. Her life seemingly revolved around her two daughters and they followed a strict daily routine. She indicated to experience social anxiety and was cautious when she met new individuals. She preferred not to socialise with individuals outside of her apartment and she did not have close friends. She allowed acquaintances to live in their apartment when they experienced economic difficulties. Although she experienced financial difficulties she continued to have hopes and dreams for the future. She displayed a drive to succeed and was committed to working hard. She described her daughters as precious and reportedly taught them to persevere regardless of the obstacles they encountered.

TROY

Troy was born in June 1989. He is the only child of his mother and father, but his father reportedly had other children as well. Following his birth Troy lived in poverty with his biological mother. Due to this, his grandmother allegedly contacted a social worker and at the age of two years he was placed in a children's village. Although he recalled limited memories of his first years at the children's village he mentioned that he received an abundance of food and clothes. He also reported on participating in chores, such as cooking and cleaning. The children's village seemingly had boundaries and rules, and he believed that this supported him as a young adult to build a life based on respect and responsibility.

Troy reported that the children's village provided him with material and social support. During his placement in care he allegedly did not receive sufficient psychological support. He further mentioned that the children's village did not celebrate his birthday and he reported on incidences of physical abuse. Troy seemingly experienced anger towards the children's village as they treated boys and girls differently. In this regard he reported that female residents received more privileges in comparison to their male counterparts. However, circumstances seemingly changed on a regular basis as his housemothers were frequently replaced with new personnel. As a result he struggled to build relationships with housemothers as their employment at the children's home was often temporary.

During school holidays Troy frequently visited his biological mother. At the age of 13 years his mother passed away and although he experienced despair following her death, the children's village allegedly did not provide him with therapeutic intervention as this service was seemingly only presented to children with special learning needs. Despite his feelings of despondency, Troy continued to have dreams for the future.

During Troy's placement in care he perceived himself as a responsible and well-behaved resident. He formed close relationships with care residents and apparently enjoyed his residency at the children's village. Despite his reports that the children's village where he resided did not provide him with emotional nurturing, he seemed grateful towards them for providing him with accommodation, sustenance, clothes and educational opportunities. As he performed well academically he was awarded

a bursary from the children's village to continue his tertiary studies. Following completion of grade 12, when leaving the children's village he was sent to live with his grandmother who resided in a different city. Despite his requests to continue residency at the children's village, as he felt unprepared to leave due to a lack of skills, this request was not permitted as he had a family member to which he could return. The children's village gave him a lump sum of money as well as his clothes, and allegedly dropped him off at a bus station. As such, he was left with no choice but to leave the children's village after 16 years of residency.

On arrival at his grandmother's home Troy reportedly felt pressurised to enrol for a tertiary degree. As he had not received career guidance during placement in care, he experienced difficulty in making a career decision. He aspired to be an entrepreneur and enrolled for a degree in entrepreneurship at a college which was situated close to his grandmother's home. Following enrolment he received a monthly allowance from the children's village that provided for his tertiary fees and basic living expenses. He also worked part-time to earn an additional income. He then moved into an apartment and used the lump sum of money that he received from the children's village, to purchase a second-hand car and furniture.

Following departure from care, Troy reportedly experienced loneliness and isolation, and as a result started searching for his biological father. He gave his biological father his contact information but his father did not display an interest in having a relationship with him. Following his final examination the children's home withdrew financial support, allegedly without prior discussion. Troy felt pressurised to find employment and he seemingly believed that he might be more successful in attaining employment in the city in which he was raised. At that stage he had maintained contact with residents who were raised in care with him. He seemingly believed that they might support him to gain employment.

Following arrival in the city in which he was raised, he moved into an apartment with one other care leaver. He gained employment at a renowned retail store but had to resign from this position following accusations of stealing. Whilst he was unemployed his romantic partner fell pregnant and in an attempt to provide financial security for his new family he participated in illegal drug activities. Soon after Troy's 24th birthday his partner gave birth to their son. Prior to the birth of his son he gained employment at a warehouse that sells commodities to vendors.

As a young independent adult, Troy thus shared a one bedroom house with two other adult care leavers. He seemingly shared close relationships with them and they lived, worked and socialised together. He did not report on having contact with biological family members. Moreover, he apparently drank socially and occasionally used cannabis. Although he aspired to own a business and had the necessary qualifications to apply for professional employment, he was seemingly content with working as packing assistant at a warehouse. Even though he experienced financial difficulty he was able to

provide for rent and daily living expenses. He was grateful to the children's village for providing him with diverse opportunities and was appreciative of the financial support he received for his tertiary studies. Pertaining to this, he continued to believe that the children's village borrowed him funds and that he will eventually have to repay them.

JAKE

Jake was born in a catholic hospital in September 1985. As his mother apparently struggled with an alcohol addiction he was placed in foster care. Following removal from his mother's care, he resided with three foster families but placements were seemingly unsuccessful. At the age of three years he was sent to live in a children's home. He reportedly suffered from epileptic attacks and was diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactive disorder. Although he could not recall many memories of his childhood, he did mention that his first housemother at the children's home was more concerned about fulfilling his basic needs than his emotional and academic needs.

During his placement in care Jake longed to be part of a family but he was uninformed about his biological relatives. Soon after his seventh birthday a social worker at the children's home allegedly told him that his biological brother and sister were living with him at the children's home. Although he found it difficult to build a relationship with his older sister he often socialised with his older brother. He reportedly also visited his biological mother but he recalled instances of abandonment and neglect during holiday visits. Moreover, he was supposedly bullied by older care residents at the children's home and in an attempt to stop victimisation he physically abused younger care residents. During this time, he reportedly did not attend school on a regular basis as he was socialising, drinking and smoking cannabis with older care residents. Due to this behaviour he was expelled from school and he failed grade five.

Following Jake's expulsion from school he was placed with a compassionate housemother who exposed him to social activities outside the children's home. His housemother apparently encouraged residents in her care to treat each other like family members. Moreover, Jake reportedly visited weekend carers who encouraged him to focus on academic achievements. He seemingly experienced a sense of belonging with his weekend father who took him for therapeutic intervention. He was then placed on medication for attention difficulties. He apparently avoided his old group of friends and attended school on a more regular basis. Following this Jake displayed academic potential and as a result he was placed back in a mainstream school. He was selected to be a leader in high school and he successfully completed grade 12. Due to him showing promise, he received a tertiary education bursary from the children's home where he resided. He decided to enrol for a degree at a university of technology, specialising in games programming and robotics, as he found computers interesting.

On completion of secondary school, Jake spent a holiday with his weekend carers, prior to commencement of his tertiary studies. He then moved into an apartment that was owned by his weekend carers. He however experienced a lack of independent living skills and found it difficult to complete chores, such as cleaning his apartment and cooking nutritional food. Adding to this, he experienced high levels of uncertainty and inadequacies when comparing himself to his peers at university. He found it difficult to initiate new friendships and as a result preferred to lead a solitary life. He reportedly resided in his apartment for long periods of time, often isolating himself from community members. In this regard Jake reported that his weekend carer was his only acquaintance and that he supported him to apply for a driver's license and identity document. Furthermore, his weekend father apparently taught him how to plan a monthly budget and provided him with guidelines for cooking.

Jake then formed a romantic relationship with a partner whom he met whilst socialising with his older brother. Whilst enrolled for tertiary education he learned that his partner was pregnant. She moved in with him for financial and practical reasons. He continued his studies during the pregnancy and following the birth of his daughter, he applied for full-time employment as he experienced a need to provide for his new family. As a result he discontinued his formal tertiary education. Shortly following the birth of Jake's daughter, he married his partner. He reported that his wife supported him when he was experiencing economic instability following a failed employment opportunity.

As a young independent adult, Jake had occasional contact with his weekend carer and he referred to him as his father. He seemingly found it difficult to maintain relationships with his peer group and he also did not have stable relationships with his siblings, as they requested him to provide financial support for his mother. This caused tension in their relationship and he preferred to have limited contact with his biological mother who reportedly continued to abuse alcohol.

Jake's wife and daughter seemingly provided him with a sense of responsibility and maturity. He described himself as a strict and over-protective father as he wanted his daughter to be responsible and independent. He was proud of his self-reliant abilities as he took care of his family with very little assistance from others. He had stable employment as computer programmer and preferred to spend most of his time either at work or at home. He bought a house in a middle-class neighbourhood. His wife and daughter reportedly provided him with a sense of belonging and security.

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Addendum C

Transcripts of reflexive interview: Umicare Project
Data analysis*

Reflexive Interview

29 May 2014

NAVORSER: Ons het nou reeds gesels oor die doel van hierdie navorsing. Vertel my meer van die program wat julle hier het?

RESPONDENT: Wil jy hê ek moet met die vragies afgaan?

NAVORSER: Ja, dis die beste.

RESPONDENT: Ok, die eerste een is "What advice would you give to youth currently residing in children' homes?"...ek gaan afrikaans praat is dit reg?

NAVORSER: Of dalk, voor ons by die vraelys se vragies kom, kan jy net begin en sê hoe het julle hierdie halfweg huis begin. Dis dalk net 'n goeie begin.

RESPONDENT: Ok dit was in 2004, ek het toe al tien jaar se ervaring by kinderhuise gehad want ek was op MTR Smit...vir tien jaar 'n vrywilliger by MTR Smit en op hulle beheer raad gewees. Toe het ek die pad nou al lank gestap met kinders. Ek het my dokters graad ook op kinderhuise gedoen, transformasie en kindersorg. En uhm so toe ek nou hier gekom het en besef hoe groot is die nood van die kinders wat dan nou as hulle agtien is moet uitgaan en daar is nou geen vangnet vir hulle nie. Die rekonstruksie dienste wat eintlik moes gelewer gewees het in hulle families deur die buite maatskaplike werkers het plat geval. Daar is nou hierdie redelike politiek oor Project Go. Ek weet nie of jy enige kennis van wat Project Go is nie, jy moet miskien my thesis lees. Dit sê vir jou die tydperk van 1997 basies aan, eintlik basies die hele geskiedenis van kindersorg. So 1997 was daar nasionale transformasie van die jeugkinders in ons stelsel. Die bevonding het van Nederland afgekom. Die naam was Project Go. Toe het hulle die hele kinder welsyn hervorm, natuurlik ten bate van daai agtergeblewe kinders wat nooit daai voordele gehad het van die kinderhuise nie en ook om weg te beweeg van die bemoedering, die verwydering van gesins verband na profesionele kindersorg...Child & Youth Care, so dit was 'n groot omwenteling gewees. Goed, en toe het hulle daar gesê 'n kind moet vanaf hy hier geplaas word en terug gaan na sy ouers toe moet maksimum twee jaar wees. Dit was mos ideaal en hulle het gesê die rekonstruksie moet buite gelewer word om daai families te herbou en te rehabiliteer sodat daai kind na twee jaar kan terug gaan...dit het natuurlik nie gerealiseer nie want die rekonstruksie was nie daar nie en die projek het plat geval, Project Go het platgeval as gevolg van geld. Project Go het platgeval om en by vroeg 2000's. Inelkgeval, so die realiteit is die kinders bly hier hulle hele lewe lank of 'n paar jaar, hulle word agtien en kan nie terug gaan na hulle ouerhuis nie want niks daar het verander nie so dit was eintlik maar met 'n geluiskoot wat ek proposals uitgestuur het vir befonding...vir opvoeding vir die kinders, tersiêr en een van my proposals het op die regte lessenaar beland. En een ding, "one thing lead to another" en ons het toe 'n partnership begin tussen ons, Umicare Autocat...dis 'n internasionale maatskappy wat katalisators vervaardig en hulle het toe gesê goed hulle wil betrokke raak. Ek het nou gedink aan tien, twintig duisend rand vir ons tutors of watokal

toe sê hulle nee hulle wil op grootskaal betrokke raak en toe het hulle vir my gevra wat is my eerste droom toe sê ek my droom is 'n half way huis en hulle het toe gesê dan doen ons 'n hawe huis saam. Maar hulle is baie "hands on" so toe het ons 'n trust gevorm waarvan ek 'n trustee geword het en hulle het gesê goed ons gaan 'n half way huis vir julle kry maar hulle wil dit help run. Hulle was persoonlik betrokke in die bestuur daarvan. Hulle is ook al die jare by SAS betrokke maar daar het hulle 'n tjek uitgeskryf en gesê doen julle wat julle wil doen maar hierdie trust...hulle wil persoonlik betrokke wees by hierdie jongmense. So toe het ons die hoof se huis herbou, aangebou, verbou uhm die hele huis ingerig vir kinders. Ons kon toe vyf kinders in neem...so van graad tien, elf en twaalf het ons ingeneem. So die program het daar begin waar ons gesê het uit die ervaring met kinderhuis kinders uitgaan is hulle sukkel met tersiêre opleiding want hulle het nie die ondersteuning nie, hulle het nie die vaardighede nie so ons moet hulle in 'n residensiële program opneem waar die kern van daai program mentoring is. So die hoof aspek van daai program is mentoring, life skills training en dan akademiese mentoring benewens die versoring jy weet; kos, klere, medies al daai goed. So toe het die eerste vyf kinders in gegaan en ons is al tien jaar later...ons het nou op die oomblik drie kinders huidiglik op die program in hawe huis een, en een in hawe huis twee, op die oomblik gaan ons nog nuwes in neem. So ons hawe huis een is die huis op die perseel, ons hawe huis twee is wat ons noem 'n residensiële program waar die kind dan in sy eie akkomodasie intrek of eie woonstel in trek of huis of kommune en hulle begin werk of gaan studeer hulle tweede kwalifikasie dan help ons hulle met daai skuif. Ons help hulle om in die woonstel in te trek, ons betaal hulle huur vir hulle, hulle deposito, ons kyk na hulle budgets, ons gee die mentoring, ons ondersteun hulle tot hulle gevestig is in 'n werk en in hulle woonplekke in en dan...

NAVORSER: So daar is nie 'n ouderdom beperking nie?

RESPONDENT: Nee.

NAVORSER: Ok, dis hoe dit met hulle gaan.

RESPONDENT: Ja, soos daar is nou 'n meisiekind wat net uit halfweg huis twee is, sy bly nou seker al vir vyf jaar op haar eie...ons het nou vir die eerste keer ontrek so sy is nou heeltemal op haar eie. Sy werk nou al 'n geruime tyd, sy het haar BTech studeer; haar tweede kwalifikasie, sy doen Game Farm Management. Sy het al 'n motor gekoop, sy werk en sy gaan nou verloof raak binnekort so sy is nou gesetlle. En dan ons ander meisiekind wat in half weg huis twee nou ingegaan het, sy woon ook op haar eie, sy swot ook haar tweede kwalifikasie BTech on Public Relations, vir haar 'n motortjie gekoop en werk en swot heeltyd, werk voltyds en swot voltyds hoor...nogal tough, sy het glad nie 'n sosiale lewe nie. Dan Charlise is in haar finale jaar Logistiek, sy moet nou besluit wil sy aanbly vir haar BTech of wil sy uittrek en aangaan met haar BTech of wil sy uittrek en begin werk en haar BTech doen, sy moet nog net besluit maar sy sal definitief in hawe huis twee gaan want sy doen onsettend goed. Haar

punte is geweldig sterk. Die jongetjie is tweede jaar Logistiek, en sy wil klaar maak met dit en moontlik oorskakel na 'n ander kwalifikasie toe so sy sal nog 'n rukkie by ons bly.

NAVORSER: Ok, hoe kwalifiseer hulle om daarin te kom?

RESPONDENT: Dis 'n seleksie proses. Hulle doen aansoek, die kinderhuis doen vir hulle aansoek. Ons het ook al 'n buite kinderhuis kind gehad. Hulle doen aansoek dan begin die seleksie proses. Ons kyk na hulle skool rapporte, ons kyk na hulle uhm enige sielkundige toetse wat al gedoen is op hulle, ons staan 'n onderhoud toe dan doen ek 'n psigometriese toets om te kyk het hulle die potensiaal vir akademiese, tersiër want ons is 'n akademiese program, gaan hulle 'n diploma kan slaag en doen 'n persoonlikheidstoets, het hulle die persoonlikheidsprofiel om te kan...die commitment, watse challenges het ons in ons mentoring program en dan as hulle die potensiaal het en uhm al is hulle punte beroerd dan neem ons hulle in, dan begin ons hulle...of ons begin hulle mentor terwyl hulle in die kinderhuise bly en ons kyk hoe baat hulle by die mentoring. Ons het laas jaar 'n seun gehad wat ses maande op die program was maar nog nie in die huis ingetrek het nie en ons het gekyk hoe baat hy by die mentor program en hy het glad nie daarby gebaat nie, hy was glad nie gereed vir daai tipe...wat hy beleef het as 'n "intrusion" in sy lewe, hy kon nie hanteer dat ons betrokke raak by hom en dit was vir hom te bedreigend gewees, hy was nie gereed vir 'n program nie. Ja, en dan as hulle daai proses deur gegaan het dan het hulle 'n onderhoud met die trust en dan kom hulle in die hawe huis in en dan begin ons met hulle onmiddelik. Akademiese supervisie begin elke week, dan kom hulle met hulle toetsdatums, projekte...ons monitor hulle, ons gee vir hulle akademiese mentoring. Ek gee hulle akademiese mentoring, Sanet is hulle primêre mentor. As hulle nog mentors nodig het dan trek ons ander mentors in so sy sien hulle elke week vir 'n koffie date en sy praat uit en uit oor persoonlike ontwikkeling die wat vir psigoterapie moet gaan, gaan dan vir psigoterapie vir ten minste ses tot twaalf sessies en dan het hulle life skills training en dan begin ons met hulle...eerste ding is leerling-en bestuurslisensie dan is dit budget en sy doen 'n formele program met hulle maar een tot een in hulle weeklikse sessies. So uiteindelik moet hulle almal bestuurslisensies hê, hulle eie budgets kan hanteer so ons studente kry 'n allowance elke maand; een vir vervoer en een vir hulle kos, klere, toiletries, al daai goed en hulle moet daai budget vir ons gee, hulle gee vir ons byvoorbeeld die spyskaart van hoe hulle gaan kook vir hulle self, hulle doen inkopies self en hulle moet hulle hele budget balanseer aan die einde van die maand en ons check net hulle finansies aan die einde van die maand.

NAVORSER: Ok, so daar is nie 'n huismoeder in die huis nie?

RESPONDENT: Daar is 'n huismoeder, omdat die skoliere nog onder wet vier-en-twintig uur supervisie moet hê is sy daar, tannie Eve, maar op die oomblik is sy amper net 'n teenwoordiger...net die moeder in 'n huis. Jy weet, as hulle laat inkom is sy wakker, as dit eksamen is het hulle 'n warm ete, sy is nog betrokke by hulle op 'n versorgings manier maar in terme van hulle...hulle doen al hulle duties self, heeltemal onafhanklik...wasgoed, skoonmaak, kook, dit alles doen hulle self.

NAVORSER: Ok, so hulle leer.

RESPONDENT: Ja, hulle leer. As ons nou 'n skolier in neem dan is dit nou anderste want dan is sy meer betrokke en dan begin ons nou met hulle net hoe hou jy jou kamer netjies, hoe trek jy 'n studie rooster op, al daai goedjies wat 'n ma nou vir 'n kind sal leer. Dan is sy meer hands on en sy kook ook nog vir hulle maar dan begin sy hulle leer kook hulle begin naweke kook, as daar nie toets tye is nie kook hulle so hier en daar in die week en dan begin ons hulle ook...mense in die gemeenskap kry, vriendekring, en daai gemeenskap ondersteuning. Hulle het 'n kulturele budget so hulle gaan dan partykeer net na movies toe en so aan. So ons het 'n heeltemal holistiese program. So ons sien hulle dan deur tot hulle kwalifikasies en soos Charlisen sê nou sy is versadig, sy is al agtien jaar in die kinderhuis sy wil uit en ons weet sy kan, sy hanteer...sy is heeltemal onafhanklik so al moet sy eintlik nog in bly laat ons haar uitgaan want dis vir haar belangrik om nou uit te gaan so sy beweeg uit die einde van die jaar.

NAVORSER: Ok, en julle neem skoliere ook in...dis nie net as jy klaar is met matriek nie.

RESPONDENT: Ja, ons doen. Wat ons gesien het is as ons die mentoring in graad tien begin is dit soveel makliker vir hulle, dan het hulle meer sukses in die universiteit. As ons te laat begin en jy vra, een van jou vra is wat het die kinders meeste nodig op die oomblik, en dis hoekom ek gister 'n meeting gehad het met die kinderversorgers...die kinders sukkel om 'n visie vir hulle self te ontwikkel, hulle kom in met hierdie kinderhuis...ek is die slagoffer, ek wil nie hier wees nie, ek haat die kinderhuis, ek is 'n victim en hulle moet nou immigrer na ek neem beheer terug oor my lewe, ek het 'n toekoms visie, hierdie is vir my 'n geleentheid, ja dit gaan baie opofferinge van my kant af vat maar ek wil hierdie visie so graag hê dat ek daai opofferinge gaan maak. So ons probeer die kinders...op die oomblik gaan ons 'n mentorship program begin more, van graad agt tot graad twaalf net om 'n visie te skep by hulle want van die kinders het glad nie 'n visie nie. Al wat hulle weet is hulle wil hier uit, "they can't get beyond that". So ons probeer vir hulle 'n visie skep ten spyte daarvan dan daar is vir hulle 'n toekoms, of dit nou in die hawe huis is of op seven pounds, watokal...hulle moet vir hulle self 'n visie begin skep en begin beheer te vat van hulle lewe. Immigreer na ek is die slagoffer na ek het beheer oor my toekoms en ek gaan beheer vat oor my toekoms jy weet. Dis die grootste challenge.

NAVORSER: En julle is beperk met spasie, daar is kinders wat aansoek doen en dan nie inkom nie?

RESPONDENT: Die spasie is nie die probleem nie, dis die kinders doen aansoek...ons het nou 'n kind gehad, 'n meisiekind in matriek, wat ingekom het...in die halfweg huis ingetrek het en baie committed was en skielik toe vou sy...toe sê sy sy wil glad nie, sy sien nie meer kans daarvoor nie, sy wil dit nie meer doen nie, sy sien nie kans vir vier jaar se studies nie uhm...

NAVORSER: Het hulle vryheid? Is dit soos ses-uur word die deure gesluit?

RESPONDENT: Nee, hulle het baie meer vryheid.

NAVORSER: So hulle kan in die aand uitgaan.

RESPONDENT: Ons skoliere moet tien-uur terug wees. Baie van hulle kuier sommer oor by hulle, ons is al so liberated dat jy weet, See-Anne het niemand anders nie, sy is heeltemal 'n weeskind en sy het net haar kêrel en sy bly vakansies en naweke by hom. So ons is heeltemal oop kop daarvoor maar wanneer dit eksamen tye is dan raak ons streng.

NAVORSER: En hulle weet van voorbehoedmiddels en die pil...

RESPONDENT: Hulle is almal op voorbehoed. Ons het enetjie wat swanger geraak het op die program, en ons wil nie graag dit weer hê nie.

NAVORSER: Wat het toe gebeur?

RESPONDENT: Ons was bereid om haar aan te hou en die baba, en te versorg maar sy het gekies om te trou en ons te verlaat.

NAVORSER: Ok, so oor die algemeen is dit suksesvol en sê nou hulle is daar buite en hulle voel nou weer hulle kan nie cope nie, kan hulle dan weer terug kom of is dit nou klaar?

RESPONDENT: Helga is al lankal uit, ons sien haar, haar broer is dood, hy het verongeluk toe ek net hier gekom het in 2003 so sy uhm vir twee jaar was sy heeltemal op haar eie maar ek het haar elke maand gesien....gou koffie drink en gesels. Sy het emosioneel baie swaar gekry met haar persoonlike lewe so ek het haar gementor, die mentoring gaan aan so lank as wat hulle dit wil hê. As hulle vir ons sê hulle het ons nie meer nodig nie dan...

NAVORSER: Is die mentors vrywillige werkers...?

RESPONDENT: Dis ek en Sanet. Wat gebeur ook baie keer is ons kindertjies styg uit maar hulle familie bly waar hulle was en hulle het broers en susters en hulle styg uit bo die broers en susters en dis baie swaar want byvoorbeeld Helga het 'n broer, die suster is in prostitusie en dwelmmisbruik en die een het 'n kindjie so Helga voel sy wil daai kind dan versorg, die suster, die broer maar op die einde van die dag moet sy aan haarself dink. Ons probeer hulle ook bietjie uit daai kloue kry van die familie wat hulle net wil...Patrick was by ons gewees agtien jaar in die kinderhuis, sy familie het nooit in hom belangestel nie en tot hy begin geld verdien...hy het sewe duisend rand verdien en toe hy begin het by Volkswagen toe hy klaar geswot het by ons toe oortuig hulle hom om terug te gaan na hulle toe, na Kings Williams town toe...

NAVORSER: Vir geld.

RESPONDENT: Uit en uit. Dis baie moeilik.

NAVORSER: En jy is nog steeds lief vir hulle maak nie saak wat hulle gedoen het aan jou nie so...

RESPONDENT: Hulle familie bly hulle families. So dit is 'n groot ding. Die ander groot challenge wat hulle face is hulle moet integreer met hulle families en hulle moet dan onderskei ek het my doelwitte en ek het onsettend hard gewerk hiervoor, ek het my lewe en hoe negotiate ek nou daai verhoudinge...jy negotiate aanmekaar daai verhoudinge met jou familie, jy moet renegotiate want hulle...ek sê altyd vat die membership terug, vat die membership kaartjie terug van daai persoon as hulle jou aan mekaar af

trek, skeer hom op en gooi hom in die asblik. Partykeer kan hulle, partykeer kan hulle nie maar hulle kan nogal baie mooi daai verhoudinge renegotiate soos Charlise se ma is verskriklik 'n negatiewe impak op haar en is onrehabiliteerbaar maar sy het nog 'n unieke verhouding met haar, sy het haar aanvaar, haar beperkinge...maar sy het haar los gemaak emosioneel heeltemal maar hulle het nogal 'n verhouding. Dis eintlik bewonderingswaardig. So mens leer ook daai kinders om nuwe verhoudinge te negotiate met hulle familie lede.

NAVORSER: En die program, is dit verskillende stappe dan graduate jy?

RESPONDENT: Hulle is so uniek, elkeen, ons volg elke kind wat hy of sy nodig het so ons een kind is byvoorbeeld intellektueel maar emosioneel baie onvolwasse dan pas ons haar program aan by haar, so sy kry langer...sy is miskien nie gereed vir dit of dat nie so ons hou haar bietjie terug maar sy floreer akademies so 'n ou werk met elke kind uniek. Ons kan nie sê dis 'n generiese program wat ons net toepas nie.

NAVORSER: Het julle soos 'n boekie wat die program verduidelik?

RESPONDENT: Ons het 'n prosedures dokument wat vir ons riglyne gee en wat seker maak daar is kontinuïteit as daar sekere goed is wat weg val maar die ding is jy moet daai kind sentreer, daai kind se uniekie ontwikkelings behoeftes moet jy sentreer...hulle gee die pas aan vir ons. Daar is kinders wat psigoterapie nodig het, ander het dit glad nie nodig nie. Ander het net bietjie mentoring nodig, ander het baie mentoring nodig. Een het byvoorbeeld glad nie akademiese mentoring nodig nie, sy hou my net op hoogte van hierdie uitslag, daai uitslag, sy is onsettend georganiseer so dis elke ou is maar uniek. Het jy Nikita geken?

NAVORSER: Ja.

RESPONDENT: Ok, so Nikita was welkom op die program maar sy het gesê nee dankie ek is uit hier so maar sy het darem haar computers kursus gedoen.

NAVORSER: Nog 'n jaar en 'n half in hierdie tronk en nou as ek my lewe vergelyk met hulle sin.

RESPONDENT 1: Dis ons grootste challenge daai ene, êrens sal dit miskien...ons wil nou video clips begin maak van ons oud studente...om hulle in te trek by ons opleidings mentors vir die jonges en dit sal vir my ook lekker wees as jy eendag vir ons net daai boodskap ook kan weergee van "sacrifice another two, three years"...

NAVORSER: En dis nie dat jy sacrifice nie want dis tog beter as waar jy vandaan kom of terug gaan.

RESPONDENT: En dit kan 'n ou ongelukkig nie, hulle verlaat ons ook om by hulle kêrels te gaan woon. Dis hoekom ons so erg is om ons meisies onafhanklik te hou van hulle kêrels. En die kêrel is amper baie laer funksionierend as die meisies maar hulle dink hulle is goed genoeg "I can only settle for him"...en hulle sukkel om daar uit te kom hoor. Hulle styg mos nou uit intellektueel bo die ou. Daai nurturing behoefte wat vervul word is so belangrik op daai ouderdom van die meisiekind jy weet, sy kan amper nie daar verby sien nie. "It is what it is"...jy kon nie dit anders gehad het nie want jy het daai

nurturing nodig gehad. Kom ons kyk gou-gou hierso, "...what advice would you give..." ok, ek dink jy het dit self vroeër gesê, probeer iets in jouself vind wat...jy sê daai "oomf" né?

NAVORSER: Ja, en jy is die produk van jou keuses.

RESPONDENT: Absoluut.

NAVORSER: Ek dink daai program wat julle doen gee nogal daai, toekoms doelwitte vir hulle.

RESPONDENT: As daai kind sê hy wil 'n BMW ry of president van die land word...sê jippee hallelujah hier gaat ons...ons het darem 'n goal.

NAVORSER: Al is dit onrealisties.

RESPONDENT: Ja, ons kan later skaaf aan dit...later kan ek settle vir deputy president. Kry net 'n droom.

NAVORSER: Enige iets wat jy na toe werk is goed.

RESPONDENT: En die kinders wat ek so jammer kry is hulle het hierdie sense van helplessness, learned helplessness...wat hulle voel net maar, dis soos Esmerelda, sy kon nie in haar kop kry dat sy is in staat tot dit toe nie...sy is al so ver met daai learned helplessness...dis nie my klas nie, "we're not entitled to those kind of things"...sy kan nie daai kopskuif maak van maak nie saak wie jy is nie, sy is te lank gebrainwash met daai ding van ek is nie entitled tot dit nie, dit kom my nie toe nie...ek is maar wie ek is. Jy weet, om daai kopskuif te maak. Ek verdien dit...

NAVORSER: Ja, jiss hierdie is moeilik.

RESPONDENT: En dis ironies want daar is geld, al die hulp is daar maar die kind wil nie so ons moet daai oorbrugging maak. Ek dink dis oor die kindertjies so groot emosionele gat het...vreeslik en uhm die Europeërs verstaan dit nie, van hoekom wil die kinders nie...ons gee vir hulle hierdie wonderlike geleentheid dan "what the hell"...jy weet, hulle verstaan nie daai. Partykeer werk ons met kindertjies en hulle ouers...hulle ouers is nog betrokke so dan werk ons en ons is so idealisties...ons ontwerp opleidings program en ons gaan nou vir al hierdie mamma's en pappa's vertel hoe om hulle kinders groot te maak...ag hoor hier, dan vee hulle hulle gatte aan ons af, askies om dit so te stel. Dan sê die ou wat nou lankal daar betrokke is maar hulle wil nie gehelp word nie. Dan stuur ek 'n vraelys uit en sê wat is julle behoeftes...hulle slaan die kinders pimpel en pers of die kinders leef op die straat dan vra ek nou mooi watter aspekte van dissipline kan ons julle mee help, dan sê hulle daar is niks probleme nie dan dink ek net oh jinne...so dit is so, daar is partykeer maar 'n groot stuk geneties... Ek kyk daai mense dan wil ek en Sanet ons koppe teen die muur stamp, ek kan dit nie glo nie.

NAVORSER: Al die hulpbronne is daar, gebruik dit.

RESPONDENT: En hulle steek mekaar aan. Jy het net een negatiewe ou in 'n groep van twintig nodig om almal af te trek. Hulle beïnvloed mekaar verskriklik. Dis hulle mentaliteit dis hoekom ons daarvan hou om ander kinders in te kry, selfs privaat kinders. As jy een of twee ander kinders in bring dan breek jy daai kinderhuis mentaliteit uhm wat die kinders mee hiernatoe kom, hulle is negatief en alles is

so...hulle steek mekaar so aan. Geld. Ek meen ons budget....'n student kos ons R100 000 'n jaar, een student met al die insette wat ons lewer. Dis 'n baie duur program. Jy sal byvoorbeeld donatueurs kry wat sal sê kyk Ubuntu, hier is 'n groot Ubuntu organisasie in die stad, hulle het sommer so sewentien studente op 'n gelyke gegewe tyd. Dis miljoene rande... so donateurs sê altyd vir ons hoekom spandeer julle soveel geld aan net vier kinders in vier jaar want ons trust sê vir elke kind...jy maak nogal 'n verskil, as jy in een lewe 'n verskil kan maak dan maak jy 'n verskil en ons doen dit baie substantief.

NAVORSER: Veral as daar slegte uitkomst is dan kla hulle eers, want jy het al hierdie in gesit en kyk wat gebeur.

RESPONDENT: Mmm maar ook nie, daar is baie drop outs gewees...ek meen daar is Patrick wat terug King Williams town toe is...ek meen hy kon by Volkswagen 'n fantastiese toekoms gehad het, Jeremy het ons heeltemal verloor, hy het by Umicare werk gekry, hy het daar gewerk en uhm hy het heeltemal...ons weet nie eers waar hy is nie...Nadia is oorlede, sy is aan Aids oorlede so ons het ons floppe.

NAVORSER: Maar dit voorkom julle nie om nog iemand te help nie. So daar is baie sukses gevalle.

RESPONDENT: Waar het jy aan gebly?

NAVORSER: Huis een by tannie Anneleen Botha. Ek het op my boude gesit en gewerk anders gaan jy terug en ek wou nie terug gaan nie want dis vuil en dis gedrinkery en...ek is net te vol nonsens.

RESPONDENT: Jy het nie jou standarde laat sak nie. Ek wens partykeer ons kan dit net uitrol, "roll it out" ...die skool en die halfweg huis, jy weet uhm dat meer kinders...

NAVORSER: En dis seuns en meisies saam?

RESPONDENT: Ja, ons het byvoorbeeld die huis is so...die hoof se huis is nou 'n woonstelletjie so as ons seuns in kry dan sorg ons dat die seuns een badkamer het en ons het 'n "on suite" ook waar een senior student kan in kom en daar is drie badkamers so...daar is genoeg badkamers en 'n televisie area, computer kamer, eetkamer, lekker groot kombuis, dis regtig baie...

NAVORSER: Koop elke kind hulle eie kos?

RESPONDENT: Die twee studente, hulle gaan elke Saterdag en gaan koop hulle weeklikse inkopies volgens hulle menu en dan dis hulle kossies. As daar 'n skoolier in kom dan ook die skoolier hulle kossies daarso so hulle weet hulle kook en dan Sondae kook almal saam, almal kook saam en almal eet saam laat hulle bietjie bymekaar connect.

NAVORSER: Kom hulle nooit dronk daar aan nie?

RESPONDENT: Nooit, ons het nog nooit ooit sulke probleme gehad nie. Nog nooit het ons 'n kind gehad wat gedrink het nie, nie eers ons seuns nie.

NAVORSER: Of dwelms...of iets uit die huis uit steel?

RESPONDENT: Nooit. Ons het nog nooit daai dramas gehad nie. Ek dink dis omdat ons mentoring so vroeg begin.

NAVORSER: En julle kan die verskil sien van toe hulle begin het by julle. Kar lisensies?

RESPONDENT: Ja, hulle almal gaan. Kyk dit vat baie, dit vat nie net tien lesse nie, dit vat twintig lesse. See-Anne is die eerste meisie wat hom nie die eerste keer gekry het nie, my meisies kry dit die eerste keer. See-Anne het hom eers na die derde keer gekry. Ons gebruik die kindershuis kar, ons betaal die kindershuis vir die gebruik van die motor en hulle gebruik die kindershuis se kar, hulle gaan self klas toe en terug en doen hulle inkopies en terug...hulle bestuur self. Die begin is die moeilike ding, aan die begin was reëls maar 'n probleem want daar is huis reëls en dit vereis respek vir mekaar meer as vir iemand anders so die jongetjies wat inkom wat emosioneel onvolwasse is dis maar die grootste ding in die huis, maak die bad skoon as jy klaar is vir die volgende ou. Maar hulle sort mekaar uit hoor. Maar ons challenge was nog nooit daai tipe van gedrag nie want hulle weet ek teken 'n kontrak ook, as ek die reëls verbreek dan is ek van die program af.

NAVORSER: So hulle sien dit as 'n program?

RESPONDENT: Ja, hulle weet dis 'n voorreg...ek teken 'n kontrak en ek weet as ek hierdie kontrak teken dan gaan ek by daai reëls hou.

NAVORSER: Gaan hulle naweke huis toe soos die ander kindershuis kinders?

RESPONDENT: Mmm ja.

NAVORSER: Ok, as hulle wil?

RESPONDENT: Ja, hulle ouers mag enige tyd kom kuier, hulle kan kom eet. See-Anne se ma het baie aande kom oorslaap want dan is die ander studente uit en dan het sy haar ma en suster gebring van die ander kindershuis af dan het hulle nou lekker gekook, dvd's gekyk. Hulle kan die mense in bring ja uhm en hulle het vrye toegang tot die swembad, wanneer die ander kinders swot daan gaan swem hulle drie...in die aand gaan swem hulle almal sommer saam maar die grootste probleem is maar emosionele onvolwassenheid soos die social skills hoor. Hulle social skills...nou is hulle fine maar daai hoe praat mens met mekaar jy weet respektvol...gooi nie tantrums nie...dis ons grootste challenge. Jy kan nie in 'n kommune bly as jy...

NAVORSER: Respek wys vir iemand.

RESPONDENT: Ja, jy kan nie tantrums gooi onder mekaar en tantrums met ons gooi nie maar natuurlik gebeur dit...daai eerste paar jaar is mens maar nog jonk, deure word geklap en kwaad. Op 'n stadium is See-Anne sy het deur die emo-phase gegaan toe dra sy swart hare en neusring en al daai goed so ons was nog daar deur ook.

NAVORSER: En het julle 'n sielkundige?

RESPONDENT: Ek is 'n sielkundige maar ek verwys na Wendy...ons verwys na terapie en al die meisies is al deur dit, deur terapie.

NAVORSER: Halfweg huis twee is as hulle uit is?

RESPONDENT: Ja, dan betaal ons vir hulle nog...dit gaan eintlik meer oor finansiële ondersteuning.

NAVORSER: En julle help hulle werk kry?

RESPONDENT: Ons probeer vandat hulle matriek is, begin ons vir hulle vakansie werk kry want hulle moet sakgeld verdien so See-Anne werk nou al vandat sy in matriek is by dieselfde plek so ons help hulle, ons stuur hulle CV's uit, ons gebruik ons contacts....tussen ons klomp het ons goeie contacts so ons probeer vir hulle werk kry en natuurlik as ons vir hulle die reference gee dan ek meen hulle doen goed in hulle werk, hulle het almal vakansie werk. Hulle het goeie sakgeld. En wat ons ook doen wat lekker aanmoediging is as hulle akademies goed doen dan kry hulle mos afslag op hulle universiteitsfooie, ons vat daai geld en belê dit onmiddelik vir hulle so See-Anne het nou al ek dink vyftien duisend rand in 'n spaar rekening.

NAVORSER: En dan betaal julle nogsteeds die universiteit?

RESPONDENT: Ja, ons betaal nogsteeds die universiteit. Dis soos See-Anne veral want sy is baie slim so en toe sy nou...hierdie eerste termyn het sy swak gedoen en ek het vir haar gesê, vir almal gesê los haar uit...dis die eerste keer wat sy swak doen...altwee haar ouers is oorlede, vir die eerste keer is sy gelukkig, sy het 'n kêrel, sy het geldjies, sy het vriende, los haar. Solank sy deur kom vir hierdie termyn is ek fine. Dan sê sy vir my elke keer is dit goed genoeg, dan sê ek vir haar weet jy dis goed genoeg vir nou...ek weet jy is tot baie meer in staat maar dit is goed genoeg vir nou en so twee, drie weke terug sê sy "it doesn't work for me, I'm not a C and B kind of girl" en sy weet sy wil werk vir daai geldjies. Ek meen Charlise het 'n ongelooflike...haar promo-werk en sy het R12 000 gespaar en ons het seker vir haar R12/13 000 in haar investment so sy stap hier uit met 'n lekker deposito op 'n kar.

NAVORSER: Hoe help julle hulle met meubels?

RESPONDENT: Charlise het al al haar truso gekoop, sy het al alles by gekoop en sy stoor dit. So hulle koop hulle goedjies so aan en ons help hulle baie daarmee. Hulle is baie goed daarmee, ek meen twee van hulle...het tussen R8-12 000 gespaar van hulle allowance, ek sê moet asseblief nie die geld spaar nie, koop vir julle wat julle nodig het...hulle het gespaar en ek het gesê spandeer asseblief die geld ons kan dit nie vir julle hou nie...dit lê in die trustgeld, dit kan nie daar bly nie, julle moet dit spandeer. Hulle kry elke maand R2000 en R750 vir vervoer, elkeen vir hulle taxi fare; elkeen kry R2000 vir kos, klere en toiletries en dan R750 transport. En op dit het hulle gespaar, amper R12 000. Hulle spandeer die minimum. Hulle is amazing. Hulle gaan na die groot winkels toe, koop al hulle klere daar, hulle draai elke sent om...hulle is ongelooflik. Nog nooit vir ons kom vra vir ekstra geld of gekla of niks nie, hulle werk pragtig met hulle geld. Partykeer is hulle lui, ons is streng daar...wanneer hulle moet kos koop, hulle het 'n vrugte allowance, hulle moet vrugte eet, hulle moet gebalanseerd eet. So hulle moet leer hoe om vir hulle self te koop en hulle self te versorg.

NAVORSER: En jy weet nie al hierdie goeters as jy net in matriek hier uit gaan nie of standard agt hier uit gaan nie.

RESPONDENT: Ja, dis wonderlik...ons is baie trots daarop. Ek sê gister ons vergeet hoe moeilik was dit vyf jaar terug want hulle is al almal studente...ons vergeet hoe moeilik was dit daai eerste drie, vier jaar met hulle...dit was harde werk maar nou ag ons cruise. As ons nou volgende skoliere in vat dan gaan ons weer daai paadjie loop. Mmm en hulle almal kom op 'n stadium wat hulle uit die program uit wil gaan, "that's it" ek het nou genoeg gehad, ek kan nie meer nie, ek wil uit en dan gaan ons nou maar weer deur die hele...

NAVORSER: Julle gee nie moed op en sê dis reg nie, julle probeer maar weer.

RESPONDENT: Ons sê vir hulle dis julle keuse, julle kan enige tyd uitgaan maar kom ons kyk gou weer...een dag op 'n slag.

NAVORSER: Ok, en julle gaan aanhou met hierdie? Dit gaan nie ophou of...

RESPONDENT: Nee.

NAVORSER: Daar is nog genoeg fondse?

RESPONDENT: Ja, die donateur...dis 'n internasionale maatskappy so hoe ons begin het, met 'n internasionale program Umicare se program Unicare...so ons het internasionaal begin daarmee...toe daar 'n tsunami was het hulle 'n Unicare by die tsunami gehad in Amerika maar ons is die enigste program wat al tien jaar volhou met ander woorde ons is sustained, ander is kom-en-gaan program en hulle het nou ook vir ons gesê met hulle besoek hierdie jaar hulle vat geen nuwe program meer aan daar buite nie want hulle weet ons is nou hulle program so ons is sustainable, ons het dit oor-en-oor bewys so hulle...

NAVORSER: Dit werk, so hulle neem nie meer nuwe program aan nie.

RESPONDENT: Nee, die trust is in tussen...ek is die enigste trustee oor, die ander is verskriklik committed maar het nie die tyd nie en ek was altyd in 'n vrywillige posisie. Ek het vier jaar hierdie werk vrywillig gedoen en toe die nuwe trust in kom toe sê ek vir hulle ek kan nie. So ons moet nou 'n program bestuurder aanstel en toe het ek ingekom as program bestuurder en hulle het heeltemal terug beweeg want hulle het nie die tyd nie.

NAVORSER: En hulle weet dis in goeie hande.

RESPONDENT: Een maal 'n maand is hulle hier, hulle moet omtrent alles goedkeur...hulle doen die finale stempel op alles maar ons raak baie onafhanklik.

NAVORSER: Ok.

RESPONDENT: Dis die storie. Ek het vir Terry hier langsaan gesê jy wil miskien gaan loer. Ek gaan laat Jackie jou deur vat. Ek gaan ook laat jy met Sanet oor die program praat, sy het 'n program wat General Motors ook gebruik het, dis 'n life skills training program en sy volg daai program in individuele sessies.

NAVORSER: Is dit nou hoe om kos te maak, om 'n budget op te stel of...

RESPONDENT: Ja, sy werk met hulle...ek dink sy begin met hulle oor ek leer myself ken, ek stel vir myself doelwitte en dan soos byvoorbeeld die kook, die kos...al daai goed is maar informeel, ons het dit nie êrens op papier nie, sy gaan sit letterlik met die kind en sê wys my jou budget...kom ons begin Excel program jy weet, trek hom op...spreadsheet.

NAVORSER: Is Sanet 'n maatskaplike werker?

RESPONDENT: Nee, sy het geen formele kwalifikasie nie maar sy is 'n uitstekende mentor en counselor.

Themes:

- Experienced facilitator, post graduate degree specialising in children's homes
- No safety net for youth leaving care. Social workers responsibility-not realised
- Youth in children's homes for long periods of time
- Could not go back to family - circumstances did not improve
- Build partnerships with private businesses
- Seeks funding / sponsors
- Formed a trust
- Half way house established
- Youth from grade 10-12
- Program goals: mentoring, life skills training, tertiary studies, academic mentoring, food, clothes and medical support.
- House 1: On the children's homes grounds, focuses on emotional and financial
- House 2: Move into their own accommodation and employment
- Support for 2nd qualification if needed
- Living independently for five years, withdrew support after transition period ended
- Selection process, apply. Accepted based on academic performance, psychological tests, interview, potential for academic success as a academic program - should be committed
- Interview with members on trust. Move to halfway house. Start program immediately
- Only select care leavers with the intellectual potential to succeed at tertiary level
- Not all youth, trial period of 6 months, found program too intrusive
- Academic and emotional mentoring
- Mentorship once a week
- Therapy, six to 12 sessions

- Life skills training: license, budget, monthly allowance, examination time table, cleaning, washing clothes, setting up nutritional menus, preparing meals, independent shopping, balance their budgets, finances checked montly.
- Cultural budget for entertainment purposes-well balanced program
- Mentoring has to commence in grade 10-more success during university years
- Encourage them to have long-term 'vision'
- Transition from “being a victim” to “taking charge” = challenging
- More freedom and independent choices, allowed to visit boyfriends
- Stricter boundaries during exams
- All of them placed on contraceptives
- Care leaver fell pregnant, chose to leave although willing to support her and her child
- After young adult leaves, they decide when contact should stop
- Family not interested in care leaver except when they start to earn a living
- Young person grows emotionally and financially, parental home does not
- Young care leavers have to negotiate and re-negotiate their role/relationships within family structure-difficult not to become part of the dysfunctionality
- Adapt program according to the needs of the child-no generic program
- Mentoring, therapy, academic support always included
- Using older responsible care leavers to act as mentors
- Girls have intense need for love and support, dependant on boyfriend- romantic relationships.
- Sense of helplessness- becomes a pattern of behaviour, I do not deserve to be happy/successful
- Accept other underprivileged youth
- R100 000 a year
- Unsuccessfull cases: returns to parental home, one pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease
- Boys and girls in the same house, different bathrooms
- Create an opportunity for youth to connect- enabling spaces
- Prevent negative behaviour when they start mentoring at an early stage-do not experience difficulties with substance abuse
- Family invited to transition home for movies, swimming and supper
- Outside psychologist provides therapy
- R2000 montly. R750 for transport to tertiary facilities
- Capable to work with their money- budget and save
- Program is sustainable
- Long term sponsor
- Program manager

Reflexive Interview

29 May 2014

NAVORSER: Vertel my meer van die mentoring wat jy met skoolverlaters doen, by die halfway house wat julle hier het.

RESPONDENT: Basies wanneer daar sielkundige evaluering gedoen is en uit 'n akademiese oogpunt dat hulle reg is vir ons program dan begin ek met die mentoring proses wat aanvanklik vir my belangrik is, is om eers net die kind te leer ken...baie informeel so ek hou daarvan om met hulle te werk af van die perseel af, in 'n coffee shop omgewing of...

NAVORSER: Die eerste sessie...

RESPONDENT: Die eerste, eintlik meeste van die sessies reg deur die tydperk uhm maklike informele sessies byvoorbeeld met van die seuns, Riette weet met die een seun het dit die beste gewerk as ons in 'n motor sit omdat hy nie daai uhm so kontak kon...hy kon nie so met jou kommunikeer nie maar dan ry ons iewers heen en jy stop en jy sit parallel met hom en gesels en dan gesels hy heerlik. So aanvanklik vir my is dit regtig om die kind te leer ken en die kind gemaklik te kry met my en 'n vertrouens verhouding op te kan bou waar die kind kan besef...dit wat in ons gesprekke plaasvind gaan nie verder as daar nie tensy ek iets optel wat uhm die kind se lewe in gevaar stel of op 'n sielkundige vlak is wat ek voel dit regtig verder geneem moet word waar ek nie kan werk met die kind nie dan vra ek die kind se permissie om dit deur te kommunikeer hier na toe, maar die res van die tyd bly ons gesprekke baie vertroulik. Uhm in die aanvanklike proses van om die kind te leer ken dan gaan dit regtig net oor wat is vir jou lekker, wat maak jou titek, wat is vir jou die belangrikste ding in die lewe, wat wil jy die graagste hê in die lewe en dan die volgende stap dan begin ek met hierdie te werk van die self-analise vir die kind om te probeer 'n prentjie skep as ek vyf-en-twintig is waar sien ek myself, waar wil ek wees, wat wil ek doen wanneer ek vyf-en-twintig is, watter mense is nou in my lewe en wanneer ek vyf-en-twintig is watter mense wil ek dan in my lewe hê...wil ek die mense wat nou in my lewe is saam vat op hierdie pad wat ek vorentoe gaan so...daai is 'n baie lang proses omdat hierdie kinders nie die insig het wat 'n kind uit normale agtergrond, waar jy deur en tyd hierdie gesprekke in 'n normale huishoudelike omgewing het. So dit is 'n baie lang proses en eers wanneer die kind daar begin 'n prentjie kan vasvat en hom vir my kan neersit op papier dan kan jy aanbeweeg na die verdere dinge...dan kom goal setting, time management, communication skills en die hele proses dan tel mens nou op....

NAVORSER: So verhouding bou is die eerste stap?

RESPONDENT: Absoluut.

NAVORSER: Dis 'n grondslag vir die res, anders gaan dit nie werk nie...

RESPONDENT: Yes.

NAVORSER: Sien jy hulle op 'n weeklikse basis of...?

RESPONDENT: Ons probeer twee weekliks, aanvanklik het ons begin met twee weekliks en dan kyk mens maar, elke kind is uniek...party kinders moet vir tannie Sanet elke week sien anders voel dit of tannie Sanet nie meer vir my omgee nie, en uhm soos ek sê ek verkies die coffee shop omgewing maar wanneer daar vertrou kom dan begin hulle hier in pop of die een bel my, sy sal my sommer net bel van die huis af en gesels in die middag wanneer sy weet ek kan oproepe vat, daai tipe van ding. Maar dis lekker om koffie te gaan drink of ontbyt te gaan eet of in die aand hulle te kom oplaai en jy ry see toe en jy loop en jy eet 'n roomys, jy weet baie informele omgewing waar hulle net lekker kan ontspan en gesels oor wat vir hulle belangrik is, ek sit 'n onderwerp op die tafel maar hulle moet praat, ek gooi idees in die heeldyd en baie keer is ek bewus van iets byvoorbeeld die supervisor by die huis sal vir my sê hoor hier ek sien dit of dat...ek sal nooit direk in kom en sê tannie Eve sê jy doen dit nie, ek sal vra waar werk jou sussie nou as ek weet daar is 'n probleem tussen haar en die sussie so...

NAVORSER: Uhm en as hulle nou klaar is soos met halfweg huis een, is daar nog steeds daai mentorskap?

RESPONDENT: Ja, dan gaan die mentorskap aan...ek het alreeds hier begin met dit...het alreeds begin 'n pad loop met hulle dan tree ek terug as ek begin agter kom minder en minder sien, die diepte van die gesprekke begin afneem uhm want jy wil nie hulle saturate, oorversadig. Jy weet, jy kan nie aangaan met time management as jy sien die struktuur is dit, jy gaan haar leer van time management tot jy sien maar sy gaan nie aanpas nie, dan stap jy weg van dit af. Die communication skills moet ons baie tyd aan spandeer hoor uhm hulle het nie daai omgewings waar hulle geleer kommunikeer het nie so hy bly baie lank op die tafel maar nie prominent in die kind se gesig van jy weet jy weet nie om te kommunikeer nie, dis soos wat sy goedjies vir my vertel...hoe het jy gereageer, hoe het daai een gesê, wat het jy gesê, daai tipe van ding die heeldyd. Baie meer coaching tipe van 'n rol uhm ja. So in die halfweg huis een fase dan begin 'n mens bietjie terug staan as jy sien jy kan en met party kan jy nie, jy kom agter wanneer kan jy terug staan. Dan halfweg huis twee, ons het nou vir Chevonne daar, sy wil nie meer interference hê nie, sy wil nie meer hê ek moet haar vra hoe gaan dit met haar budget nie maar sy wil haar hoogtepunte met my deel...sy sal vir my sê tannie ek het soveel gespaar nou gaan ek my karretjie kan koop. So ek moenie meer...ons het 'n lang pad gestap van financial management om te sê hier is jou budget, nou het jy R500...soveel gaan vir dit en soveel vir dat...nou het sy dit, sy wil net haar hoogtepunte met my deel, daai tipe van ding.

NAVORSER: Dat jy kan trots wees op haar.

RESPONDENT: Ja, soos Chevonne is nou in die werksomgewing so nou begin die onderwerpe verander na dit wat in die werkplek gebeur, konflik hantering in die werkplek met my kollega's...uhm

boredom wat my werk betref, my werk is nie baie stimulerend nie, so die gesprekke verander soos wat die kind groei so verander daai onderwerpe deur en tyd.

NAVORSER: Ja, so jy moet die heeltid aanpas.

RESPONDENT: Dis fantastiese riglyne, professionele mense het dit opgestel. Ek sal vir jou fotostate maak dan kan jy deur dit kyk, jy kan sien hulle dui aan watter persone het watter dele van die kursus ontwerp...alles plaaslike professionele mense. Uhm General Motors Foundation het hierdie program saamgestel, hulle hardloop nie meer met hom nie...hulle het aanbeweeg na 'n ander program toe maar dis hoe hulle werk...hulle skep iets, hulle gee die materiaal gratis beskikbaar aan enige NGO en jy maak daarmee wat jy wil van daar af verder vorentoe. Aanvanklik toe die program geloop het het hulle kwartaalike sessies gehad waar ons bymekaar gekom het en gedeeltes met mekaar....elkeen werk met die program in 'n ander omgewing. Ek dink van 'n hele klomp van ons wat daai stadium begin het met die program was dit die enigste een wat in die kinderhuis omgewing gewerk het hoor. Stres hantering uhm verhoudings...

NAVORSER: Hoe om 'n CV te maak, onderhoude...

RESPONDENT: Absoluut alles, selfs hoe om 'n telefoongids te gebruik. Jy sal nie glo, hulle weet nie wat is 'n telefoongids nie, hoe gebruik ek 'n telefoongids, hoe gebruik ek die internet? Jy weet, al die normale goed wat maklik kom gewoonlik is net nie...

NAVORSER: En uhm gaan baie van hulle na daai skills program toe by Caroline?

RESPONDENT: Die kinders waarmee ons werk is glad nie deel van dit nie, hulle gaan universiteit toe.

NAVORSER: So hulle almal is op Technikon of Colleges ook?

RESPONDENT: Net varsity...

NAVORSER: Ok, so hulle almal moet op universiteit wees. En die kinders wat nou akademies nie so sterk is nie kan na die skills sentrum toe...

RESPONDENT: Ja, ons is glad nie betrokke by...ons identifiseer in die hoërskool die wat potensiaal het vir tersiêre onderrig. Ja, daar is min van hulle so ons program is nie groot nie.

NAVORSER: Mmm vier, vyf op 'n slag?

RESPONDENT: Dis 'n groot kommer, as jy besef waar gaan hierdie een opeindig in die sisteem.

NAVORSER: Hoeveel jare doen jy nou al hierdie?

RESPONDENT: Ek is van 2009 af hier.

NAVORSER: Ok, Riette het gesê jy het nie opleiding nie...jy is 'n natural.

RESPONDENT: Ek het nie formele opleiding nie nee...

Themes:

- Relationship building and trust important

- Mentoring process takes place in informal setting
- Mentor trained as a psychologist = beneficial
- Confidentiality and respect privacy
- Mentorship = setting goals / dreams for future / time management / communication skills
- Long process – cannot rush - a process not a product
- see youth weekly / every 2nd week
- In contact with housemother = explore issues informally
- Flexible in approach- adress certain issues when young adult is ready
- Mentorship in halfway house two
- Professional program: cv's, interviews, stress, how to use internet and relationships
- Tertiary education-only university, not everyone accepted

Addendum D

Transcripts of primary participants' individual interviews Data analysis*

Transcripts of the following data are included as hard copies:

- ❖ Skylar Session 1: 17 December 2014 (Page 22)
- ❖ Jake Session 2: 20 May 2014 (Page 30)
- ❖ Troy Session 1: 29 May 2014 (Page 54)
- ❖ Harmony Session 3: 12 February 2014 (Page 72)
- ❖ Dakota Session 5: 22 February 2014 (Page 93)

Transcripts of the following data are included on compact disc:

- ❖ Skylar Session 2: 20 January 2014
- ❖ Skylar Session 3: 3 February 2014
- ❖ Jake Session 1: 31 March 2014
- ❖ Jake Session 4: 3 June 2014
- ❖ Harmony Session 1: 6 November 2014
- ❖ Harmony Session 2: 20 November 2014
- ❖ Dakota Session 6: 8 March 2014
- ❖ Dakota Session 7: 21 March 2014

Skylar Session 1

17 December 2013

NAVORSER: Wat is jou geboortedatum?

RESPONDENT: Oh ok ek is in 1978 die 2de Februarie, ag die 14de Februarie nie die 2de nie, ek wou gesê het 02/14.

NAVORSER: Oh so dis Valentine's day.

RESPONDENT: Ja. 1987, een nege agt sewe.

NAVORSER: Het jy matriek klaar gemaak?

RESPONDENT: Ja, ek het uhm van graad een af was ek in die kinderskool tot my laaste dag, maar ek het nie matriek nie, ek was in Magalies, en ons laaste dag was mos net tot op daai ouderdom.

NAVORSER: Ek onthou, tot graad tien?

RESPONDENT: Ja, tot op daai een, dan is jy mos klaar met skool, dan moet jy nou uit die kinderskool uit. Ek het kursusse gedoen, hulle het betaal vir die kursusse en vir my verblyf.

NAVORSER: Van watter ouderdom was jy in die kinderskool gewees?

RESPONDENT: Agt, tot die ouderdom van sewentien. Graad een tot my laaste dag.

NAVORSER: In Jakaranda kinderskool?

RESPONDENT: Ja, nog al my tyd. Ja, toe is ek nou daar vanaf agt tot sewentien. Toe is ek nou van daar af... toe't ek eers in... ken jy Melgedex...dis daar as jy by die hospitaal HF daar by daai hoek, daai plek wat soos 'n plakkerskamp lyk, so bruin gebou daar...

NAVORSER: Ja.

RESPONDENT: Daar was so pastoor of 'n ding wat daar gebly het, toe het hulle my daar gevat. Ek het in 'n kamer gebly. Alleen, uit die kinderskool uit. Hulle het dit vir my gereël, ek het nie geweet nie.

NAVORSER: Oh, toe jy nou sewentien was?

RESPONDENT: Ja, toe is ek mos nou klaar daar met skool.

NAVORSER: Toe moes jy nou daar gaan bly...

RESPONDENT: Toe het ek daar gaan bly, en toe uhm bly ek daar toe het ek kursusse geloop... 'n rekenaar kursus.

NAVORSER: Die kinderskool toe gesê hulle sal betaal?

RESPONDENT: Ja hulle het vir alles sover betaal. My kamer, my kos, my studies alles. Elke dag het ek maar bus gery om te gaan studeer. Ek het vir 'n personal assistant gestudeer, maar net kort kursusse tot die kinderskool besluit nee ok ek het klaar gestudeer, ek het klaar my kursusse gedoen. Ek dink my geld was net vir 'n jaar, om vir my verblyf te betaal. My studie het hulle mos betaal, my verblyf net vir n jaar. En dan moes ek nou my... daai tyd gestudeer het en dan daarna.... ek dink dit was meer 18 of 19, ja want ek het net 'n jaar...dit was kort kursusse wat ek gedoen het soos tik en PA, vinnige kursusse.

NAVORSER: Waar het jy geleer?

RESPONDENT: Priterian Computer College. Ja dit was daai kort kursusse, soos drie maande dan tik jy en dan leer jy die rekenaar en jy leer hoe om 'n PA te wees en hoe om 'n sekretaresse te word.

NAVORSER: Waar was jou biologiese ouers?

RESPONDENT: My ma bly in Randfontein en my pa bly ook in Randfontein, maar hulle... hulle lewe is deurmekaar. Hulle is alkoholiste, hulle altwee. Drank probleem en my ma drink. Ook maar net die lewe daar is baie swaar, dit is verskriklik swaar. My ma het ander kinders en my pa bly by sy ma en so dis biejie baie... hulle sukkel verskriklik baie, nou nog sukkel hulle baie. Partykeer is daar nie kos nie of hulle gaan slaap so, of sulke goed nie. So ek het nou vir my hier gebly en in 'n jaar gestudeer en toe het tannie Sarah vir my gesê die kinderhuis gaan nou nie meer vir my betaal nie, vir my verblyf nie, ek moet nou maar begin kyk vir werk en begin op my been kom.

NAVORSER: Het hulle vir jou kom kuier?

RESPONDENT: Nee, as jy uit is daar is jy uit. Daar's soos in, ek het al agter gekom daar is soos in niks meer daai... sal mekaar.. ek sou byvoorbeeld vir haar 'n boodskap stuur of so maar ons het... daars niks meer... iemand wat vir jou kan bel of vir jou kan iets.. jy's alleen jy's op jou eie, verstaan? Dis verby. Daai was nou die kinderhuis en dis nou klaar en dis verby daars nou niks meer van, jy kan ook nie weer sê ek gaan terug gaan more nie, jy moet op jou been kom, jy moet jou eie planne maak. My suster was mos aangeneem.

NAVORSER: Oh ja. Is sy ouer as jy?

RESPONDENT: Ja sy's al ek dink sy is 31 of 32.

NAVORSER: So sy was saam met jou in die kinderhuis vir 'n rukkie en toe gaan sy uit?

RESPONDENT: Ja, maar nie saam my nie, sy het in huis vyf gebly, en ek en Brooke het saam gebly in huis drie. Ja, so Brooke het ook klaar gemaak met skool en toe het sy gaan studeer vir 'n haarkapster. Sy het hier in Centurion gebly toe het hulle vir haar betaal vir verblyf vir 'n haarkapster. En toe is sy ook nou al geval in die lewe.

NAVORSER: Is jy die middel kind?

RESPONDENT: Die jongste een, Brooke was die middelste een. Op die ou einde het Victoria ook terug gegaan huis toe. Ek weet nie wat het gebeur met haar aanneem mense nie, hulle het ook begin uhhh bankrot raak...toe het die vrou haar huis verloor en sy't al haar goed verloor en toe Victoria op 'n tyd huis toe gaan het sy ook begin drinksoos Brooke nou is...sy drink sy worry nie meer oor haarself nie sy worry nie oor haar kinders nie. Ja, dit gaan terug soos ons ouers...oor en oor. My ma was ook so.

NAVORSER: Jy kan nie daar uitkom nie?

RESPONDENT: Ja, sy drink en sy verniel haarself en sy kyk nie meer na haarself nie, sy's moedeloos, sy gee op, sy sê vir my sy wil nie meer lewe nie, sy worry nie meer nie. Sy's deurmekaar, sy praat deurmekaar. Haar kinders is nog klein, haar seuntjie is nou agt en die baba is nou agt maande. So,

sy's op daai stadium waar sy opgee in die lewe soos sy worry nie meer nie, sy is verskriklik maer en gee nie meer om nie en drink net, sy sê as sy drink voel sy beter. Drank maak dat sy beter voel, dan sien sy seker nie die goeters wat rondom haar gebeur nie.

NAVORSER: En voor jy agt was, waar het julle gebly?

RESPONDENT: Voor wanneer?

NAVORSER: Voor jy nou in die kinderhuis was?

RESPONDENT: Oh toe het ons by my ma gebly saam met my ma se suster, in 'n klein plekkie. Ek dink dis hoekom hulle ons weggevat het, want my ma se suster het 'n kamer gehad waar ons almal op die vloer geslaap het.

NAVORSER: Kan jy onthou toe hulle jou weggevat het?

RESPONDENT: Al wat ek kan onthou is ons was in die hof in, ek't in die hof gesit en my ma het ons gegroet. Dis al... maar ek het nie verstaan, want ek meen daar was 'n tas en ons was in die hof. Ons sit in die hof, ons drie sit in die hof en my ma groet ons net en toe is sy weg en van daai tyd af het ons nooit weer my ma gesien nie, nooit.

NAVORSER: Het sy nie kom kuier nie?

RESPONDENT: Ek dink sy sê dis finansieël dat sy nie hiernatoe gekom het nie omdat ons ver was. Sy kon nie vir ons kom kuier nie, en uhm sy't ook nie geweet waar ons is nie maar sy sê sy't altyd vir haarself gesê ons is veilig. Nooit gebel nie, nooit geworry nie. Ek wonder as ek na my eie kinders so kyk ek dink net elke dag hoe lewe jy as jy so sê jy worry nie, dink nie hoe gaan dit met my kind, lewe hulle, is hulle gesond, eet hulle, word hulle nie abuse nie, is hulle nie seer of wat nie. Partykeer dan naweke dan gaan die kinders mos uit, dan bly ons agter. Dan wonder jy maar nou hoekom kom my ma nie, hoekom kom haal my pa my nie, en hoekom sulke goed. Jy raak hartseer, dis seer.

NAVORSER: En kan jy onthou toe jy in die kinderhuis aangekom het?

RESPONDENT: Ja, toe ek daar aankom toe was dit nie tannie Sarah nie, dit was die vorige tannie...tannie Lena. Toe ek daar aankom weet ek sy't ons klere weggegooi...

NAVORSER: Jou ou klere?

RESPONDENT: En vir almal nuwe klere gekoop, en ons moes gebad het en toe ons klaar gebad het moes ons eet.

NAVORSER: Was julle almal saam in dieselfde huis?

RESPONDENT: Die eerste keer?

NAVORSER: Ja.

RESPONDENT: Toe het ons gebad. Toe bly ons al drie in een kamer, toe was daar drie beddens in een kamer gewees. Ek dink daar was nie meer space nie of so iets. Toe het ons al drie in een kamer gebly. Maar weet jy ons het nie oor die weggekom nie, want nie lank daarna toe is Victoria uit, toe is dit net ek en Brooke in die huis. Ek weet nie, hulle het haar seker geskuif of iets. Maar sy was nou al

bietjie groot, sy was nou al in standard ses so sy kon verstaan. En wat sy ook sê is dis deur haar dat ons in die kindershuis is want sy het welsynwerker toe gegaan omdat sy gesien het ons kry te swaar.

NAVORSER: En sy's die oudste?

RESPONDENT: Ja, sy was al standard ses. Daar was 'n vriendin wat vir haar gesê het by die skool, sy't haar gegroet haar vriendin, toe vra sy vir haar waantoe gaan sy toe sê sy nee ek gaan na 'n kindershuis toe, toe vra sy hoe maak 'n mens om soentoe te gaan en toe vertel sy nou maar. En toe het Victoria net eendag gegaan na die welsynwerker en toe gaan sê sy vir haar hoe swaar ons kry en sukkel, ons het nie kos nie, my ma bly dronk en daar's niemand wat na ons kyk nie, ons is baie alleen en wat wat...Toe het die welsynwerker nou eendag vir my ma 'n brief gestuur en vir haar gesê sy moet kantoor toe kom en toe daar het my ma besluit dis beter laat hulle ons wegvat en toe kom kyk die welsynwerker ons slaap op die grond, ek kan onthou ons het op bokse geslaap agter 'n bank, ma het gesukkel laat ons moet eet of skool toe te gaan, stukkende klere gedra, ons het swaar gekry.

NAVORSER: Waar was jou pa?

RESPONDENT: Ek weet nou nog nie, my ma sê my pa het net verdwyn. Dis wat sy sê... Ja, en toe het ons nou maar gesukkel en swaar gekry en toe het hulle ons maar weggevat.

NAVORSER: Jy sê jou ma het nooit kom kuier daar nie, maar het jy naweek ouers gehad of vakansie ouers?

RESPONDENT: Ja, aan die begin het jy maar begin vriende maak by die skool, maar maatjies gehad. My laerskool jare het ek nooit uitgegaan nie want ek het nie rerig maatjies gehad nie...al my maatjies was maar blanke maatjies, ek het nie rerig maatjies gehad nie in die laerskool dae nie. In die hoërskool het ek nou so bietjie maatjies dan kom haal hulle maar vir my so...maar daar was mos baie reëls jy kan mos nie net kom haal nie, jy moet briewe invul en die pastoor moet invul en so... maar in my hoërskool het ek eers begin uitgaan, toe begin hulle ook eers bietjie maak of ek huis toe gaan, toe het hulle ons gaan aflaai by my ma, ons het Randfontein toe gery een vakansie. Toe ek ouer raak, toe begin ek eers bietjie uitgaan. Ek dink hulle het seker maar gesien ons is baie alleen en wil bietjie iewers gaan.

NAVORSER: En voor dit, maar net die heertyd in die kindershuis?

RESPONDENT: Ja, net daar gebly altyd. Nie dat dit sleg was nie, ek dink dit was eintlik 'n baie lekker lewe. Ek meen was nie 'n slegte lewe nie, hulle het ons goed hanteer. Warm bed gekry, niks gekort nie. Ek het modern jazz gedoen, ek het gedans. As jy iets like dan het sy uit haar pad uitgegaan dat jy deel kan neem, as jy vir haar sê ek wil so graag dit doen dan bel sy rond vir sponsors of 'n ding. Sy het baie van ons gehou. Jy moet vir haar sê daar is dit wat jy graag wil doen dan gaan sit jy en dan sy sal vir sponsors soek om jou te sponsor. Sy't vir my 'n sponsor gesoek vir modern dancing, elkeen in die huis het sy sponsor gehad. Maar ek het nooit my sponsor gesien in my hele lewe nie. Jy't 'n sponsor mos gehad vir...en daai was soos in as jy nou modern jazz wil doen, sê nou maar al my maatjies doen modern jazz, nou tannie ek wil ook modern jazz doen, ek sien almal dans en ek wil ook dit doen. Nee,

dis 'n sponsor vir net dit soos as jy net dans wil doen dan kry jy daai sponsor wat net vir jou dans help of so, maar die kos, ek dink, seker maar die government wat betaal het of ek weet nie hoe dit gewerk het nie.

NAVORSER: Dink jy jou lewe sou anders gewees het as jy nie daar was nie?

RESPONDENT: Nee, ek dink my lewe sou verwaarloos gewees het as ek nou moet kyk na my ma. Baie hartseer.

NAVORSER: Sy drink nogsteeds?

RESPONDENT: Sy drink nogsteeds. Daar's nie kos in die huis nie, die naweek, ek het saterdag gegaan, hulle lê net so. My ma sê daar's niks om te eet nie. Daar's nie 'n lewe nie, my sussie is deurmekaar, sy is maer, sy is verwaarloos.

NAVORSER: Kry hulle nie werk nie?

RESPONDENT: My ma het nooit skool geloop in haar lewe nie. Sy weet nie hoe om te skryf nie, sy kan nie haar eie naam skryf nie, sy kan nie lees nie, sy kan tel seker nou al...sy weet nie eers wat is 'n R100 en change van 'n R100, sy weet niks nie, sy kan nie lees nie, sy kan nie skryf nie, sy kan niks vir haarself doen nie. Ons is ses kinders, ek en...my ma het nog weer drie kinders na ons gehad. Ek, Victoria en Brooke is een pa...en dan is dit nou Felicity en Cezel hulle is een pa...en die laaste kind het ook sy eie pa. Ons is ses kinders... Ons is ses kinders en my ma bly in 'n klein huisie, drie vertrek huisie. 'n Sitkamer, een slaapkamer en 'n kombuisie.

NAVORSER: Nou wie bly almal daar?

RESPONDENT: Dis Brooke, haar twee kinders, my kleinsussie wat nou 22 is - sy's nou die dag uit die skool uit, sy is nou by Victoria- dis die baba wat agt maande oud is, my broer en my ander broer, so dis agt in die huis. En dan my niggie, haar ma is dood mos, toe het sy by my ma gaan bly, nog 'n een kind wat my ma ook gemaak het, sy moet daar bly en swaar kry. Ek dink hulle is seker 'n stuk van 10 in die huis. Maar my ma werk nie, daar's nie 'n inkomste nie, daar's niks. Nou en dan moet ek en Victoria geld huis toe stuur vir kos.

NAVORSER: En dis nou as julle ekstra geld het?

RESPONDENT: Ons forseer onself, ons sukkel verskriklik baie maar ons probeer maar dis hard. Ek het nou die dag my werk verloor, Julie maand het ek my werk verloor, ek was 'n PA ook vir iemand gewees toe het hy bankrot geraak. Toe moes ek gesit het in Julie maand by die huis, en Augustus eers begin by die plek waar ek nou is. So dit gaan maar baie opdraende en afdraende en moeilik en hard. Ek sukkel nogsteeds.

NAVORSER: En jy is nou 26. Na jy uit die kindershuis uit was kan jy onthou daai dag?

RESPONDENT: Ja, ek het... daar was 'n sponsor wat my gehelp het met my potte en panne en breek meubels, baie gekry, ek het 'n bed gekry. Dit was basies maar al. Ek het net 'n bed gekry en 'n tassie en kombuisware. En dan my duvet en kussings, gordyne en so. Ek het net in 'n kamer gebly. Na ek my

kursusse gedoen het moes ek baie dringend dringend werk soek want toe tannie Sarah vir my sê sy kan my nie meer betaal nie, hulle betaal nie meer my verblyf nie, betaal nie meer my kos nie, niks nie. Ek is nou op my eie alleen toe het ek waitressing werk gaan doen vir 'n tydjie, maar my kursus was nog bietjie, want ek het nog bietjie gesukkel met my tik, want jy kort mos 'n sekere ding voor jy 'n sertifikaat kry, so ek het waitressing werk toe begin doen en ek het my tik gedoen. En soos ek by my laaste was met tik het ek toe al my sertifikate gekry behalwe die tik...toe het ek nou dit gedoen en toe het ek gewaitress in die aand. Dit was nie ver van my plekkie af nie, ek het sommer geloop. Ek het my waitressing geld maar so gebêre laat ek my rent kan betaal want in daai tyd was dit nog R700 vir daai kamer. Maar hulle gee vir jou kos by die plek so jy betaal R700 vir kos en alles. Toe het ek maar my geld so gebêre vir myself laat ek kan my plek kan betaal aan die einde van die maand. By my tik het daar 'n ander meisie ook begin tik en toe het ek maar so rond gevra vir werk toe weet sy nie van 'n plek nie toe sê sy vir my eendag nee bring jou CV sy werk by 'n plek en die company het haar gebring om net tik-klasse te doen. Toe het ek my CV vir haar gegee, so na twee weke toe bel hulle my daai plek, 'n prokureur plek in Centurion, toe het ek vir 'n onderhoud gegaan, toe begin ek nou daar deur die dag van 8 tot 5...maar vir 'n klein salaris. Toe het ek net uhm ook maar gehelp met admin werk want hulle het ook soos invordering, maar vir banke soos ABSA bank en sulke goed, toe het ek maar admin gedoen by prokureurs maar baie min salaris...hulle het my begin met twee en half 'n maand. Toe het ek myself maar so opgebou in daai besigheid, ek het vier jaar daar gewerk.

NAVORSER: En toe bly jy nog steeds in daai kamer?

RESPONDENT: Ek moes... Ek kon nou nie vir my 'n plek kry want my salaris was dan nog twee en 'n half...

NAVORSER: Hoekom het hulle jou Magalies toe gestuur?

RESPONDENT: Ek vra dit elke dag, ek kan nog onthou, want toe ek in Magalies kom is ek die slimste, ek was dan die hoofdogter ook gewees. My juffrou het altyd gevra wat maak jy hier, jy hoort nie hier nie. Ek was altyd die slimste in die klas en altyd die meeste sertifikate gekry en altyd die beste gedoen en op die ou ende was ek die hoofdogter tot op die laaste dag. Ek was 'n prefek in die kindershuis ook gewees so ek het altyd vir tannie Sarah gevra maar dit was mos nie haar keuse nie.

NAVORSER: Hoe oud was jy toe hulle jou soentoe gestuur het?

RESPONDENT: Ek was twaalf, ek dink standard vier. Ja, ek dink dit was maar net emosioneel en ek was net bietjie seer gemaak. Ek is eintlik kwaad maar aan die ander kant worry ek nie, ek gaan maar aan met my lewe en ek probeer maar die beste vir my kinders want op die oomblik is dit nou net my kinders.

NAVORSER: Is jy nou getroud?

RESPONDENT: Nee, ons is nie getroud nie,

NAVORSER: Hoe lank is julle al saam?

RESPONDENT: Ons is nou al agt jaar saam.

NAVORSER: Waar het jy hom ontmoet?

RESPONDENT: Ja, ek het net daai kamertjie gekry toe ek hom ontmoet het. Hy het in 'n woonstel gebly net onder my, hier by...sien jy in Kock straat...ja hy't in daai woonstel gebly, ek het daar bo gebly. So ons het maar so verby mekaar geloop...

NAVORSER: En toe begin julle uitgaan.

RESPONDENT: Ja, en toe sê hy ek moet by hom gaan bly en nie in so 'n klein kamertjie bly en alleen wees nie.

NAVORSER: Het jy kontak gehad met jou ma en pa na jy uit die kindershuis was?

RESPONDENT: Ja, ek dink my kontak was maar net ek moet hulle geld stuur. As ek geld het moet ek maar vir hulle sorg. Dis al maar nie baie...

NAVORSER: So hulle het nie vir jou kom help nie?

RESPONDENT: Hulle kan my nie help nie, hulle sukkel verskriklik baie nou nog.

Themes:

- Neglect, alcohol abuse, lack of food, poverty
- Absent father figure
- Elder sister requested intervention → lead to placement in children's home
- Removal from home: not prepared or informed
- No emotional caring after arriving at home - practical like clothing, food and bed
- Sadness-parents didn't visit
- No weekend/holiday parents
- School for learner's with special needs-choice was made for her
- After leaving care - admin courses paid by children's home
- Stayed alone in room after leaving children's home → arranged by children's home
- Financial support for one year
- Children's home cut financial support – had to look for employment
- Tried to make contact with housemother-no reply
- No friends in primary school / limited friends in highschool
- Didn't go out over holidays (except once) → stayed in children's home = alone
- Identity-socialised with different cultures at school
- Limited freedom at children's home
- Had opportunities to participate where interest lied – positive about housemother's efforts
- Family was not rehabilitated

- Mom = illiterate
- Overcrowded house (mom), unemployment
- Provided financial support to family of origin
- Unstable employment / waitressing
- Kept on living in room after children's home cut her off financially
- Worked herself up when entering world of work
- Anger-placing her in school for learners with special needs-influence on career
- Long-term relationship with boyfriend - met him soon after leaving care
- Vulnerable on her own, lonely, moved in with him

Jake Session 2

20 May 2014

NAVORSER: Ok, nou vandag wil ek by jou hoor wat jou advies vir ander kinders wat uit kinderhuise gaan, wat is jou advies vir hulle? Amper soos 'n guiding roadmap wat jy vir kinderhuis kinders wat nou in die kinderhuis is, wat jy vir hulle kan sê. Sommer oor ervaringe uit jou eie lewe, van as hulle nou die kinderhuis verlaat, soos advies of bietjie wysheid wat jy net vir hulle wil sê wat hulle dalk moontlik kan help as hulle daar weggaan. Om 'n werk te kan kry, of 'n woonstel te kry of net advies, emosioneel, of advies vir verhoudings.

RESPONDENT: Weet jy, soos ek laas gesê het...die ding is wel kom ons begin by...verhoudings is, ek weet nie, ek was maar selfs op skool was ek baie weird gewees. Ek is nie een van daai ouens wat iemand date en dat twee weke daarna is jy lief vir daai persoon en goed nie so ek het eintlik maar min gedate op skool want dit was net vir my overrated gewees. Uhm so ek weet nie, verhoudings was nie vir my rerig 'n probleem gewees nie. Die ding is ek het baie saam my broer gaan jol so ek meen...ek het nooit regtig...weet jy ek sê vir haar ook as dit nie vir haar ten to one was nie dan sou ons seker nie saam gewees het nie...ek was half dommerig wanneer dit by vrouens kom en al daai goed. Ek sal nie altyd tekens sien wat daar moet wees en signs nie.

NAVORSER: So jou vrou het dit obvious gemaak en nie moed opgegee nie 😊.

RESPONDENT: Ja, miskien is dit iets van die kinderhuis...ek weet nie maar jy weet, 'n mens kyk nie. Miskien is dit 'n ding van...miskien in jou agterkop bly jy dink jy is nie goed genoeg nie. Jy weet, hoekom sal hulle nou in jou belangstel omdat jy weet waarvan af jy kom en hulle weet nie...dan dink jy almal sien jou soos hoe jy jou sien. Ek moet eerlikwaar sê dit is een groot ding waarmee ek sukkel, ek het nou die dag vir haar ook gesê selfs soos Harry hulle wat my nou mos gehelp het...selfs hulle het dit as hulle vir jou goed gedoen het dan sit jy agterna en dink jiss jy weet, hulle sê hulle is lief vir jou en sien jou as hulle kind maar doen hulle? Jy weet, soos daai tipe van goed. Maar die ding is jy sien dit nie deur hulle oë nie, jy sien dit deur jou oë omdat jy weet...ja ek was in die kinderhuis so ek's maar net nog iemand vir hulle. Jy weet, daarmee sukkel ek nou nog maar...wat die verblyf aanbetref, daar het ek dit gemaklik gehad omdat hy my gehelp het met blyplek maar kos en dit was moeilik want...ok, ek het dit ook gerespekteer van hom af, is hy't ook swaar groot geword so hy't reguit vir my gesê jy weet, ek gaan niks ekstra vir jou doen of gee nie...jy moet werk daarvoor. As jy spending money wil hê soek vir jou 'n werk, werk vir jou geld. So al het ek iemand gehad om my te help, het hy my nie gehelp deur om my die heeltid te spoon feed nie, ek moes my eie klere was...dadelik toe ek uit die kinderhuis uit was is ek in die woonstel en ek's weg by hulle.

NAVORSER: So hy't jou nie bederf en net geld gegee nie?

RESPONDENT: Nee, niks.

NAVORSER: Dis eintlik swaarder daar buite as in die kinderhuis. By die kinderhuis kry jy alles.

RESPONDENT: Ja nee baie. Die ding is ek moes vir myself actually leer om wasgoed te was...nou sit jy daar en dan weereens ek het darem hulle gehad, dan bel ek hom en sê nou hoe werk hierdie ding dan sê hy vinnig vir jou. So eksperimenteer 'n mens maar net jy weet, gooi bietjie hierdie by, kyk wat doen dit. Selfde met kosmaak, ek kan onthou toe sy nog by my kom eet het en dit was nou al seker twee jaar wat ek uit die kinderhuis uit is...toe sy by my kom eet het die eerste keer toe bel ek hom, toe sê ek hoor hier... Ek kan onthou een keer moes ek iets stupid maak soos mince wat ek hom gebel het en gesê het luister hier, hier kom iemand oor, hoe braai 'n mens hierdie goed, wat gooi ek in, hoe nou... Nou weet jy jy het groot geword in die huis, jy't gesien as die goed in jou bord is maar nou dink jy hoe de hel kry ek dit so, wat doen ek eerste. Ek meen pap né, ek het die eerste keer in die kinderhuis pap gemaak maar ek wou krummelpap of iets gemaak het...wat ek daar staan met 'n pot en naderhand letterlik al 'n hele twee kilogram sal meel al daarin het en die goed wil nie verkrummel nie so jiss ek weet nie en uhm...kyk die feit dat mens daai...wel die raad wat ek kan gee is mik vir 'n beurs want die ding is dit help, dit gee vir jou...in daai beurs werk hulle vir jou kos uit, hulle werk vir jou verblyf uit. As jy net se nou maar klaar maak uit die kinderhuis uit, wel ek weet nie hoe het die ander kinders dit gehad nie, sover as ek dit verstaan jy gaan jou way...en dis die laaste wat jy van die kinderhuis weet maar as jy daai swottings beurs het dan sit hulle met jou en sê vir jou waar gaan jy swot en sê nou jy sê by TUT dan sê hulle okay, kom ons kry dan vir jou 'n woonstel naby so in jou budget...deel van die swotting geld sê hulle vir jou dit is wat ons vir jou kan gee en wat ek moes doen is jy moet fisies na hulle toe gaan met 'n budget en sê dis hoeveel ek vir petrol gaan nodig hê en dis hoeveel ek vir kos gaan nodig hê en alles.

NAVORSER: Wie't jou gehelp met dit? Kan jy onthou?

RESPONDENT: Uhm Harry het my gehelp, ja net om die budget uit te werk maar die ding is weereens toe ons na hulle toe gaan toe sê hulle dit is te veel want daar is klomp ander kinders so hulle het dit baie gesny oral maar jy weet, ten minste die vakke en goed was betaal as bietjie ekstra. Daar was daai bietjie ekstra so dit help verskriklik baie. Maar ja vir ekstra goedjies het ek maar by Spur gewerk, ek het uhm...

NAVORSER: In die aande of naweke?

RESPONDENT: Ja, aande en naweke. Dis maar jou ekstra geldjies. En ek het vakansies, as dit nou toe is, ek het soos by Toyota gewerk in Centurion, ek het een keer by...Dell, nee nie Dell nie...ek het vir 'n ander company gewerk...ek het by 'n paar companies gewerk vakansie tye vir ekstra geld. Maar die ander ding is ook, jy weet, omdat jy begin swot...die vakke raak moeiliker dan begin jy druipe en die kinderhuis betaal dan nie as jy druipe nie. So dis ook hoekom ek moes gaan werk het om geld te maak vir as ek nie die vak geslaag het nie, dat ek hom darem self kon betaal om hom weer te vat en aan te gaan so...

NAVORSER: Het hulle jou vir jou rapport gevra?

RESPONDENT: Ja, jy moes elke liewe jaar...aan die einde van elke jaar, ons het altyd hulle in Johannesburg, dan kom jy daar bymekaar dan moet jy weer jou hele budget plan vir hulle gee met jou punte en alles...en as jy nie slaag nie dan sê hulle vir jou sorry ons betaal nie. So wat ek altyd gedoen het, jy weet as jy begin swot het jy 'n A of 'n B vir meeste van die vakke, so dan sê ek vir hulle hierdie A het ek geslaag so julle kan vir die B betaal, ek gaan vir hierdie A betaal en dan....jy weet, as jy net na hulle toe gaan en sê ek het gedruip dan sê hulle nee sorry ons betaal nie.

NAVORSER: Is dit by die kantore?

RESPONDENT: Dis die beursmense...so dis eintlik glad nie met die kinderhuis te doen, dis die mense wat met die beurs werk...daai trust ding.

NAVORSER: Wat's die vrou se naam nou weer?

RESPONDENT: Ek kan nie onthou nie.

NAVORSER: Ja. Harry het mos vir jou gehelp met 'n kar?

RESPONDENT: Ja, toe ek Matriek was toe koop hy vir my 'n kar so. So ja kyk, dis nogsteeds, soos ek sê...dis nie van jy het die beurs se geld en jy doen net wat jy wil nie...daar's baie kinders wat dit gevat het en hulle het lekker geleef en dan druip hulle en dan het hulle nie gewerk vir geld nie dan sê die beurs ook sorry ons betaal nie meer nie en dan hou hulle op...hulle voel nou hoekom moet ek 'n maand lank gewerk en dan weer van vooraf aansoek doen, jy weet...en 'n mens is jonk en jy dink nie aan daai goed nie dan los jy dit en ja so...

NAVORSER: Dink jy hulle het genoeg studiemetodes of weet hulle hoe om te leer?

RESPONDENT: Jol...

NAVORSER: Want jy's nou vry...uit die kinderhuis?

RESPONDENT: Ja, dis die ding. Kyk, ek dink in 'n normale ouerhuis het jy daai....jy gaan slaap by 'n vriendin, want ek kan onthou op skool dan sê die pele vanaand kuier ons by watsenaam se huis want hulle male is nie daar nie. So hulle is jonk, hulle is by hulle huis. In die kinderhuis, jy gaan skool toe en jy gaan kinderhuis toe, dis dit. Dis nie van jy gaan kuier by daai vriend of daai vriend nie so ek meen en as jy drank in die kinderhuis kon in smokkel en dit daar gaan drink...dit gaan oor blootstelling, as jy nie blootstelling kry terwyl jy onder supervision is of ten minste iemand kan hê om met jou te baklei...en eventually soos jy sê jy uit die hok uit klim dan...en ek meen drank is ongelukkig addictive.

NAVORSER: Jy is gewoonlik nie daar blootgestel aan sulke goed nie.

RESPONDENT: So en dis dieselfde met dwelms. En ek meen dit is een ding waarvoor ek dankbaar is vir my broer want Harry het aan die begin, eerstens, hy't my broer gehaat want ek het al standard vyf...

NAVORSER: Het Harry gedink hy is 'n slegte invloed?

RESPONDENT: Ja, maar die ding is ek moet ook vir jou sê, as dit nie vir hom was nie...toe ek al standard nege of matriek was was ek al gatvol vir skool want toe het ons elke tweede naweek as ek na

my sussie toe gegaan het dan jol ek en my broer vrydag en saterdag so, ek meen teen standard nege is ek al...as iemand sê hulle gaan Steelworks toe dan was ek net ag asseblief nie dit nie, kom ons braai eerder of iets. Ja, so dit gaan maar oor die blootstelling.

NAVORSER: En jou lisensie, het jy dit geslaag of hoe het jy geleer om...?

RESPONDENT: Nee, jiss ek het hom die derde keer...my learners en lisensie.

NAVORSER: Wie't jou geleer om te bestuur?

RESPONDENT: Ja, Harry het my gehelp daarmee.

NAVORSER: Ok, so jy't nie toe jy in die kindershuis was rerig geweet hoe om te...

RESPONDENT: Nee. Wel tannie Magda toe sy hoor Harry begin my leer. Sy't ons altyd met die bussie gaan haal haal dan vat sy my saam...dan reverse ek hom uit en ry met haar nou na die huisie toe...dis net om die blok maar jy weet, dis net daai bietjie blootstelling. Ek kan onthou ons het 'n wildsplas gehad waarna ons gegaan het, Hartbeeshoek, en daar altyd as ons gaan wild kyk dan sê tannie Magda...dis mos nou grondpad, kom Jake dan klim ek daar agter die stuurwiel in, eerste en tweede heelpad, so poer-poor. En Harry het my ook met my ID gehelp.

NAVORSER: Om aansoek te doen.

RESPONDENT: Ja, kyk ek het Harry hulle ontmoet...ek was elf, tien...daar rond.

NAVORSER: Baie van die kindershuis kinders sê vir my hulle weet nie hoe om te bestuur nie. Ek het al agter gekom dat baie van die kindershuis kinders is baie happy by die huis, in hulle pyjamas waar hulle veilig voel.

RESPONDENT: Dit is ek meen nou dat jy dit doen, jy kan vir Antionette vra dis waar ek die happiest is. Sy raak partykeer van haar kop af, dan sit ons van naweek na naweek ...dan wil ek by die huis wees want ek is happy hier.

NAVORSER: Elke liewe kindershuis kind sê dit vir my.

RESPONDENT: Sy is altyd van kom ons gaan braai bietjie, kom ons gaan drink 'n koffie en dan voel ek net kom ons bly net hier.

NAVORSER: Ja, ek wonder wat dit is.

RESPONDENT: Ek moet eerlik wees, toe ek geswot het...dis waar ek was. Ek het klas toe gegaan, ek het huis toe gegaan.

NAVORSER: Ek weet nie wat dit is nie.

RESPONDENT: Dit kan die kindershuis wees, ek dink dit gaan half oor...die eerste beste plekkie wat jy gemaklik voel...maak dit, dis 'n kindershuis se sanctuary want hy weet hierdie is die plek waar hy veilig is, ek kan myself wees, ek hoef nie die feit dat ek in die kindershuis was weg te steek nie, ek hoef nie te worry hoe ek aantrek nie, ek hoef nie te worry oor ander mense. As mense weet jy was in die kindershuis of iets, en hulle begin vir jou simpatie gee en al daai goed, dít frustreer my, dit maak my mal. Want die ding is jy weet jy is deur moeilike dinge maar hulle laat jou so half pateties voel, hulle is van

ag shame is jy oraaï en jiss dit moes erg gewees het en...jy weet, dan dink jy. Vra Antoinette ook...ek het jou mos laas vertel van tannie Mart hulle wat my in die begin gevat het, wat my wou aaneem, ek meen ons het as ons hulle nou nog...ons het hulle 'n rukkie terug gesien, seker 'n jaar of twee jaar terug, dan groet hulle jou dan druk hulle nog geld in jou hand maar ek meen jy werk al, dan gee ek vir hulle terug en sê weet jy wat ek het dit rerig nie nodig nie...hulle laat jou so voel asof hulle jou betaal om net vir hulle te gaan halo sê. Maar sien jy? Dit is seker ook maar 'n fout van die kinderhuis se kant af, die ander persoon bedoel dit dalk goed. Ja, en jy word dan aan die gesig gevat want ek meen jy gaan om daar te wees om net actually bietjie halo te sê en hier word daar geld in jou hand gestop.

NAVORSER: En dan voel jy half, ek is nie hier vir geld nie, ek is hier om vir hulle halo te sê.

RESPONDENT: Weet jy, ek dink so. Ja, wat tannie Magda gedoen het is sy het vir die dogters baie verantwoordelikhede...ek dink Dakota het daarmee gehelp, ek kan onthou Dakota het in die oggende partykeer vroeg opgestaan dan help sy tannie Magda wasgoed was en uhm maar jy weet die rede ook daarvoor is die wasmasjien en als was in die meisies se gang so dis nou nie asof in sin die oggende daar kon gaan wasgoed was terwyl die girtjies klaar maak en dit so. Maar kos maak ja, dis ja. Kyk, ek dink tannie Magda het ons reg geleer, ons was buite en die vrouens was binne. Kyk, ons het ook binne skoon gemaak maar ek weet Dakota hulle het ook kos gemaak. Ek kan actually onthou, ek dink dit was Dakota of Bianca, iemand het een aand gesê hulle wil kos maak toe sê tannie Magda dit is reg...toe maak hulle vir ons mince maar hulle het soos 'n halwe pot spout of iets daarin gegooi, jiss dit was horrible gewees. Maar jy weet, dis sulke goed want dis hoe mens leer...dis goed wat jy doen as jy uit die kinderhuis is, so as iemand nie vir jou leer nie dan...en weet jy, ek dink ook miskien iets soos...die ander ding is ook, ek en jy kan nou sit en praat hieroor maar as jy nou hulle wil probeer leer, hulle gaan nie belangstel daarin nie, hulle gaan actually arrogant wees...

NAVORSER: Ja, hulle verstaan dit nog nie. Dit moet eintlik deel wees van 'n skoolverlaters program.

RESPONDENT: Ja, en budget. Ons, ek en my vrou, ons het in die begin glad nie 'n budget gehad nie, ons het ons salarisse gekry en ons het goed gekoop soos wat ons nodig het.

NAVORSER: Hoe oud was jy toe julle ontmoet het? Negentien?

RESPONDENT: Nee, ek was...2006? (vra sy vrou) 2005 toe ons ontmoet het...

NAVORSER: Hoe oud was jy toe?

RESPONDENT: Uh een-en-twintig. Dan is dit 2005 want ek het 2004 gematrikuleer het toe was ek negentien en ja 2005 toe is ek twintig.

NAVORSER: So jy was nog nie lank uit die kinderhuis uit toe ontmoet jy haar?

RESPONDENT: Ja.

NAVORSER: Waar het julle ontmoet?

RESPONDENT: Wel ons het, oorspronklik, ons het al baie keer ontmoet dan sê ons net halo en bye, want die ding is my broer het haar sussie gedate toe ek nog in die skool was. En ja hulle het al die jare

uitgegaan, haar sussie en my broer, en uhm so ek het maar altyd saam met hom soentoe gery en dan kuier hy daar dan sit ek net daar en wat wat. En ons het 'n paar keer ook, dan sien ons mekaar by Presleys jy weet dis net groet want sy't 'n ou gehad en als so. Ek was al eintlik van die begin af verlief op haar en ja maar ons het actually offisieël geclick...ek was die een aand besig om te leer toe bel my broer my toe sê hy ek moet kom, hulle sit nou by Boston Barbeque ek moet hulle gaan join. Dit was daar in Wonderboom. En uhm toe was sy daar gewees saam my broer en haar sussie, toe bel hy my.. Ja, toe was ek twintig en uhm toe sê ag ja ek is besig om te leer en wat wat. Toe sê hy ok dis reg en ag dit was nie lank daarna nie toevra hy weer, my broer kan aanhou, en uhm eventually toe sê ek dis reg ek sal deur kom. Ja, en toe kom ek daar en ons het dadelik geclick, ons het lekker geclick, ons het lekker gesels. Al wat ek kan onthou is ons het geclick. Nee, jiss maar die ding is on het dadelik geclick, lekker gesels. Jy weet mos as jy gewoonlik by iemand kom en gaan eet uit dan is die akward, want daar mens staan mos op en gaan skep, en ek meen ons het nie een keer opgestaan nie, ons het heeltyd stil gesit...Jan hulle het opgestaan en gaan skep, toe is ons naderhand na haar plek toe toe het ons verder gekuier en wyn gedrink.

NAVORSER: Het sy geweet jy was in die kindershuis?

RESPONDENT: Ja, wel Jan is een van daai mense wat op 'n berg sal skree hy was in die kindershuis. Ja, ek het nie issues daarmee gehad nie solank jy net, ek is mos nie...ek voel vir die mense wat in die kindershuis was uhm en ek weet dit moes moeilik gewees het en ek kan myself nooit in so iemand se skoene sit nie, maar moet jouself net nie heeltyd jammer kry nie, doen iets daaraan...wys mense jy is beter as dit...want baie mense het 'n anerste siening van mense wat in die kindershuis was en ek kan ook hoor as hulle praat oor hulle, hulle dink hulle almal sit die pot mis, hulle judge verskriklik baie. So vir my, ek het nooit so daarna gekyk nie, en vir my ook die amazingste ding is as hulle uit die kindershuis uit kom en hulle wys en maak iets van hulleself en hulle volg nie hulle ouers se footsteps nie.

NAVORSER: Ja, hulle breek die kringloop.

RESPONDENT: (se vrou) Maar vir party kindershuis kinders is die kindershuis maar beter, 'n beter lewe. My ma het destyds toe ons nog in die huis was, wou hulle nog 'n kind uit die kindershuis gevat het maar net vir naweke so iets maar toe het dit nou nooit gerealiseer nie maar...

NAVORSER: So jy het geweet van hulle?

RESPONDENT: (se vrou) Nee, ek het geweet van hulle. Ek self het nie die beste kinder lewe gehad nie, ons was maar arm gewees so...ek was in FA gewees en negentig persent van die kinders daar is kindershuis kinders gewees.

NAVORSER: Het jy partykeer gevoel dat hy is die kind en jy's die ma? Nie dat dit so is nie, ek vra sommer.

RESPONDENT: (se vrou) Oh nee.

NAVORSER: Jy weet, dat jy vir hom moet alles leer en vir hom wys.

RESPONDENT: (se vrou) Oh nee, glad nie. Ek het dadelik hom gesien as 'n man in die huis en uhm ek het my vroulike pligte gedoen en dan sou ek net wees van kom ons was bietjie die gordyne en jy weet, daai tipe van goed. Ek moes hom nie leer nie, nee. Ek het nou nog van daai ou klere. (sy vrou) Ja, soos ons meer geldjies begin kry het, ja want ek was soos ek sê arm gewees en ons het nie baie geld gehad nie so ons het maar saam, maar weet jy wats die lekker ding...die lekker ding was toe ons ontmoet het het ons altwee twee vyf gekry, toe ons Anelda gehad het, het ons altwee twee vyf gekry...ons het saam vyf 'n maand gekry. So dis nie asof die een, jy weet, maar hierdie geld is myne...jy trek my af...ons het saam gesukkel en ons het saam gebou. So ek dink dis ook wat ons verhouding so sterk maak.

NAVORSER: So julle is saam deur alles.

RESPONDENT: Nee, sy was baie goed vir my... Die ding is sy het my baie in die begin gehelp. Ek was in die begin omdat ek gewoon is om te swot, was ek baie lui. Ek het gelike om te leer, 'n boek leer, maar ek sou nie klas toe wou gaan nie...eerder by die huis sit en game speel of slaap of watokal. En die ding is sy't my baie gedruk daar en gesê gaan eerder klas toe of as ek vanaksie werk gekry het dan skop sy my uit die bed en sê jy gaan werk of jy weet, as daar geld is dan sê sy ons het nie nou geld hiervoor nie. So ek dink as dit nie vir haar was nie sou ek ten to one in skuld gewees het en al daai goeters. Maar ja mens het 'n sterk partner nodig om 'n mens maar te help en dit.

NAVORSER: Ja, iemand wat jou lief het onvoorwaardelik, wat altyd daar is vir jou.

RESPONDENT: Ek dink sy wou op 'n stadium opgee want die ding is ons het saam gekuier en dit maar ek het haar nooit uitgevra.

NAVORSER: Het jy nooit inisiatief geneem in verhoudings nie?

RESPONDENT: Nee, nooit. As 'n girl nie 'n move gemaak het van haar kant af nie dan het niks gebeur nie. Selfs met 'n piksoentjie, ek was net nie so tipe ou wat sulke goed doen nie. Ek weet nie of dit selfvertroue is nie...kom ek stel dit so, almal het altyd in die kindershuis gesê ek is baie mature vir my ouderdom want ek het toe ek standard vyf of ses was, standard vyf...toe is ons met die ander gedeelte van tannie Magda se familie en sy't ook twee, ek weet nie of dit haar niggies of nefie se kant was nie...en daar was ook, ek dink die een girl was sewentien en die ander een was sestien en die ander een was negentien, en die sestien-jarige een het glad nie van my gehou nie, ek en die negentien-jarige het gedlick...ons het so fling ding aangehad vir daai vakansie. En dieselfde in die kindershuis, ek het toe ek standard vier was het ek 'n girl gedate wat in standard nege was en ja toe ek vyftien was toe is sy matriek en toe is sy uit.

NAVORSER: Dink jy, jy was rerig toegelaat om 'n kind te wees?

RESPONDENT: Kyk, daai tyd toe ek in die kindershuis was wat dit moeilik gemaak het is ons was verskriklik baie geboelie...ons was elke liewe dag so jy het nie rerig uitgegaan om te speel die middag

nie...jy't half 'n tipe van 'n wegkruip plek gaan soek, 'n sanctuary, en jy't daar gaan sit tot wanneer speelyd verby is dan het jy in die huis in gegaan wanneer die huis ouer daar is sodat jy nie geslaan kan word nie. Jy weet, maar ek dink nie dit het enigiets met die verhoudings of iets uit te waai nie. Uhm ek weet ook nie, dit kan seker maar baie goed wees. Ek het nou nog nooit rereg so daaraan gesit en dink nie. Maar ja dit is...maar weereens daar is nou weer ander kinders wat soos glad nie op hulle monde geval is nie, ek kan onthou toe ek ook in di Kriel was...my vriende en vriendinne het onder mekaar rond geslaap asof dit niks was nie...

NAVORSER: Ander kinderhuis kinders?

RESPONDENT: Ja jiss die volgende dag dan hoor jy net ek het uitgeslip en ons het hier deur die diewering en sulke goed so...niks het hulle gestop nie. Ja so dit is net jy weet, ek weet nie, soos ek sê was net nie...ek weet nie, miskien was my kop net anders. Ek het net nie belangstelling gehad om net rond te slaap en sulke goed nie.

NAVORSER: het tannie Magda gesê van die pink panthers...julle geleer...wat was dit?

RESPONDENT: Nee, kyk wat daar gebeur het was sy..kyk tannie Magda kom ook uit die voortrekkers uit so sy't 'n kop van haar eie gehad so...kom ek stel dit so, toe sy in die begin daar was was sy prim and proper. Sy was hierdie sweet tannie gewees, sy't mooi met jou gepraat, sy't vir jou gesê ag Jake tel nou jou klere op asseblief en bêre dit, dan gooi jy dit net weer neer dan tel sy dit op. Dit het seker so twee maande gehou toe wou sy haar goed vat en loop. En ja, ek weet nie met wie het sy gepraat nie maar ons het daai dag by die huis gekom en toe is dit sommer doen dit nou of ek donner vir jou. Toe is almal se oë so...Dis eendag wat ek moet sê, op 'n stadium toe ek nou ouer geword het en jy weet, ek het huisleier geword en dit...dis ook al hoe ek kon deur kom na die kinders toe. Jy kan hoe liefdevol met hulle probeer wees maar jy moet op 'n punt kom wat jy net lelik met hulle is om op hulle vlak te kom waar hulle jou kan verstaan en daarna respekteer hulle jou en luister vir jou. Maar wat daar gebeur het is ons het...daar was 'n oop swembad gewees so vier uur het die huis se deur oop gemaak, dan swem jy dan is dit weer 'n ander huis se beurt en ons het in die swembad....

NAVORSER: So elke huisie kry vyftien minute om te swem...

RESPONDENT: Ja, ons het ek kan onthou daai dag het ons en 'n ander huis saam gesmelt toe besluit ons ons swem saam dan is dit vir 'n half-uur en ons het, ek kan nie onthou...ek dink dis bullfight of iets...die meisie of die seuntjie op jou skouer sit dan tackle hierdie twee mekaar hier bo dan kyk jy wie val eerste af en ek kan tot vandag nie sien wat was fout daar nie, want ons het lekker gespeel maar dit het seker vir tannie Magda gelyk of ons vatterig was of meer was as net speel, en toe ons nou by die huis kom toe sê sy ek gaan nou vir julle leer...julle kan nie net vat en speel soos julle wil nie, toe gaan haal sy die pink panther uit...

NAVORSER: Is dit 'n pop?

RESPONDENT: Ja, jy weet pink panther die storie...sy't sulke groot pop gehad toe sê sy jy moet nou die pop naai...

NAVORSER: Wie?

RESPONDENT: Wel dit was ek en Bryan, en Bianca en Charlene. En die ding is toe ons daar klaar is toe moes ons nou sommer strip op die tafel voor almal en ons moes soos veertig onderbroeke gaan aantrek en ek dink Dakota sy staan daar onder en sy cheer daar in die crowd, maar ag ek dink dit was maar net...

NAVORSER: Net om vir julle te demonstreer.

RESPONDENT: Ja, en ag kyk die ding is ook ons het...ek dink sy't ook net gevoel kom ek sê dit reguit vir hulle dan weet hulle dan is daar nie doekies om om te draai en sulke goed nie. Almal het maar, ek sal nie sê dit wat sy gedoen het is verkeerd nie, elke ouer het sy eie manier om hierdie goed te doen so ek het niks fout daarmee gesien nie en ja ek dink die boodskap wat sy probeer deur stuur het is luister hier, en sy het dit na die tyd vir ons gesê, dogtertjies het hulle goeters en seuntjies het hulle goeters en dis waar dit bly.

NAVORSER: Maar het sy julle geleer oor die pil en kondome?

RESPONDENT: Nee, dit het sy nooit oor gepraat nie. Daar was mos seks opvoeding by die skool en sulke goed so dit het sy nou nie gedoen nie. Wat sy wel gedoen het, as daar so tipe geval was het sy...Harry was soos die huispa gewees, ek weet nie of sy dit vir jou gesê het nie...hy was soos die huispa gewees. As daar iets was wat sy voel sy kon nie hanteer nie het sy hom gebel so in plaas van dat sy na die kinderhuis hoof toe hardloop en almal in die moeilikheid kry, het sy vir Harry gebel. Dan sal Harry nou alles los en deur ry kinderhuis toe, dan sal hy soos 'n vergadering met ons hê, dan sal hy met ons praat. So hy het baie gehelp daarmee en uhm ja maar sy het nooit regig jy weet, sulke talks en goed met 'n mens gehad nie.

NAVORSER: Van hoe om jouself te beskerm of swangerskap...

RESPONDENT: Ja. Ek weet nie of sy met die vrouens het nie, want die vrouens is mos maar anders, miskien het sy maar wat ons aanbetref...nee.

NAVORSER: Maar watse memories het jy nog van die kinderhuis, wat jy nog nie met my gedeel het nie?

RESPONDENT: Ek sal sê...weet jy wats die goot fout van huisouers wat ek wou gesien het en nou nog sien...is die man werk en die vrou werk daarso, so hulle kry 'n inkomste, hulle het nie huur om te betaal nie, hulle het nie kos om te betaal nie want hulle kry alles daar. So alles wat daai man werk pocket hulle of hulle spaar jy weet...maar die groot ding is hulle doen net wat hulle moet so daai...was jy al in een van die huise by die kinderhuis?

NAVORSER: Mmmm. Hulle het mos elke jaar daai liggiefes?

RESPONDENT: Ja, so die huis loop mos nou soos 'n bakkie en dan aan hierdie kant is die woonstel van die huisouers nou wat baie ouers doen is hierdie deur is altyd gesluit want hulle en hulle familie is hierdie kant...al wanneer hulle uitkom is om jou in die oggend wakker te maak want ek meen hulle deel obviously werk op dat iemand moet pap maak en dit...hulle gaan maak daai persoon wakker om pap te gaan maak en daai persoon maak pap en hy moet sommer die res wakker maak.

NAVORSER: Hoe maak hulle hulle wakker? Sit hulle net die lig aan?

RESPONDENT: Hulle kom sê net vir jou kom staan op dan sit hulle die lig aan. As daai persoon dan weer aan die slaap raak dan stuur sy hulle skool toe sonder om te eet, dan moet die ander kinders daai persoon maar uitsort en dit is ook 'n probleem want die ding is dan wetter almal daai ou. Maar die ding is daar word geen aandag gegee nie, niks leiding gegee nie. Daar word net...dit is nou half eintlik erger vir my want die ding is nou voel jy, jy is in 'n plek, in die huis maar niemand wil jou hê nie...nie eers hierdie persoon wat hier werk, wat na my moet kyk wil jou hê nie.

NAVORSER: So hulle is daar vir die verkeerde redes?

RESPONDENT: Ja. So ek sal net sê, en dit is hoekom ek dink almal so van tannie Magda gehou het is sy het rerig....sy was meer aan ons kant as aan haar kant. Ek kan onthou Jeanine het op 'n stadium terug getrek by haar in die kinderhuis omdat sy ook swanger geraak het en sy kon nie na die kind kyk nie. En ek meen deur haar eie issues en goed het sy nog altyd tyd gemaak vir ons, altyd. So ja ek dink as 'n huisouer dit meer van hulle kant af kan doen, meer betrokke wees by die kinders...en weet jy 'n ander groot ding is ook huisouers moet ook nie net 'n mindset hê van die staat gee geld nie. Wat tannie Magda gedoen het, sy het fisies met mense gaan praat...met gemeentes, kerke gaan praat...sy't nie net gevra vir geld nie...ons het gewerk vir goed. Sy sal byvoorbeeld met uhm Toyota gaan praat het, hulle het so ding wat hulle elke jaar kaartjies verkoop dan kan jy 'n kar wen...en dit is hoe sy ons betrokke gekry het. Sy het met hulle gaan praat en hulle het gesê vir elke kaartjie wat julle verkoop kry julle twee rand of watokal. En wat sy op die ou einde van die dag gedoen het is y't nie daai twee rand gevat en gesê ok hier is vir ons geld nie. Om ons te motiveer het sy gesê vir elke kaartjie wat jy verkoop jy kry jy een rand. So op die einde van die dag kry sy net een rand in vir die huis maar dis motivering vir die kinders so jy weet, dit is so klein dingetjie maar op die einde van die dag gee dit soveel geld vir jou huis is wat jy op skoolgoed kan spandeer, op klere, ekstra kos kan spandeer...jy weet sonder dat jy nou staat hoef te maak op die staat. Ek meen klomp sulke goed het sy gedoen. Sy was permanent daar buite en sy't ons partykeer saamgevat laat ons ook, en dis ook miskien goeie blootstelling, om uit te gaan en te leer hoe om met ander mense te werk. Sy't nie net gegaan om vir geld te vra nie, sy't gesê luister hier kom ons doen. Ons het soos broodjies gesmeer by sulke jam stalletjies en goed om jam te adverteer en sulke goed. So sy het baie moeite gedoen om geld in te samel vir die huis.

NAVORSER: Was jy tot Matriek in haar huis?

RESPONDENT: Ja.

NAVORSER: Ok, en sy's mos toe na dit toe trek sy na 'n plaas toe?

RESPONDENT: Ja. Sy was nog in die kinderhuis gewees so jaar of iets want toe ek daar was het sy al daai ding begin.

NAVORSER: Maar kon jy met haar gesels toe jy uit was? Kon jy haar bel of het jy nie eintlik die behoefte gehad nie? Kon jy gaan kuier?

RESPONDENT: Kyk, wat nice is van haar...wat ek gedoen het is ek het actually nog ek dink daai jaar nadat ek uit is, het ek...want ek het na dieselfde kerk toe gegaan so wat ek gedoen het is ek het die gemeente gehelp...ek sou byvoorbeeld, die gemeente sou kos koop, dan het tannie Magda byvoorbeeld nie 'n kar om dit te gaan haal nie dan het ek met my kar dit vir hulle gevat. So dan het ek die kos vir hulle gaan aflaai en ek weet tannie Magda het baie kere dan sê sy Joe, ons gaan see toe, Toyota sponsor ons, wil jy saam kom en dan gaan ek saam. Ek was 'n paar keer Hartbeeshoek toe, daai wildsplaas...so dan bel sy my en vra wil jy saam kom en dan gaan ek saam so sy't my nie abandoned nie so ja ek moet sê ek het nooit rerig net uit my eie uit gaan kuier nie. Selfs Harry hulle en dit...ek is nie...ek bel nooit nie, ek bel niemand nie. Ek volg nie op nie, ek onthou nie eers verjaarsdae nie. Dis hoekom ek bel nooit vir tannie Magda nie, ek gaan kuier nooit nie, sy is sweet en ek weet sy het baie gedoen en ek weet dis verkeerd van my maar ja, dis hoekom ek sê ander huisouers, as jy uitgaan vergeet hulle van jou maar sy...

NAVORSER: En sy was aktief betrokke, sy't nie haar deur toe gemaak nie.

RESPONDENT: En die ding is ook toe ek vir Antionette ook die eerste keer vat, toe is ons na 'n funksie toe...toe is ons actually by 'n funksie wat sy gereël het vir haar familie soos haar close familie want haar dogter was oorsee en sy het terug gekom. En ek meen sy het my aan almal voorgestel aan haar familie as haar seun, dan sê sy hierdie is my ander kind en dis sy vrou en so. Tannie Magda het baie moeite gedoen, sy het above and beyond gegaan...sy het regtig haar vingers af baklei, selfs as jy in die moeilikheid was.

NAVORSER: Het sy ooit gesê sy is lief vir julle?

RESPONDENT: Nee, maar ek meen dit kan 'n mens verstaan, selfs ek, al weet ek wat daai kinders nodig het sal ek nie net in die huis in stap en sê ek is lief vir jou nie. Al is jy al vier jaar daar en jy is close met hulle, jy weet, dit is...ek weet nie...maar...

NAVORSER: Ok, en sê gou vir my van die memories in die kinderhuis of goed wat vir jou uit staan, goeie goed of slegte goed?

RESPONDENT: Jiss, daar's baie... Ek kan onthou standard sewe het ek elke dag (weed gerook)... in die oggende voor skool het ons gerook...jiss daai goed het gebrand, dit brand die rook uit jou uit... Ja, ons het selfs in eksamen tye voordat jy gaan skryf dan rook jy, daai hele jaar deur...

NAVORSER: En jy het deur gekom?

RESPONDENT: Ja. Ons het letterlik...ons het die oggend gerook, ons het in die middag naskool gerook en by die kindershuis as ons gaan speel het, het ons gerook. Ons het op FA, ek weet nie of jy FA Hoërskool ken nie, hy't 'n rugby veld aan die onderkant gehad en dan was daar 'n pawiljoen in die middel en dan weer 'n ander rugbyveld...en dan weer daar bo...ek kan onthou daar bo aan die kant daar was krane gewees en goed...daar was so klein...ag jiss seker so groot soos hierdie tafel, so huisie en ons het daar binne elke dag gesit en rook...dan rook jy en daarna leef jy maar van die vibes af. Wimpie uhm het altyd vir ons gerol...jiss hy kon daai goed gerol het hoor. Hy het gelove om 'n cone te rol maar hy het...dis só dik...hy rol daai ding so dik en dan is hy omtrent so lank... Nee, jy is weg. Ons het al 'n paar keer dat jy so gerook is dat jy begin hallucinate, dis jiss... So standard sewe het ek dit reg deur gedoen.

NAVORSER: Hoe oud was jy toe jy begin het met dit?

RESPONDENT: Eerste keer toe ek weed gerook het, ek dink dit was standard vyf gewees. Nee, ek jok...standard vier in Derdepoort...nee, ek was standard vyf in Derdepoort.

NAVORSER: Saam met een van jou pelle?

RESPONDENT: Dominee se seun. Ons het so baie daar gedrink en goed. Sy pa het ook nog vir Wimpie hospitaal toe gejaag want hy moes steke kry...

NAVORSER: Het jy geweet wat is weed toe, het jy besef?

RESPONDENT: Nee.

NAVORSER: So jy was oraait gewees om dit te probeer (die eerste keer)?

RESPONDENT: Ja.

NAVORSER: Ok, enige ander dwelms? Soos coke of cat...

RESPONDENT: Ag nee, die ergste wat ek al gedoen het is Ecstasy...nie Ecstasy nie...E's dis daai pille...en uhm ja dit is die ergste wat ek gedoen het.

NAVORSER: Dink jy jy was verslaaf gewees aan weed? Want as jy elke dag gerook het...?

RESPONDENT: Ag ek weet nie. Dit was half soos 'n roetine. Ek sal nie sê ek was verslaaf daaraan nie want ek het dit net soos opgehou, so dis nie asof ek 'n craving daarna gehad het...

NAVORSER: Hoekom het jy opgehou?

RESPONDENT: Toe het my pa mos daai pille gekry en goed...dis nou standard agt...my life-changing jaar. Pille en swot en leer.

NAVORSER: Dis amper asof iets in jou click.

RESPONDENT: Ja dit was weird. Ek meen, tot en met einde standerd sewe was ek...almal in die kindershuis jy weet, ek was populêr gewees nou en standard agt was ek net in my kamer, ek kan nog onthou toe het ek ewe skielik van enya en al daai goed gehou...dan luister ek Enya en doen wiskunde. En ek meen selfs, ek kan onthou daai tyd ook, dan kom vra almal waar is Joe...maar ja ek moet eerlik waar vir jou sê ek sal dit nie nie doen as ek kon terug gaan (weed). Een jaar het ons kaskar gehad en

jiss ek was so gerook gewees, ek kan onthou ek kon daai aand nie opgehou lag het nie. Ons het gerook en gedrink, dit was by....jy weet mos kaskar dag by die skool. Ons het so Powerade cooler gehad maar hy was vol drank gewees maar die ding is hy't 'n dekseltjie gehad so die dekseltjie seël bo...jy sê even vir die menere dis Powerade kyk...en almal dink jy cheer maar jy is net dronk. Ag ja dit was...standard vyf was...my laerskool was vir my maar die rofste gewees, wel tot en met standard vyf was vir my erg gewees...

NAVORSER: Bedoel jy soos met die bullying?

RESPONDENT: Ja, tot en met standard vyf het ek...toe was ek heavy gebully.

NAVORSER: Dit was nie die skoolkinders nie, dit was die kinderhuis kinders.

RESPONDENT: Ja, dit was die kinderhuis kinders gewees. En ek het gebank want dit het naderhand iets in jou dat jy nie eers skool toe wil gaan nie, jy wil jouself net heeltemal uit die wêreld ontrek. So as jy uit die kinderhuis gaan wil jy nie eers skool toe gaan nie want jy voel net almal kyk vir jou en goed so dan bank jy maar en gaan weer terug kinderhuis toe. Ja so...standard vyf, ek het actually eers begin leer vanaf standard vyf af. Van standard vyf op was vir my...

NAVORSER: Dis toe jy begin stout word?

RESPONDENT: Ek was voor dit stout maar ek dink voor dit stout was meer...ek dink dit was stout vir aandag jy weet...maar ook nie lekker stout nie, jy weet jy wat jy doen is verkeerd en jy breek almal se hart en jy doen dit inelkgeval. En die ding is jy was stout maar nie omdat jy wou stout wees nie, omdat kinders jou sou wetter as jy nie goed doen nie. En ek meen, wat standard vyf gebeur het is ons almal wat actually op daai vlak was, wat geslaan was en gebully was, ons het almal saam begin staan so ek meen ons het mekaar amper elke dag half dood geslaan omdat die grotes gesê het ons moet maar op die ou einde van die dag was ons beste pelle. Ons het net saam gestaan, jy weet, teen die grotes opgestaan en was 'n paar keer weer grond toe geslaap maar ons het bly opstaan en hulle het ons eventually begin uitlos.

NAVORSER: Maar nooit enigiets gebreek, soos 'n arm? Dit was maar net soos 'n fight.

RESPONDENT: Nee. Kyk, die ander het goed gebreek maar ek het nooit nie.

NAVORSER: So goeie memories en slegte memories. En as julle nou soos skool bank en hulle vind uit daarvan? Wie dissiplineer julle?

RESPONDENT: Ja, toe Notnagel daar was toe was pakgee nog legal jiss toe was jy gewetter. Hy't so rotang in sy kantoor gehad, hy slat jou gat letterlik oers...ek het al pak gekry in die oggende dan vat...dit was voor tannie Magda gekom het, toe was ek stout gewees dan vat daai tannie my hoof toe dan wetter hy vir jou. Jy kom so met trane by daai skool aan, jy sukkel om te sit.

NAVORSER: Hoeveel houe?

RESPONDENT: Wel hy het tussen drie en ses van die bestes gegee, hang af wat jy gedoen het. Ek het pyn gewys, ek het gehuil. Dit was seer. Dit was nie net 'n plank nie, dis letterlik, ja daai hoof hy het

nie nonsens gevat nie. Hy het jou gewetter. Ek onthou nog hy het toe hy ook net begin het, toe het die grootkinders...my broer hulle het ook kak aangejaag toe stap hy dar by sy kantoor in met 'n rotang en sê wie is eerste...toe kyk my broer hom so en vat sy rotangtjie, breek hom en sê vir jou bliksem ek as jy my met die ding slaan.

NAVORSER: Is jou broer groot?

RESPONDENT: Nee ag hy is ook maar maer'erig en so, maar hulle was die McGyvers gewees van daai tyd in die kindershuis. Ek moet ook eerlik vir jou sê dit is regtig die huisouers, dink ek, want my broer hulle het ook baie goeie huisouers gehad en ek meen as ek kyk na almal van hulle wat ook nou uit die kindershuis is, hulle huis en vriende groep...hulle almal doen goed, jy't 'n odd one out wat bietjie sukkel hier en daar maar jy weet hulle doen goed. So ek dink 'n huisouer maak op die einde van die dag 'n groot verskil.

NAVORSER: En is hulle huis ook so netjies?

RESPONDENT: Ja. Ja, ons het gelag want dan maak hy skoon dan kom sy verloofde dan maak sy vir haar 'n broodjie dan los sy die krummels en goed net daar, jiss dan wil hy dit verloor. Of hy kom by die huis dan is die skottelgoed nie gewas nie, dan wil hy dit verloor. Ag met Anelda'tjie...sy is darem ook so, sy is gewillig om skoon te maak...sy was al skottelgoed en als. Ek hoor nou nog gereeld van ouers dan is hulle kinders twaalf dan weet hulle nie eers om 'n eier te bak nie. Dis vir my totaal en al onaanvaarbaar. Ek wil ook nie eers goed vir haar ook doen nie, as sy nie weet hoe om iets te doen nie dan sê ek vir haar ek wys jou en jy doen dit self. Ek voel net as iets nou vandag met my moet gebeur wil ek nie hê sy moet useless voel en niks kan doen nie want jy weet, dit is 'n kak gevoel... Jy wil nie wees van jiss ek weet nou nie wat om te doen nie, dan stres ek en ja so... En 'n mens wil ook nie op die ou ende van die dag in 'n verhouding ingaan net omdat jou man nou al daai moeilike goed van jou af weggevat het nie...ek wil hom nou nie los nie al verkrag hy my of hy slaan my of watokal, hy doen al hierdie ander goeters waarom ek nie hoef te stres nie. Ek wil hê as 'n ou haar kak gee dat sy hom onder sy gat kan skop.

NAVORSER: Haar eie geldjies en geleerd wees.

RESPONDENT: Ja, jy voel maar net jy verdien nie beter nie...dit is al wat jy werd is.

NAVORSER: Jy aanvaar die liefde wat jy dink jy verdien. As jy dink aan soos 'n life motto of 'n quote of iets wat jy baie sê of dalk weet jou vrou ook...Jy weet, iets soos 'n life quote wat jy gebruik of by lewe.

RESPONDENT: Nee...

NAVORSER: Moeilike vraag?

RESPONDENT: Nee ag ek leef nie rerig by 'n quote of iets nie. Ek vat maar elke dag soos dit kom.

NAVORSER: En is julle godsdienstig? Elke Sondag kerk toe?

RESPONDENT: Nee ag weet jy, dis maar eintlik aan en af by ons.

NAVORSER: Glo jy in God?

RESPONDENT: Ja, dis maar net...ek weet nie dis net moeilik, ek weet self nie op hierdie stadium nie.

NAVORSER: Maar leer julle vir haar hoe om te bid?

RESPONDENT: Ja, en sy leer dit by die skool ook. Ek wil dit graag in die huis in bring maar weet jy, dis hoekom ek sê ek weet nie want ons sal begin dan gaan ons kerk toe dan hou ons op. Dan begin ons Bybel-studie hou dan sing ons en lees uit die Bybel saam haar. Nee ag ek weet nie, ek weet nie of dit dalk is dat jy weet, jy wil nie tyd maak daarvoor of iets nie. Dis net asof jy verby dit leef in plaas van dat jy nou sit en lees doen iets anders of Sondag kerk toe gaan of lê eerder in die bed nog...so iets.

NAVORSER: Uhm was daar iemand wat toe jy groot geword het na wie jy opgekyk het, soos 'n rolmodel dan dink jy wow...ek wil daai persoon wees.

RESPONDENT: Nee ag nie rerig nie.

NAVORSER: Of was dit net jy het jou eie kop gevolg?

RESPONDENT: Nee ek het nooit rerig opgekyk na enige iemand nie. Ek het op 'n stadium, en ek dink dit is een persoon wat rerig 'n verskil gemaak het, en wat dalk ook in 'n manier...hy was saam my in tannie Magda se huis. Ek was ook moer stout gewees en hy was soos tannie Magda se witbroodjie gewees, hy was netjies, hy was skoon op homself...hy was so boerseun. En ek het hom 'n boerseun genoem want sy asem het altyd gestink, dit het soos mis geruik. Maar weet jy né, mens kon gesien het hy was verantwoordelik, hy't nie daai ding gehad van groepsdruk nie, hy het mense geken en as hulle wou kak aanjaag en hy wou nie deel wees daarvan nie het hy vir hulle gesê ek wil nie deel wees nie. Hy was nie lank in die kinderhuis nie, hy was klaar oud gewees toe het daar iets gebeur. Hy was hoërskool toe het daar iets gebeur, toe kom hy kinderhuis toe vir 'n jaar of iets en toe gaan hy weer terug huis toe. So hy was nie lank daar nie en hy't ook van tuinwerk gehou en sulke goed. So ek het altyd maar...ek en hy het geclick en...

NAVORSER: So jy het 'n paar goed by hom geleer? Was hy ouer as jy gewees?

RESPONDENT: Ja, hy is baie ouer as ek. Hy was vriendelik met my gewees, en vir my was dit 'n plus punt want al die ouer kinders wat ek geken het het my geslaan. So hier kom hierdie ouer kind in en hier vat hy my onder sy vlerk.

NAVORSER: Hoe oud was jy toe?

RESPONDENT: Jiss, ek kan nie onthou nie.

NAVORSER: Hoërskool?

RESPONDENT: Nee, ek was laerskool gewees.

NAVORSER: Maar jy het nie kontak met hom nie, jy weet nie waar hy is of...?

RESPONDENT: Nee. Ek dink ek was standard drie gewees of so iets. Ek was rerig nog jonk. Ja so ek kan onthou ek het altyd by hom gaan sit in sy kamer dan chat ons, of ons luister radio of hy vertel my goed of ons praat en jy weet, plant plantjies en saadjies...en sulke goed. Sy kas was ook altyd netjies en al daai goed so in daai tyd het ek opgekyk na hom want toe het ek my kas begin netjies pak en ek

het bietjie vir tannie Magda begin help en al daai goeters. Ek het bietjie in die tuin begin belangstel...so dit is al aan wie ek kan dink, maar verder het ek nie rerig 'n rolmodel of iemand gehad wat my geïnspireer het of iets nie.

NAVORSER: En is daar iemand waarvoor jy baie dankbaar is, of 'n paar mense in jou lewe wat jy dink ek sou nie gewees het waar ek nou is as dit nie vir hierdie mense was nie.

RESPONDENT: Daar is baie van hulle.

NAVORSER: Soos wie? Wat het hulle gedoen om jou te help?

RESPONDENT: Vir tannie Magda definitief. Ek meen sy het regtig soos ek nou-nou gesê het...haar vingers af baklei en above and beyond gegaan. En vir tannie Mart...dis nou die derde pleegsorg mense wat my wou aanneem. Hulle het my ook baie, al het hulle my net vakansies gevat hulle was altyd daar vir my, hulle het altyd ook vir my pakkies gestuur.

NAVORSER: Soos deur die pos?

RESPONDENT: Ja, dis letterlik 'n skoenboks wat sy gewrap het maar hy was vol sweets so daar was koekies in, daar was liquorice sweets in.

NAVORSER: Waar het hulle gebly?

RESPONDENT: In Ermelo.

NAVORSER: Dis so cool.

RESPONDENT: Daai was soos 'n kers persent.

NAVORSER: Was dit net sweets? Of geldjie ook?

RESPONDENT: Net sweets. Sy't nie geldjies gestuur nie. En die ding is ons het altyd vir mekaar geskryf.

NAVORSER: Hoe het sy by jou uit gekom?

RESPONDENT: Ek weet nie hoe nie, want die ding is dit is een van daai...toe ek gebore was was ek dadelik weg gevat by my ma en toe wou mense my aanneem toe sê my ma nee toe is ek by ander mense en dieselfde het toe gebeur. Na daai mense is ek toe na tannie Mart hulle toe en toe wou hulle my ook aanneem toe sê my ma nee. Ja, toe het hulle gesê dis okay, hy kan by ons bly...dis fine maar toe het sy kanker gekry en dis toe hulle gesê het hulle kan nie meer na my kyk nie. Toe is daar nou nie meer families of iets nie.

NAVORSER: Was jy gebore in Pretoria?

RESPONDENT: Blykbaar ja. By 'n Katolieke Kerk plek of iets. Ek's tussen die nonne of iets gebore.

NAVORSER: Toe kry sy kanker en toe gaan jy kinderhuis toe?

RESPONDENT: Ja, en toe van daar af is ek en sy soos pen pals. Ons het vir mekaar...dan skryf sy vir my 'n briefie, dan skryf ek vir haar 'n briefie.

NAVORSER: Sy lewe nog?

RESPONDENT: Ja, sy lewe nog.

NAVORSER: En haar man?

RESPONDENT: Ja.

NAVORSER: Het sy pakkies elke jaar gestuur?

RESPONDENT: Ja, so een keer 'n kwartaal het ek 'n pakkie gekry. En ag net daai briefies ook, dan vertel sy hoe gaan dit met die honde en alles dan skryf jy weer terug. En dis ook lekker as jy eventually daar gaan kuier dan sien jy sy't so pinbord en dan is jou briefie en prentjies wat jy geteken het daar. So ja definitief hulle. En selfs vir hulle kinders, Daan en Hennie. Selfs toe hulle weg is by hulle ma het hulle my selfs uit die kinderhuis kom haal en gesê kom kuier bietjie by ons. So hulle het regtig...hulle kan ook seker soos rolmodelle...maar ek meen hulle het ook net klaar gemaak met skool en alles.

NAVORSER: So tannie Magda en tannie Mart, dan Harry?

RESPONDENT: Ja, Harry definitief en uhm, soos wat jy groei het jy iemand anders nodig in daai tipe ding waar deur jy gaan. Ja, so almal het maar met daai stukke goed gehelp. Dis 'n groep mense.

NAVORSER: En hulle doen dit selfless. Hulle dink nie aan hulle self nie.

RESPONDENT: Ja, selfs kinders as hulle hoor jy is in die kinderhuis...bêre hulle hulle beursies en geld en dink jy is 'n groot krimineel.

NAVORSER: Ja, hulle dink jy is daar omdat jy iets verkeerd gedoen het. Was jy ooit gespot gewees in die skool oor jy in die kinderhuis was?

RESPONDENT: Nee. Die kinders was moer bang gewees vir my. Enige kinderhuis kind het sulke draaie om my geloop. Weet jy, omdat ons so geslaan was toe ons klein was, ons is nie gewees van daai kinders ons gaan jou slaan dan stamp jy die ou en dit nie. Hierdie ou staan nog en praat en dan drop jy hom net daar so jy weet, dit is wat meeste van die kinders ook gebang gemaak het vir ons. By die skool dan sien jy skoolfights dan sê jy kom ou kom...ons het dit by die kinderhuis nie gehad nie. Jy wou die ou so vinnig drop as moontlik. Die kinders het maar net uit ons pad gebly. Dis hoekom ek sê...van standard vyf af, vandat ek vir myself begin opstaan het en die vriende (daai bully groep)...ons is populêr op skool, ons was stout, ons was slim-stout maar dit was lekker gewees.

NAVORSER: En hulle wou jou nooit in daai spesiale skool terug gesit het nie?

RESPONDENT: Nee, kyk hulle wou my nooit weer terug gesit het nie want ek het myself bewys toe ek uit is. Maar hulle wou my nie uitgehaal het nie ja.

NAVORSER: Hoe lank was jy daar? Ek

RESPONDENT: Ek was van standard een tot standard vier daar.

NAVORSER: En toe doen jy baie beter en toe kom jy uit?

RESPONDENT: Ja.

NAVORSER: Watter skool was dit?

RESPONDENT: Transvalia. Ja, ek was op Ritalin en als. Dis lettelik soos wat jy op flieks sien, dan staan hulle met water en pilletjies dan moet jy die tong op lig en als. Daar was mal kinders in daai skool hoor... scary goed.

NAVORSER: Ja, en as jy nie daar hoort nie... Harry het dit geweet. Nou as 'n volwasse man, as jy vir jouself, sê nou maar tien jaar oud was of elf of twaalf...iets kan sê of met jouself kon praat toe jy so klein was...wat sou jy vir jouself sê?

RESPONDENT: Jiss, daar's niks wat ek vir myself kon sê nie. Weet jy, eerlik waar ek sou vir myself net 'n half-uur drukkie gegee het, net stilte. Niks raad gegee het, niks gesê het nie...

NAVORSER: Liefde...

RESPONDENT: Ja, dis die een ding van die kinderhuis...ek het hoeveel, ure, wat ek in my bed lê en net uit die venster uit staar en net vir die lig kyk of op die gras buite gaan lê. Dis net...dan dink jy aan daai familie ding. Dis 'n ding wat my altyd gepla het...dan hoor jy hoe praat die kinders by die skool, dan kom hulle uit die klas uit dan hardloop hulle na hulle ma en pa toe...die deur gaan oop en hulle vertel van die hele dag en jy kan sien die ouers is so excited. By die kinderhuis kry jy dit nie. Jy moet skool toe loop en huis toe loop, dan kom jy by die huis en jy weet, daar is nie hoe was jou dag...het jy nuwe goed geleer of wat wat nie. Jy gaan sit jou tas neer...en wag vir etenstyd en ja so dis een ding...ek dink dis wat ek sou doen. Selfs jy, jy voel so eenkant toe gestoot en jy weet nie wat aangaan nie, jy weet nie wat vir jou wag nie, jy weet nie wat soek jy hier nie, jy weet nie wat het jy verkeerd gedoen om daar te wees nie, daar is soveel goed wat in jou kop aangaan. Ek dink ek sou myself net vasgehou het...net stil gebly het en vasgehou het. Dis wat ek sou doen.

NAVORSER: Ek hoor jou.

RESPONDENT: Ja. Ek dink dit is wat almal nodig het.

NAVORSER: En veral as jy 'n kind is, jy soek maar aanvaarding...jy sal nie vir jouself sê bly uit die klubs uit, moenie drink nie.

RESPONDENT: Dis hoekom ek sê ek dink vir 'n kinderhuis kind op daai stadium is dit nie eers 'n ding wat in sy kop aangaan nie. Ek meen, as jy sê tien twaalf of elf, op daai ouderdom het ek try uitfigure wat het ek verdien om daar te wees...hoekom word ek elke dag geslaan deur ouer kinders.

NAVORSER: So dit was inisieël nie vir jou lekker nie, dit was vir jou aaklig daar.

RESPONDENT: Ja. Ek meen, jy verstaan nie. Hoekom het niemand my lief nie, hoekom wil niemand my vashou nie, hoekom sê niemand hulle is lief vir my nie.

NAVORSER: Het jy jou ma en pa gemis?

RESPONDENT: Nee, teen daai tyd is my trane al opgedroog. Ek het hulle eintlik nooit geken nie.

NAVORSER: So jy het nie goed in jou kop gehad van julle gaan weer saam wees nie?

RESPONDENT: Nee, glad nie.

NAVORSER: Oh jy't nie eers geweet van jou broer en jou suster nie.

RESPONDENT: Nee, ek het toe ek sewe was of iets toe het ek uitgevind...maar ek meen selfs ons het nie 'n verhouding gehad nie.

NAVORSER: Almal dieselfde van...so almal dieselfde pa?

RESPONDENT: Ek weet nie, maar die ding is soos ek sê ons was nog steeds in ander huise in die kindershuis so ons kon nie eers bond of iets nie.

NAVORSER: Mmm boetie-sussie verhouding.

RESPONDENT: Ja, hulle was in dieselfde huis so...

NAVORSER: Het jou broer jou nie beskerm toe die ander ouens jou slaan nie?

RESPONDENT: Nee.

NAVORSER: Hy't seker nie eers geweet wat gaan aan nie.

RESPONDENT: Nee ag hy't sy pelle gehad. Regtig, ek weet nie, dis maar hoe ek dit sien. Ek dink maak nie saak hoe sterk 'n persoon voorkom of 'n kind in die kindershuis of watokal of hoe deur hy is of wat hy gesien het nie...net stilte en 'n druk en net daai kontak en daai bond of watokal 'n mens dit wil noem.

NAVORSER: Verder by die kindershuis jy het altyd pynpille gehad as jy kopseer gehad het...genoeg kos? Het julle ook...die kaste word toe gesluit 'n sekere tyd, sesuur moet jy eet, daai reëls...

RESPONDENT: Ja, en jy moet 'n sekere tyd by die huis wees....dan moet jy bad, dan moet jy...

NAVORSER: ...studeer. Alles gebeur volgens 'n tyd.

RESPONDENT: Mens is maar...as kind het ek nooit, as iets in die aand fout gegaan het het ek maar gewag vir die oggend want dis maar....tannie Magda was in haar kant en jy wil nou nie haar gaan pla en sulke goed nie. En uhm ag nee tannie Magda was, weereens, sy het moeite gedoen.

NAVORSER: Hoeveel jaar was jy in haar huis?

RESPONDENT: Jiss, ek weet nie. Vandat sy daar begin het...ek kan nie onthou nie...

NAVORSER: Jou hele hoërskool?

RESPONDENT: Ja, sy was standard vyf ook daar. Toe ek in Transvalia al was toe was sy...sy was toe ek standard drie was, toe begin sy daar...ja, dit was standard drie toe begin sy daar.

NAVORSER: Hoekom het hulle jou geskuif?

RESPONDENT: Nee, ek was net in drie huise gewees...kleutershuis, toe is ek in huis sewe...dit was 'n huis gewees met klomp spesiale kinders en omdat ek in Transvalia was en op Ritalin was was ek daarin gesit...en ek weet nie, ek dink daai huistannie, tannie Marietjie, sy was ook baie nice gewees. Uhm sy het, dink ek, toe gesê hierdie kind is niks meer fout nie en toe skuif ek na huis vyf toe...toe is ek nou in 'n normale huis en uhm ja maar daai tannie was, sy was net 'n bitch gewees.

NAVORSER: Die huis vyf tannie?

RESPONDENT: Ja, dit was voor tannie Magda. Daar's moppe en besems dan sal sy laat jy op jou knieë elke teëltjie skrop en sulke goed. Vir haar het dit gegaan net oor haar kind en haar familie en sy wou niks met ons te doen gehad het nie.

NAVORSER: En toe is sy weg en toe kom tannie Magda na huis vyf toe?

RESPONDENT: Ja.

NAVORSER: So mens moet ook heelyd aanpas vanaf een se reëls na die volgende een se reëls.

RESPONDENT: Ja, en daai vorige huistannie het ook...jy het sulke aparte tafels, die hele plek so apart gestaan dan het drie kinders om 'n tafel gesit en geëet...so julle het nooit iets saam gedoen nie. Ek kan nog onthou, dit was flippen weird gewees toe tannie Magda daar aankom en hier kom jy by die huis nou moet almal bymekaar sit. Sy het regtig klomp goed, selfs as ons gaan kamp dan doen ons soos ysbreker, jy weet...net sulke trust goeters, gewoonlik bonding goed. Dit het ons as 'n huis net soveel sterker gemaak.

NAVORSER: Was dit naweke wat julle weg gegaan het na daai wildsplaas toe en dan verskillende aktiwiteite gedoen saam wat julle sterker gemaak het?

RESPONDENT: Ja, want die ding by die vorige tannie, hierdie is my beste maatjie en julle kyk net uit vir mekaar. Maar toe tannie Magda daar aankom toe is dit as jy op die speelgrond loop en iemand anders bully hierdie kind, jy weet, dan help jy...dit het naderhand soos 'n natural instinct geraak. Ek kan onthou, selfs die kleintjies...want ek was vir lank die grote in die huis gewees met klomp laerskool kinders en hulle het permanent na my toe gekom as hulle issues gehad het en goed.

NAVORSER: Mmm en jy't 'n leier ook geword?

RESPONDENT: Ja, jiss... Ek was vir baie jare leier in die kinderhuis. Ag weet jy ek sal nie sê...ek gaan nie sommer terug soentoe nie...maar dis weird, die een liggie jaar was ons daar gewees...

NAVORSER: Was jy in jou huis? Huis vyf...

RESPONDENT: Nee, dit was uit die pad uit...hulle het so toe gemaak daar. Ek het haar na 'n ander huis toe gevat dat sy kan sien hoe dit lyk. Maar ag ja dis weird. Ek weet nie, dis seker ons is maar gelukkig gewees om daar te wees maar ek weet nie...

NAVORSER: So dis nie altyd vir jou lekker om terug te gaan?

RESPONDENT: Nee, ag dis net 'n gevoel. Ek het nog altyd as ek weet ek moet terug kinderhuis toe gaan dan...al was ek hoërskool gewees, ek het net altyd dan kry ek so hol kol...butterflies in my maag. Ek weet nie, dis soos party mense as hulle begraafplaas toe is dan kry hulle hoendervleis dan freak hulle uit.

NAVORSER: Is dit as jy terug gaan om te gaan kuier?

RESPONDENT: Ek gaan kuier nooit nie, ek gaan nie rerig soentoe of enigiets nie. Ek het net al liggiefee toe gegaan...

NAVORSER: Kry jy ooit drome of nagmerries van die kinderhuis nie?

RESPONDENT: Nee, dis dalk as jy nie 'n man het nie want as ek wakker word, voor ek kan dink dat ek alleen is of iets dan draai ek om en hou vir Antoinette vas. Dit help my seker. Jy kan haar vra ek klou aan haar...sy raak partykeer, dan kry sy warm dan wil sy my net van die bed af hê maar ek klou so...miskien help dit. Ek droom ok baie van die kindershuis maar nie nagmerries nie.

NAVORSER: Soos wat jy daar gedoen het of dat jy weer daar is?

RESPONDENT: Ja, ek het al gedroom dat ek weer daar is en wat ons gedoen het en sulke goed.

NAVORSER: Soos regte goed of stories wat jy opmaak?

RESPONDENT: Nee, dis stories...dis soos asof ek daar is en dis net nuwe goed wat gebeur. En weird genoeg...dis nie net ek nie, dis soos letterlik almal saam met wie ek groot geword het daar. Soos as ek sekere goed doen dan is daar sekere pelle wat daai tyd saam my dit sou doen, in die droom. So dit is maar nee ag nie nagmerries nie.

NAVORSER: So jy is nie eintlik meer close met die kindershuis kinders nie?

RESPONDENT: Nee.

NAVORSER: Jy weet van hulle en hulle is daar op Facebook maar jy is nie close vriende met hulle nie.

RESPONDENT: Nee.

NAVORSER: Maar jy't mos ook al vir my gesê jou familie is vir jou die belangrikste. Daar's net vriende om jou as jy visvang want julle het 'n gemeenskaplike belangstelling...maar andersins...

RESPONDENT: Nee ag ek het niks, niemand anders nie. En die ander ding is ook hulle is soos jy sê, nie almal kom goed aan die ander kant uit nie. Vir my, ek het niks daarteen nie en ek sal help waar ek kan as ek moet en dit maar dis net nie vir my altyd goed...ek wil nie vir Anelda'tjie...daar gaan kuier net oor ons saam groot geword het en dan gebruik hulle dwelms en dan kuier ek omdat ons mekaar geken het. Ja, en dan sien my kind dit en alles so...ter wille daarvan jy weet....maar ek dink selfs al het ek nie 'n kind en 'n vrou gehad nie...ek weet nie, dan sou ek tien teen een saam gesit en gekuier het maar jy weet as mens verantwoordelikhede het is dit anders.

NAVORSER: Daai is ook 'n gedeelte van jou lewe wat verby is. Dit sal altyd deel wees van jou maar dis nie wie jy is nie.

RESPONDENT: Ja. Ek dink die jol vir ons altwee...want toe ek my vrou ontmoet het was sy net so lekker joller gewees... En die ding is nou nog, jissie, dis nou weird dat as jy 'n kind het en jy word nou groot maar ek dink as ons nie vir Anelda gehad het nie sou ons nou nog net so hard gejol het...

NAVORSER: Maar op 'n goeie manier.

RESPONDENT: Ja, op 'n goeie manier. Jy werk in die week en is verantwoordelik maar naweke jy weet, kuier jy tot die oggend ure en gaan slaap twee uur dan gaan staan jy op en eet iets en gaan kuier weer verder...dit sou ons doen.

Themes:

- Risky behaviour; physical abuse; drugs; corporal punishment = time in care
- Childhood depression
- Guidance from male figure, medication, focused on academics-grade 10
- In contrast with adult life = showed emotion as a child
- Constant doubt = how can people love me = not good enough
- Sexual education inadequate
- Embarrassed about children's home = stigmatised
- Lack of basic skills in children's home = cooking, washing
- Limited knowledge - finances / budgets
- Evening job = waiter – extra money
- Driver's license, ID-weekend father
- Father & mother figure=better relationship with wife
- Happiest at home-comfort zone
- Independent NB – no to good intensions, self-reliance
- Fears discrimination
- Need to be loved / accepted unconditionally
- Adult-neat and controlled environment NB
- Feels non-deserving of love
- Doubts belief system as adult
- Need for older male figure-rolemodel
- Mentors needed at children's homes = young males
- Housemother and weekend father NB
- Community members; pen pals=send care packages
- Community members, children raised in care criminals-stigmatised
- Need for love; physical care in childhood
- Longing for a family - belonging, love and care
- What did I do wrong?
- Time in care = punishment
- Siblings bond=care
- Dreams of children's home; anxiety - unfinished business
- Responsible; overprotective-birth of child

Troy Session 1

29 May 2014

M: Ok I am going to start this now. When is your birthday?

T: Do I have to like say the...

M: Yes...

T: 17th of June 1989

M: 1989. So you are how old now?

T: 24

M: 24. Oh your birthday is next month.

T: My birthday's is next month, on the 17th.

M: It's like four weeks from now, like three weeks from now....

T: And then I am 25. I feel like an old guy already...(both laugh)

M: What school were you in? Did you pass grade 12?

T: Gelvendale High School

M: Oh yes you could choose what school you wanted to go to. Different question, have you ever been homeless?

T: As in no place to stay?

M: Yes.

T: No.

M: Did you ever have to sleep on the street or beg for money?

T: Oh yes, there was actually once when we had to move out of the one place and then I didn't have nowhere to go and we...

M: We?

T: Me and two other guys that also stayed at the SOS. We shared like a house and stuff ...and then we couldn't, ok the thing is I left Edgars and then we couldn't afford the rent. Coz it was actually a big house that we rented out and the lady said we must move out. And then she like, like let other people come move in while we were still staying there with all our stuff still in the house. And then they stayed there so we had nowhere to go. Coz you know we don't like to still cause arguments so we just took our stuff and left. And then I slept at a friend's house until we had found our own other place to stay.

M: Why did you leave Edgars?

T: Cause, the thing is, it was in Walmer and then you worked Monday then Thursday again and then Saturday and then the next week you work two days and the following week you work for one day and that's like you working for taxi fare to go to work.

M: Did you work there for long?

T: 6 months, I think.

M: Oh ok.

T: I started there in September, and you work five days a week coz it is like close to Christmas so then we worked full shifts. But when it came to January and February then it was like two days a week, one day a week. Like that.

M: Oh, at what age did you go to the children's home? To the SOS?

T: Think I was two. I'm not sure.

M: Where did you live before that?

T: Probably with my granny and mother.

M: In Durban

T: Ja

M: Ja. Did your mom die?

T: Yes.

M: How old were you?

T: 13

M: You were 13 when she died.

T: I was in standard six.

M: Did you know her? Did you visit her when you were in SOS?

T: Yeh.

M: Ok. And your dad?

T: Well the story with him

M: Yes?

T: I actually did go and meet him ...

M: Yes

T: ...but it was on my own. It was like...my mom told me like stuff about him and where I can get hold of him and what he used to do and stuff, so that when she passed away then while I was studying there was a girl that I was studying with that has a contact that finds people and so she helped me out and then we actually went to him.

M: So your mom didn't give you his information, you found him on your own.

T: No she did like tell me he has this bottle store in this place and

M: Yes...

T: he owns that and like where I can find him and stuff like that she told me. Then I went and then I got him and I phoned him and then met up with him and then when I got to him and I asked him does he remember like my mother. And he doesn't remember nothing, but he did take my number and he told me if he does remember stuff he's gonna phone me but till today he hasn't.

M: How old were you when you went there?

T: It was about 3...4...5 years ago that I went there.

M: Does he have other children now, is he married?

T: Yes, when I phoned his son picked up (laughs). But at least I know I made an effort to actually...

M:to go there and speak to him.....

T: ...to go there yeah and ...

M: ...and to meet him ...

T: He wants nothing to do with me.

M: Now the ball is in his court.

T: Yeah. I don't want his money; I just wanted to see him and to know him, that's all

M: Do you look like him?

T: The feet, my hair, eyes and that but his complexion is lighter, I have my mother's complexion.

M: So why did the social workers take you away from your gran? What happened? And why so far? Why not in Durban somewhere?

T: In what way now?

M: Like when you were two years old you came to SOS what happened ...

T: No, what my mother told me was that there was like fighting in our family. Like from my father's side also. Like he didn't want anything to do with me, and she told me she couldn't take care of me at that time.

M: Your mom?

T: Like ja finance wise, like she didn't have money and all that, and then my granny was the one that knew of SOS and then she just took me, she actually stole me from my mother, she said and then she took me straight to the SOS. Coz she thought and knew that it would be better for me here than there.

M: But all the way here in PE?

T: Yep.

M: Wasn't there a SOS in Durban?

T: Nope. There's one in Pietermaritzburg but it's...but the one in Pietermaritzburg they only built it a few years later, it's a new one.

M: Then you've been in the children's home the whole time and when did you leave?

T: When I finished school. That was 2007 I think...2008 and then I went to go study.

M: Before we go on, was your mom and dad married?

T: No they weren't married.

M: Was it like a one night thing or were they like seeing each other?

T: I have no idea (laughs). I think they were in a relationship. I don't think it was a one night thing.

M: Where were you born?

T: In Pietermaritzburg

M: Ok

T: In a house

M: Not in a hospital?

T: No, the ambulance came too late that's what she told me (laughs). By time the ambulance came I was out already.

M: And do you have brothers and sisters on your mother's side?

T: Not that I know of.

M: So your mom didn't have other children.

T: No.

M: Ok, so she only had you. Did the children's home help you in any way after matric? I know you went and studied, where did you get money, where did you stay?

T: They paid for everything.

M: Where did you go and stay after the children's home?

T: I stayed with my gran for like the first few months.

M: In Durban?

T: She was staying in Pietermaritzburg at that time. I stayed with her and then the one the youth leader came up to where I was staying to see where she stays and all that and after that then while I was studying I got my own place, a commune. I was staying in a commune at first ja, and then they paid for the rent and fees all that and they give you an allowance every month.

M: For how many years did you stay there while you studied?

T: Four years.

M: Was there other SOS children there?

T: No, it's normal like a commune like ...

M: Which area?

T: It's in Scottsville

M: Also in Pietermaritzburg. So they actually allowed you to go there?

T: To stay on your own.

M: Did they ask you for slips or anything?

T: And then they pay for your rent and your fees

M: Where did you go study?

T: Varsity College.

M: What did you study?

T: Business management and entrepreneurship.

M: Ok. And then when did it stop? Why did it stop? Did you finish or

T: I finished the course, they still paid the rent and paid an allowance until just before December, it was November I still remember. On the 25th I'm expecting my money to come in (laughs) but I didn't see no money. And then I asked them am I still getting an allowance or what? And they like no sorry but we can't pay you an allowance any more. They didn't tell me nothing.

M: Why? Why did it stop that month?

T: I just didn't get money that month and I asked them the Monday....

M: After how many years?

T: Four or five years.

M: It just stopped without them warning you, without phoning you?

T: They could've at least said look here from next month you're not getting it anymore.

M: So what did you do then?

T: What can you do? You have to go work for your own money (laughs).

M: But you still live in the same commune?

T: No I had to leave.

M: So you came back to PE. Why did you come back?

T: because... (laughs) it's a long story.

M: Why did you come back?

T: Because all my friends graduated and we all went separate ways andso I don't want to be stuck alone. That's the thing that's why I came here coz I knew there's friends that can help me.

M: Let's just go back a bit. When you went to Pietermaritzburg, the SOS gave you money but they didn't help you to find a place to live?

T: I had to do everything on my own.

M: Did they help you to write in for College?

T: Nope I did it on my own.

M: Did they help you to...

T: They were in PE (laughs).

M: Did they help you to just decide on which course to do?

T: I did everything on my own, and then they just paid for it. They just said send me the stuff, fax it down and they will pay for it that's what they did. They paid it directly to the college and they paid to the landlord's accounts. But then my allowance comes to me into my account.

M: How much was it?

T: It was R2000 a month, but I was working also at the time while I was studying so that also helped me. It was a part time job, it was a half day thing.

M: So what did you do?

T: It was sales consulting like we supply Universities with books. Like if you want this book, marketing, you would come order it from us and we supply it to you. It was like an Internet Café thing, ja, that's what I was basically doing. Then I came back...I actually came on holiday here. I was finished studying coz I was gonna graduate the April the year after that, and then I stayed here and all my friends that I do have here and I knew I had support here. So why would I go back and just be alone there

M: With your gran?

T: With all my friends here, so I decided to stay here. We got a house we rented it out with another guy.

M: Also from the SOS?

T: Ja, coz I was visiting him at the time and he had his own place

M: Was he also getting an allowance?

T: No he was working for MTN, and the money wise it wasyes and then we shared rent and all that

M: And then?

T: After that the SOS said that they gonna start cutting me off. They didn't tell me they just did it. And then I had to go and look for a job.

M: So they basically didn't support you in anyway except for a little bit of money every month? They didn't help you to choose a career?

T: Nope.

M: They didn't help you to find a place to live you had to do everything. Do you have a license?

T: Learner's only.

M: Ok, so did you do it while you were with them?

T: They paid for the Learner's.

M: Who was the contact person that you had to speak to there?

T:Like if I want something or I need help or anything? Like I would go to Uncle Werner and then if he's too busy then Auntie Michelle or the other youth leader, Willie, I think...

M: Why didn't you rather just live in the youth house?

T: The thing is that when after school, coz that is normally the house where they trained you to be on your own, but straight after school they just told me no I must go to my granny and stuff.

M: So you didn't have an option that you can stay in that house?

T: No, they told me I am going to my granny.

M: If you had a choice would you have changed it, made a different choice?

T: Probably.

M: Would you have stayed there?

T: I would have stayed there, yes.

M: What skills do they teach there? What did you hear?

T: I don't know. They do the same thing. They give you an allowance and then you have to budget through it with that every month and like buy your food and toiletries and stuff like that out of that money. But the thing is I knew that would happen. Coz they were doing it with the previous guys and then obviously we all knew that it's gonna come to us also like that, where they stop the money. They give you a choice. You can either go study or you can go to your family. That's what they do. But they told me I'm going to my granny (laughs). I said I'd rather study while I am there coz I can't just go like after school and not like have something behind my name and like that.

M: Ok. Did you go back to visit them when you came back? Did you ever ask them can you be in that youth house?

T: The SOS youth house, no.

M: The guy that you are living with now. How did you find him?

T: John, when I came down to stay for the holidays it's his brother's house.

T: So then I stayed with his brother and his brother, ok we all three stayed together and then his brother moved out to stay in a bigger apartment, so me and him shares the house now.

M: Ok

T: But me and him, we're closer than as to what me and his brother are coz his brother is older than me so I wasn't so close with him. I was closer to the one that I am staying with now.

M: Did you struggle to find work?

T: Nope.

M: Ok. How did you find this work?

T: This one now?

M: Mmm

T: John, the guy that I am staying with. He took my CV to work.

M: Ok

T: And the manager phoned me and said you can come in and when do you want to start.

M: Ok. Completely different question. Do you get drunk frequently? Do you drink a lot or use drugs?

T: No, I don't do drugs; no I haven't even tried drugs, ok weedjust weed. I used to but not anymore

M: Ok. And do you get drunk?

T: Not like as in heavy, like now and then, ok I drink every weekend...

M: Do you get drunk?

T: Nope, I am always the last one standing.

M: Do you want to stop drinking?

T: As in when now? I am sure everyone wants to stop drinking. Is this now a psychology session? I do want to stop drinking but not now

M: Not now? (laughs). Ok. Did your mom also drink?

T: Yup, she did tell me she was drinking ja.

M: Let's talk about the SOS. Was it good or bad? Or both?

T: Both, good and bad.

M: Ok. Like what?do you think your life is harder now than what it was when you were in the Children's Home?

T: Yes

M: In which way?

T: Because they would support you financially and like you know...Ok we were groups in one house so if you had a problem you can speak to this person at any time you see. And money wise...coz you know if you had to go somewhere, had to do something you just tell them I need money for this or that and they'll give you the money. But now you have to cough it up on your own.

M: What was good about the Children's Home?

T:Ja there were some bad things. Some house parents werebeating the children.

M: What was bad for you in the SOS?

T: Ok you can say favoritism.

M: Yes....

T: Like the housemother treats the one better than....well that lady that looked after us did like the girls more than she liked the boys. Skosisana, that one was the favorite. She was the one who could go out drinking. She's lighter complexion. She could go out weekends, go drink and come back drunk.

M: And she wouldn't get into trouble?

T: Ja.

M: Ok but did you get enough love, like hugs?

T: No, don't get hugs. Ok I think I don't want any hugs.

M: (laughs). Why?

T: Because, I don't know why. Now and then they forget your birthday. Imagine you wake up. When you are small they will buy you gifts and they will throw you a party but as you get older it's an out thing. They will just buy you a cake happy birthday and finish. That's how it is. I haven't received a gift on my birthday since, probably when I was in primary school I think. That's when last I got a gift for my, on my birthday. Yip, we got hit a lot. Not from Aunt Thandiswe much but by the previous lady. Tant Anna, the Zimbabwean lady. That one hit us all with wooden spoon and...a lot of stuff like that.

M: Could you go and complain?

T: No, we were too scared.

M: Like at the office?

T: There was this one stage when we were too scared to go complain coz we thought that if we go to the office then they gonna ask her about it and then she's gonna hit us even more. Coz we were small at that time and we didn't have like think about things, but then at one stage when we actually did complain about it and she got fired and she left.

M: Ok. Did you ever receive therapy? Like with a social worker?

T: Not that I can remember.

M: Ok

T: Probably once or twice ja

M: In your whole life that you were there?

T: Yep. I think they focused with that on the special kids at SOS and only the special kids that do that, that goes to those social workers, there's a lady that comes in and she does it with them.

M:ja. Can you remember your first memories of the Children's Home? Can you remember going there like the first day when they dropped you off?

T: I was like small, small so I don't know nothing. That's way back. I don't remember

M: Did you have enough food and did you get new clothes?

T: Food and clothes they supplied us with. Ja, like twice a year you would go shopping for clothes like winter clothes and summer clothes. Edgars sponsored SOS, then they'd give you an amount and you'd go to Edgars and buy your clothes.

M: Um what advice would you give to house mothers, that's there now taking care of the children, like what would you tell them?

T: To treat the children equally. That they mustn't favor the one and not give attention to the other one. And they should treat the children like it's their own children, not like treat them ok I am just looking after this child. Ja, this is my job let me just do it anyway you know. They mustn't treat them in that way.

M: Do you think it is good for them to have a house father also?

T: No

M: Do you think a house mom is fine?

T: Coz if you have a house father at SOS also it's not gonna go down well. Because the mother and the fathers was mos not married. Think of all the arguments that's gonna happen in that house (laughs). Maybe for some houses there will be a house father but not a mother. Not both in one house. Coz he will understand what the guys go through. But in comparison with them living together and they not married ok but probably it is just his job also. They don't know each other it's not going to work out. But in the youth house there is that. A guy looks after the guys. You can you can say it's a house father but that you only experience when you 18 then you go to the youth house. But when you below 18 you're still living in the houses.

M: I wonder who gets the option to go to the youth house. Is it for kids who don't have anywhere else to go?

T: I'm not sure about that hey. They just told me you're going to your granny and I don't even question them at that time, but from what I heard nè everybody is supposed to go there.

M: To the youth house?

T: Ja. We are all supposed to first go to the youth house before going on your own. That's what they told us

M: How do you think children now that's in the children's home, what will help them to reach a success once they leave?

T: Some guys are homeless and they, and then you get some people like us working and..... Ok we're not out there yet but we at least working and we're taking care of ourselves and, the thing is with me it's not the children to blame, I think it's SOS to blame the way they handle the situation once you leave. That's what I think.

M: How do you mean?

T: Like they treat you like when you get to 18 they know you gonna leave anyway so they like just lose that....ok like we say in our language plak just loose plak. The energy isn't there anymore coz you gonna leave anyway. They don't show interest in you anymore once you're out. Same thing with me while I was studying. They lost interest with me coz they know I am already out there's no way I'm gonna come live here again after once I'm finished there. Well money was.....the money thing is I was in there this year they says SOS doesn't have money anymore. That lots of people has left, the staff members hasn't got them bonuses last year December and all that. Two youth houses is closed somehow

M: Both of them?

T: The Boys and the girls. Those two youth leaders left. They no more working there. Both of them. Only they would know. Coz the thing is with me once I was starting to be on my own I also I haven't phoned them like in a while, you know so I doesn't know what is going on there anymore also.

M: Do you think you are a stronger person?

T: Now?

M: Because you were there?

T: Yes

M: Like what did it teach you to be there?

T: To be independent. Ok we grew up with the rules and stuff so that you can actually see the difference like if I take a guy that stays in my area, like some of my friends hasn't grown up at SOS and you compare them to me I grew up at SOS with rules and stuff. Ok we got beaten if you don't listen but then that shows now that you respect people and then they don't respect people coz they grew up like,

you now doing their own thing, and their parents like just allows them to go do whatever. By us it shows coz we have to be this time in 5 o'clock you have to be in, you must be washed, you have to wake up in the morning, you have to do dishes. Like you get chores to do also. You must clean. It happened in all the houses.

M: ok

T: But like I'll make you an example. Like my friend that didn't stay at SOS but at his house and like his mother would clean up and stuff. We had to clean ourselves, we had to cook, but it's a good thing coz you know I can cook today and I stay on my own. I don't have a wife that's gonna cook for me now or a girlfriend

M: Can you iron and wash your clothes?

T: Iron clothes, I wash my own clothes, we clean, everything. That's where that comes in.

M: What made the good and the bad housemothers different? Like how was the one bad and the one better?

T: The thing is with the other one I was smaller at that stage so I don't really know much what was going on. Auntie Driessel treated us, she was...you can also ask Melanene, she treated us like you not staying in a home. It's like you staying outside, you can go visit your friends on weekends, you can do whatever you want. If you want something you must always ask her and she can help you where she can and that's how she was with us. And like she treated us like if she goes out and then she would like leave the house to us alone and she would go do her stuff during the day or at night or whatever. But the other housemothers if they go do their own thing like go out for the day whatever they will lock the house and then those children would wait till that person comes back. And they would sit outside. They like have to go play for the whole day until she comes back.

M: You can't do your homework, you can't go in?

T: No.

M: Did they give you all your photos and stuff?

T: Most of them.

M: Ok. After the children's home, what was difficult you know as an adult? What was difficult for you to deal with?

T: Doing things on my own. There was a few times that you don't feel that you had the support, like friends wise and all that and financially also, like money. Coz like if you move into a new place and you have to pay a deposit and rent – where is that money gonna come from? Advances and all that stuff. So that was hard. Ja, but luckily I had a friend. I do see good out of this.

M: Ja..

T: I do. They are doing a good thing and they do help the children like where they can help the children but if the child is stubborn and doesn't want to learn and stuff that's their problem you see. So

it is your choice also what you do with yourself and what they give you the resources, but they gave us a place to stay.

M: What other resources did they give you when you left?

T: When I left it was just money. They paid for everything. I haven't had nothing.

M: Were you prepared?

T: They do now and then, ok now and then, they do like check up on you to see if you still ok, how you coping outside.

M: Do they phone you?

T: No they'll just do it if I go there then they ask you. If you go visit them they ask you.

M: Were you prepared for the real life?

T: Coz I got taken straight out of high school and you have to go and stay on your own. And that was the first time coz I was staying in a house and I didn't know how to spend the money. I don't know how to spend the money. I didn't know how to spend the money, what do I do with all this money, things like that. Coz the thing you know they should've put me in the youth house, that's how you learn. They give you an allowance and you learn how to buy your own food, you learn and things like that.

M: That's how you learn to prepare yourself for the big world.

T: Yep, because it's basically children's home, you've hardly left there because you went to school and you went to holiday homes and all of a sudden you're just out, you're like a baby of agtien jaar oud, what the hell is happening in the world. You don't know how everything works. I didn't have a clue what was happening.

M: What would you have liked to learn from them? You know, say you were in the youth house, what would you have learnt from them when you were there? Like how to?

T: And they can like help some of the guys like get work or so coz like they have a lot of connections, they know people and sponsors and all that, so they can help coz it is hard to find a job hey. Yeah so they should like once you're 18 they should like help people get their own jobs and stuff like that and like help you find a place to stay and maybe pay your rent for like a few months, first three months or first four or five months, just so you can get on your own feet after that.

M: Something else now. So when you went back to Pietermaritzburg wasn't it difficult with all your family there?

T: Actually there is no big family, just my granny.

M: So it's only your granny?

T: That I know of.

M: Does she live alone?

T: Yep.

M: Ok

T: She was staying alone at that time.

M: What happened to your mom? How did she die?

T: Kidney failure.

M: Did you know she was sick?

T: No I just came back from school that one day and they called me to the office at SOS and that guy that she was dating at that time phoned and he said my mother passed away.

M: Did the Social Worker tell you?

T: No, the guy, my mother was dating someone at the time. I think she was engaged or what, I can't remember. He phoned to SOS. I spoke to him on the phone. They did phone them at SOS while I was in school so they knew about it. When I came back from school while I was walking home and this lady called me and said like sorry to hear about your mom. But I didn't know because they haven't called me to the office yet. I went home to change and then they phoned me to say I must come through to the office and then he was on the phone. But I knew him because when I go holidays then he and my mother used to be there and then he told me that she's passed away and stuff. Nobody's told me that she was sick.

M: Did you go to the funeral or

T: I went to the funeral. Uncle Daryl he took me and him went up.

M: Do you think the Children's home got better over the years or worse?

T: Worse, well I actually don't know coz I don't really keep contact with them anymore that much. It was nice when I was there but from what I hear now it's gone down actually.

M: Ok so you can make food and you know how to take care of yourself?

T: Yes. It's not hard taking a taxi. They'll ask you actually you'll just stand at the stop and they'll ask if you want a ride or not. So you didn't even have to say anything, coz they need your money (laughs).

M: What helped you when you were there?

T: At SOS?

M: What was good for you there?

T: The support, coz I didn't have a mother and you have a house mother there. Ja, there's people you can speak to, about your problems and stuff like that.

M: What will you tell the children that are there now? Any advice?

T: Well they should work hard, take the opportunity that SOS gives them. Study, finish school, and stuff like that. SOS gives them an opportunity they should take it with both hands and then do well. Well they should stay away from alcohol, drugs, not that I have but anyway. Kids will try stuff so what's the use to tell them stay away from alcohol, They gonna go try and drink anyway. Practice safe sex or else you'll end up a father. She's using the pill now

M: It's fine, you've got a beautiful baby boy.

T: It just happened; I'm telling you it just happened. I don't regret him, really I don't, I'm happy I had that man in my life.

M: Ok. Was it difficult for you after you left the children's home to get along with other people, to interact with them?

T: I feel like I am a people's person I get along with everyone. Even at work people were surprised. I get along with everyone.

M: So do you tell people that were in the SOS?

T: They all know but I don't like to tell.

M: Why?

T: Tell people? Coz then they will start feeling sorry for you coz you grew up in a home and you don't have family and that's what I don't want. I want them to treat me equally. But if I am close to this person I will tell them that I grew up in a home and I don't have family. Most of them at work know already anyway. But someone I'll just meet now, they not serious like I won't tell them where I grew up coz they will just feel sorry for you and treat you like oh he grew up there do you want food do you want whatever like that man. I don't like people must feel sorry for me and I'm pretty fine on my own now. They musn't give me mothers.

M: Were you happy to leave the SOS or were you scared if you think back?

T: I was scared at first. Coz I don't know what to expect coz they like just ok, just my clothes (laughs). Coz I took bus so I just took my clothes. Coz none of that stuff is yours there. All that stuff is the House's stuff it belongs to the SOS. You just take your clothes, cellphone, clothes everything else you leave there. I didn't pay anything back. Well they haven't told me I have to pay anything back

T: They gave me 18 000, I bought me a car.

M: You bought a car?

T: And some furniture stuff. Well the car was about 14, 15 (laughs) it was just a second hand car, just to get me to and from work and that.

M: What else will you tell children's home children that are there now?

T: They should actually coz some housemothers give you proper advice hey. Like they do actually care about the children, not all housemothers are the same

M: What else did you need when you left?

T: What did I need?

M: Like what didn't you know?

T: How to budget, how to spend money, how to, like when you're on your own, just like basic stuff, being on your own and all that...I haven't experienced that, yeah your mother does everything for you, the housemother did everything for me, and that waking up in the mornings, she would wake us up and now you have to wake up on your own. And the food, you have to go shopping for your own, coz the

housemother shops for food and sometimes she cooks also for you, so that when you come out of school there is food to eat, all that. Now you have to do everything yourself. Ja, they should find jobs for the children there once they leave, ja, coz what's the use if they kick you out and you don't have a job? Where you gonna get money from coz they not supporting you anymore also. They should teach them that. Actually not teach them, help them find work. Coz they know a lot of people

M: But T what do you want to do now?

T: I wanna start my own business

M: But how are you really?

T: I'm happier now. Ok I was a bit, I was a bit down because I wasn't working and I was stressing on my girlfriend's pregnant, I was a year at home hey.

M: How did you get money to eat and to live?

T: I made a plan (laughs)

M: Illegal stuff? What did you do?

T: I did work for a guy that was in the drug business. Like I just used to go fetch his stuff, drop it off at people that wanted it.

M: And you weren't scared that somebody will catch you?

T: That's why I left it but I had to bring my side of the salary. Ja, and then this job that I'm actually doing now came at the right time hey.

T: Like on the day that I was supposed to start my girlfriend was in labour on the morning. I was supposed to start at six.

M: Were you late for work?

T: No I didn't go in. I phoned them and told them my girlfriend's in labour I'm gonna start the Monday coz it was on a Wednesday so I told them I am just gonna take this, ja and start the Monday then we see

M: Do you still believe in God after everything that has happened to you?

T: I have to. If you don't believe in God then who do you believe in? Coz it's through Him that I'm here and I've made it through SOS and all those challenges that I've facedlike you know SOS leaving you, not supporting you. The thing is with me I'm not clever, I'm not smart but I just used to work hard. I just used to work hard in school. When it came to exams I'd stay in the house from the Monday to the Friday. I used to study. I was a nerd in school. I was a nerd in school; I'm not going to lie. I only got my wings in matric. I started drinking and girls. I wanted to do that but I think it was all the partying and drinking and girls that took my mind off studying and things went the other way.

M: Do you still see the SOS children as your brothers and sisters or your familywhose your family now?

T: With Melanene, I ignore her. She greets me first then I know it's gonna be about her boyfriend. So if I greet her first then I know we're gonna have a decent conversation but if she says hello then I know it's gonna end up what Donovan did this to me or like that so (laughs). It's just about guys. She mustn't live her life like that, worried about guys, guys, guys. Her status is also, I'm so single; I am done with guys, every day. She mustn't live her life for a guy, she must do things for her. She must get a steady boyfriend rather ... this one month, two month, three month guys is not working.

Themes:

- Poverty
- Absent father figure-rejection; lack of interest
- No love; physical abuse, harsh discipline at children's home
- Boys & girls treated differently
- Do not celebrate special occasions
- Feared housemother
- Limited therapeutic support
- SOS provides mother figure / substitute
- Abusing alcohol grade 12 - stopped focusing on academic work
- Financial support received from SOS children's village
- After security / safety net of SOS-didn't know what to expect
- Fear and insecurity
- Live with grandmother-another province, no choice
- Lack of knowledge: transport & career guidance
- SOS paid rent & monthly allowance
- Abrupt end to finances-no preparation
- Unstable employment
- Loneliness, need for friends, support and contact
- Youth house: "trained to be on your own"- budget
- Alcohol and dagga use
- Children's village not interested in young adult-after leaving
- SOS taking care and then sudden withdraw – forced to survive independently
- Youth house closed-financial irregularities
- Advantages of SOS: rules, learn to respect others, cook, washing and clean=thankful
- Baby of 18 years old in big world
- Need for support with employment

- Learned helplessness
- Needed someone to talk to after leaving care
- Good relationships with friends
- Doesn't like to be pitied or treated differently
- Depressed, unemployed, stressed
- Educated-couldn't find employment
- Illegal activities-drug runner
- Responsible-girlfriend pregnant
- Faith and Education NB
- Financial neediness (not abuse) → therefore not experiencing problems with friends
- Greatest challenge = instant independence/responsibility/survival
- Academic achievement adds to + identity; improve chances of success & future perspective

Harmony Session 3

12 February 2014

Navorser: Vandag wil ek hê moet op op 'n roosboom fokus. Jy moet vir my 'n roosboom teken.

Deelnemer: Ok.

Navorser: So jy moet net 'n bietjie stil word en dink hoe lyk 'n roosboom en dit dan vir my teken. Dit gaan nie oor jou tekening nie, dit gaan meer oor die vragies wat ek jou daarna gaan vra. So dit hoef nie mooi te wees nie.

Deelnemer: Ek's nou nie 'n kunstenaar nie, hoor.

Navorser: Ek het vir jou 'n potlood gebring of kleur. Ek het nie geweet waarmee verkies jy om te teken nie.

Deelnemer: Ok. Nee, ek hou van kleur, gee maar vir kleur.

Navorser: Dalk is daar verskillende tipe blomme aan jou boom.

Deelnemer: Oh jinne, nou gaan ek die ding teken dan gaan jy sien ek is seksueel gefrustreerd. (Lag). Ok (Sug). Moet ek vir jou 'n roos, koning roseboom teken. Dit hoef nie realisties te wees nie?

Navorser: Nee.

Deelnemer: Dit kan onrealisties wees?

Navorser: Ja.

Deelnemer: ...dit kan whatever wees?

Navorser: Ja.

Deelnemer: Ok

Navorser: Ok. Dink maar bietjie.

Deelnemer: Hierdie goed is altyd so funny wat 'n sielkundige vra, hoor. Ek wil deur daai sketse saam met jou gaan. Ek wil rêrig, want ek kan nooit uit figure wat is die antwoord nie.

Navorser: Dis soos daai inkbloets.

Deelnemer: Ja. Soos wat lyk dit vir jou? Lyk soos 'n pelvis, so wat de hel. Om te hoor dit is 'n pelvis. Daai Good Will Hunting was nogals snaaks gewees en dan sê hy ook elke keer vir jou.

Navorser: Ja?

Deelnemer: Ja, ek sien niks. Ok, 'n roosboom sê jy vir my.

Navorser: Ja.

Deelnemer: Ok.

Deelnemer: Dis nou weird. (stilte - besig om te teken)

Navorser: Ek dog jy kan nie teken nie?

Deelnemer: Ek kan nie teken nie.

Navorser: Jis.

Deelnemer: Lyk soos 'n geskrabbel.

Navorser: Dit doen nie.

Deelnemer: (Lag).

Navorser: Ok, ek gaan nou net vir jou 'n paar vragies vra oor die boom.

Deelnemer: Ja.

Navorser: Jy moet nou maar net dink soos ek vra.

Deelnemer: Ja.

Navorser: Watter tipe roosboom is dit? Is dit klein of groot?

Deelnemer: Mhmm, wel, ek hou van 'n bosserige...

Navorser: Ja.

Deelnemer: 'n Roosboom.

Navorser: Ja.

Deelnemer: So hy moet kan mooi rank en groei en bosse groei. Ek is nie vreeslik op die stam. Jy weet, hy moet kan, hy het sy stam, maar dan moet hy kan groei op die einde. Rank. Ek sal dan sê ek is maar seker 'n medium na 'n groot.

Navorser: Ok. Is jy uhm...uhm jou roosboom soos, jy weet vol of is dit meer soos 'n maer kleinerige boompie of is dit meer voller groter.

Deelnemer: Ja, nee hy moet kan, hy moet kan...

Navorser: Bosserig wees.

Deelnemer: Ja, hy moet kan wild groei. Hy moenie net, beperk wees nie, maar hy moet netjies wees.

Navorser: Ok en is die boom sterk of is dit 'n swakker boom?

Deelnemer: Dit sal 'n sterk boom wees.

Navorser: Ok en is dit lank of nie... soos jy weet groei op?

Deelnemer: Ja, groei op en oop.

Navorser: Ok...en ek sien dit het blomme.

Deelnemer: Ja, ja.

Navorser: Ok, watter tipe blomme is dit? Is dit net rose of is daar ander blomme tussen in?

Deelnemer: Kyk, rose is nou nie my gunsteling blom nie. Ek is meer sonneblom en Barberton daisy en daai tipe van blomme. So, maar ek nou gefokus op 'n roosboom, maar met daai kleure in.

Navorser: Mhmm...

Deelnemer: So as ek, ek hou van roosbome, dit moet altyd lekker ruik. Daar moet 'n lekker reuk hê. 'n Roosboom moet nie net 'n boom wees wat daar groei nie, hy moet darem meer as net mooi wees. Dit moet lekker ruik ook, dit moet 'n doel hê. So uhm, ek gaan roosbome plant in my tuin, maar hulle moet kan beleef te word eur lekker ruik en dan warm kleure. Ek hou van rooi en geel, oranje, diep kleure, maar 'n heining met wit roosbome op lyk ook mooi. Dit moet net...Dit moet net...Hy moet kan boom

wees, maar hy moet kan rank en hy moet kan...maar dit moet netjies lyk. So jy moet hom af en toe moet jy hom trim. Ja, ek hou van baie blomme.

Navorser: Ok en watter kleure is dit? Jy het gesê dit is die warm rooi.

Deelnemer: Rooi.

Navorser: Geel, oranje, al daardie tipe kleure.

Deelnemer: Ja, daarsy.

Navorser: Ek sien dit het die baie blare ook?

Deelnemer: Ja.

Navorser: Uhm, is al daai blommetjies daar, het hulle geblom, of is daar 'n paar wat nog besig is om te blom, soos jy weet daai buds.

Deelnemer: Van hulle...is al twee kante, ja both.

Navorser: Wat besig is om te groei?

Deelnemer: Ja, die buds. Daar is buds nê.

Navorser: Ok.

Deelnemer: Dan is daar oop blomme ook.

Navorser: Ok

Navorser: Is daar enige dooie blomme op daai boom?

Deelnemer: Van die blare wat afgaan ja, maar nie regtig nie...dis, hy's...hoe kan 'n mens sê, hy uhm...hy's in sy seisoen.

Navorser: Ek verstaan. Uhm en hoe lyk die takke? Is dit reguit of is dit meer gekronkel soos wat dit uitgaan?

Deelnemer: Ja, so tussenin, want van hulle is bietjie meer reguit as ander, maar daar is van hulle wat buig ook.

Navorser: Ok en hoe lyk die wortels, jy weet die roots, wat in die grond ingaan.

Deelnemer: Hulle is in.

Navorser: Diep in of meer op die oppervlak?

Deelnemer: Nee, hulle is...

Navorser: Of miskien het jou boom nie enige wortels nie, dis mos maar enige iets wat jy wil hê dit moet wees.

Deelnemer: Ja, nee ek het nie wortels geteken nie, maar ek sou sê hulle is in, hulle is in die grond in. Hulle is diep.

Navorser: En is dit lank en reguit of meer twisted?

Deelnemer: Nee, dit is soos wat ek 'n roosboom ken. Jy weet 'n roosboom se wortels moenie blootgestel wees nie, hulle moet eerder bedek wees en hulle moet, hulle is rankerig. Dit hang af

obviously watter tipe roosboom dit is. Soos die een wat ek geteken het, sal 'n meer rankerig een wees, want jy kry roosbome met penwortels ook. Myne sal meer bywortels hê.

Navorser: Ok. Het dit dorings, soos op die takkies, want rose blare het mos maar...

Deelnemer: Ek hou nie van dorings nie.

Navorser: Ok.

Deelnemer: Roosbome wat dorings het sny ek af.

Navorser: Ok.

Deelnemer: Wie wil gesteeek word.

Navorser: Ek het gewag vir daai een! Ons kan altyd 'n plan maak. 'n Roosboom met dorings plant! (Beide lag verder)

Deelnemer: Jis want jy kry roosbome wat dorings het, dan steek dit jou dan brand daai steek so. Dan is jy sommer die moer in. Maar ek breek gewoonlik al die dorinkies af. Breek hulle af as ek uhm... rose pluk, sal ek hulle dorings, breek ek hulle dorinkies af. Maar party ander roosbome het dorings maar dit brand nie of hulle is nie skerp dat hulle jou steek steek nie.

Navorser: Ja, jy kan amper daaraan vat.

Deelnemer: Daai groterige dorings.

Navorser: Los jy daai?

Deelnemer: Nee, nee wat myne het nie dorings op nie. Ek los, my roosbome moet, ek moet darem die roos kan vat. Ek wil nie wonder of moet ek vat nie.

Navorser: Ja, of bang wees om aan dit te vat nie.

Deelnemer: (Lag) Dit klink baie weird.

Navorser: En kyk gou-gou uhm om die boom. Jy weet, ek sien jy het daar 'n heining geteken. Is jou boom in 'n erf, of op die maan, of parkie, of di kan kan selfs in die woestyn wees of in 'n stad...

Deelnemer: Ek is in die natuur.

Navorser: ...of in die middel van die oseaan.

Deelnemer: Die see sal ook nice wees, maar ek is in die natuur. Op die plaas. Plaas is die buitelig daar buite. Wolkies is lekker blou. Dit gaan binnekort reën hopelik (Lag). Die son is ook daar.

Navorser: Ok, groei jou boom in 'n pot of uit die grond uit?

Deelnemer: Uit die grond uit. Wie wil in 'n pot wees?

Navorser: Ok en is daar geen sement of iets nie.

Deelnemer: Nee.

Navorser: So jou boom is nie binne nie, maar meestal buite.

Deelnemer: Mmmm...

Navorser: Is dit soos 'n plaas huisie?

Deelnemer: Ja, hierdie is jou tipiese plaas heining.

Navorser: Is die boom vêr van die huis af?

Deelnemer: In my gedagtes?

Navorser: Ja.

Deelnemer: Nee, hys naby aan die huis. Jy moet darem kan ruik hy ruik lekker. Die reuk moet inkom in die huis in.

Navorser: Ok...en uhm dink gou-gou, is die omgewing vir die boom goed of sleg om te groei. Is dit 'n goeie omgewing vir 'n roosboom om in te wees om te kan groei of nie eintlik nie?

Deelnemer: Uhm, as jy...kyk...ek sou sê, ek sal dit nou nie sê soos wat dit daar nou by die huis is nie. By die huis is dit baie klipperig, nè. Ek sal 'n redelike groot gat moet eers grou voordat ek hom en dat ek hom goed met pot-soil en goed die grond moet opvul voordat hy kan lekker kan mooi groei soos wat ek daarvan hou. So ja, as hy geplant is en hy groei gaan hy in 'n lekker stuk grond wees. Ryk met kompos.

Navorser: So daar is spasie om te groei? Dis nie asof daai heining die boom beperk nie, kan nie verder groei. Daar is spasie nog om te groei?

Deelnemer: Ja. Die heining hou jou net netjies, maar hy is nie daar om jou te beperk nie.

Navorser: Ok en is daar blomme, ander blomme of ander bome daar naby?

Deelnemer: Ja...mooi, mooi tuin ja...mooi veelsydige tuin, groot grasperke.

Navorser: Ok en is daar diere of mense?

Deelnemer: Oh ja...daar's diere...ek het nou net al met ondervinding geleer dat jy moet maar jou diere...jy weet...hulle moenie...soos ganse gaan nou nie kan daar kan rond vry loop nie, want hulle sal als opeet. Ek het nou geleer jou diertjies moet in hul kampies wees en dit moet mooi wees. Hulle is daar in die scenery en hulle is gelukkig op hulle plekkies en hulle hokke lyk mooi, maar uhm hulle kan nie...en dan die res van die tuin is daar vir mense, fonteintjies en water-poedels en... voëltjies kan kom bad en daar is voëls definitief in die tuin en...daar is ander wilde diere wat obviously nie in hulle hokke kan gehou word nie. Uile en...koggelmanders en geitjies en...jy weet, daai tipe van goeters, dis alles daar, daar is diere daar is lewe.

Navorser: En kom die roosboom oor die weg met hulle almal?

Deelnemer: Ja, dis 'n natuurlike habitat. Natuurlike habitat...jy weet, ek glo daaraan om, om diere aan te moedig om na jou tuin toe te gaan. So jy plant plante wat natuurlik daar voorkom en wat vir die diere tot hulpmiddel sal wees, skuiling of voedsel of iets in daai lyn is.

Navorser: En kyk iemand agter hierdie roosboom? Jy het nou-nou gesê hulle snoei die plant, die goedjies wat nou afval.

Deelnemer: Word skoon en netjies gehou ja, die tye wat hy moet gesnoei word, word gesnoei.

Navorser: Wie doen dit?

Deelnemer: Dit sal maar seker, jy weet, meestal ek wees, tensy ek iemand kan leer hoe om dit te doen.

Navorser: Ok en hoe jy het gesê dit gaan nou-nou begin reën. Daar's blou wolkies, maar jy hoop dit begin reën. Is dit vir die roosboom, hoekom wil hulle hê dit moet reën?

Deelnemer: Ja, wel ja ons het 'n droë seisoen gehad, maar dis 'n matter of speech, jy weet. Reën is goed. Kan nie net altyd sonskyn en warm weer hê nie, die seisoene verander. Na winter is daar lente en na lente is dit somer en dan moet dit reën en daar moet water wees. So ja, die plante het dit nodig en die diere ook.

Navorser: En lyk jou boom soos 'n roosboom? Soos as ander mense verby loop sal hulle sê: Ah kyk daai roosboom. Of lyk dit meer soos 'n sonneblom?

Deelnemer: (Sê gelyke tyd) Sonneblom

Navorser: Is dit? Soos van vêraf met die kleure dalk?

Deelnemer: Die sonne...wat vir my mooi is van 'n sonneblom en ek is baie lief vir 'n sonneblom, ek het dit nou al baie keer geteken. Ek het net 'n groot liefde vir die sonneblomme want hy's lief vir die son, hy draai altyd sy gesig na die son. Jy kan 'n roosboom, ag jy kan 'n sonneblom plant net waar jy wil en soos wat die son draai deur die dag draai sy gesiggie ook, ek weet nie of jy dit geweet het nie.

Navorser: Ek het nie dit geweet nie.

Deelnemer: Ja en 'n sonneblom is nie net mooi nie, hy ruik nou wel nie baie lekker nie, dis nou nie asof hy 'n reuk...reukblom is nie, maar hy, daar's sade in en hulle maak olie daarvan en dis mooi. Die bye is daar, al daai blaartjies om sy gesiggie, dit is net iets moois. Ek is natuurlik verskriklik allergies vir sy...daai pollen...die stuifmeel. Ek is baie allergies daarvoor so as...ek kan 'n sonneblom sal ek aanhou, nê en ek sal dit plant in my tuin en sulke goeters nê en kan dit in die huis hê maar sodra daai stuifmeel afval moet ek dit verwyder want dit pla my. Dis waar die protea nou weer 'n ongelooflike...dis my tweede een in lyn...dis 'n protea. Protea is...oh en ek is mal oor die...ek is eintlik mal oor enige protea maar ek hou van 'n protea wat uhm, mooi kleur het jy weet, hy moet pienk en rooi wees en so koning protea wees en al daai sagte goedjies aan hom en alles. Dit is so mooi. Die koning protea en die sonneblom is vir my baie amper dieselfde, die een is net geel en die ander is rooi en pienk. Maar dit is my twee blomme. Die protea...ek is mal oor 'n protea ruiker.

Navorser: Ek verstaan. Staan, staan hierdie bossie uit?

Deelnemer: Hierdie een?

Navorser: Ja.

Deelnemer: Ja hy doen.

Navorser: In vergelyking met die ander blomme en natuur en plante wat daar is.

Deelnemer: Dis striking. Dis net striking. Hy staan nie noodwendig in sy grootte uit nie, maar is die kleur en die feit dat hy mooi groen is en hy groei, alles daai dis mooi want mense sal dit eerste raaksien want jy kom in...my oë sien ek dit by die hek want dis waar ek my heining wil opsit en my roosbome wil

plant, is...is by die hek. Mense gaan dit eerste sien en die roosbome gaan vir hulle opvallend wees. Die proteas en sonneblomme is in die tuin maar jy moet hulle ontdek.

Navorser: En wat gebeur met die boom soos wat die seisoene verander, jy't nou-nou gesê die seisoene verander. Wat gebeur dan met hierdie boom.

Deelnemer: Ja, wel as dit winter word gaan ons dood. Die plant gaan nie dood nie, maar die blomme gaan af en die blare gaan af. En daar is byvoorbeeld op die plaas is daar mooi veldblomme wat dit...dit gaan dood, maar onder...onder die grond lewe hy nog die bol is daar uhm...maar wanneer die seisoen weer kom, kom hy weer op en hy groei weer en sien jy hom weer. En hy...daars baie blomme wat baie interessant is maar jou proteas ook, hulle is ook plante wat nie daarvan hou dat hulle wortels gesteur word nie. Sonneblom gaan heeltemal dood weer, as 'n sonneblom se seisoen verby is, as hy geblom het en jy het hom gepluk en hys geoes dan is dit dit en moet jy weer nuwes plant of soos wat ek partykeer doen ek los dat saad op die grond val en homself voortplant ek plant hom nie noodwendig self nie, volgende seisoen dan kom hulle net weer self op. Maar 'n protea gaan nie dood dood nie, die bos staan daar en sy blomme is geoes en alles is af, maar hy gaan nog, hy't nog sy blare en hy gaan aan. Roosboom ook, jy moet hom snoei jy moet hom afsny en terugsny dat hy kan weer mooier groei.

Navorser: Het die boom 'n goeie toekoms daar?

Deelnemer: Ek hoop so...

Navorser: Gaan iemand dit dalk afkap?

Deelnemer: Oh fok nee ek hoop nie so.

Navorser: Het die boom 'n goeie toekoms daar of wat gaan gebeur?

Deelnemer: Solank as wat ek versorg word...enige iets...as jy...solank as wat daar gekyk word en versorg word en... nie neglect word nie, sal enige iets blom en groei, enige iets sal floreer... maar sodra daar niemand is wat meer omgee nie sal niks meer groei nie.

Navorser: En wat gaan met die boom gebeur, gaan jy dan?

Deelnemer: Ek of die boom?

Navorser: Die boom.

Deelnemer: Die boom gaan vrek. Gaan natuurlik doodgaan, hy gaan nie net vanself...hy gaan dit dalk miskien, hy sal...ek weet nie, hy sal dalk nie noodwendig dadelik vrek nie, want dit sal reën en die seisoene sal gaan aangaan, maar hy gaan net, hy gaan lelik word, hy gaan uit proporsie uitgroeï hy gaan nie meer so, hy gaan nie meer sy volle potensiaal bereik nie en dan sal hy seker eventueel doodgaan want die goggos gaan hom opeet.

Navorser: En die blaarjies, val dit ook af saam met die blomme?

Deelnemer: Wat de fok?...Is dit wat hulle dit deesdae noem. (Lag)

Navorser: Soos uhm as, as, die seisoene nou verander, verloor die boom sy blare ook of net die blomme.

Deelnemer: Nee, net die blomme, die blare is daar. Jy het die blare nodig, hel, anderste... dit hang af watter tipe plant jy is, nè. Maar as ons nou praat van roosbome en proteas die blare bly, die stam is daar, bogronds groei hy nog hy dra nog lewe want hy het sy blare nodig om suurstof te produseer hy het sy biologiese stappe nodig om deur te gaan anders gaan hy anyway vrek en as jy al sy blare afsny gaan hy doodgaan, maar as ons praat van 'n sonneblom gaan hy heeltemal doodgaan as die seisoen verander, soos ek sê as sy doel gedien is, is hy uit.

Navorser: Is enige van die blommetjies of blare giftig, jy weet is daar iets wat die boom probeer weghou.

Deelnemer: Nee, jy kan, alles kan jy eet. Die blomme...kyk rose gebruik hulle in kos en water en bad, oh dis die een lekker ding van rose veral as dit lekker ruik. Vars rose te pluk, ek het 'n vriendin gehad wat 'n roostuin gehad het, sy, ek weet nie eers hoeveel roosbome, sy het seker honderd roosbome in haar tuin gehad het en as sy gesny het, ons het nou, as jou roos baie oopgaan verloor hy nou baie van sy reuk, maar dit het nie gepla nie, want as jy dit in die badwater gooi dan ruik dit steeds lekker. Ek het dit gelike om in roosblare te bad, dis lekker.

Navorser: Ja, dis special.

Deelnemer: Dit is en ek het dit nou al vir ander ook gedoen.

Navorser: Ja, dit voel net lekker.

Deelnemer: Dit is nè...en dan...maar jy kan eintlik enige blomme gebruik, selfs die sonneblom se blare kan jy, daai geel blaartjies kan jy gebruik, die sonneblom sade sal jy gebruik vir kos, jy kan dit self eet vir jou diere voer, alles. Ek is mal daarvoor om sonneblomsaad te eet.

Navorser: Ok en is daar iets wat die boom seermaak, die boom nou. Soos insekte of jy weet iets wat die takkies kom eet.

Deelnemer: Ja,...ek dink 'n roosboom se grootste vyand is...miere.

Navorser: Miere?

Deelnemer: Ja, is miere. So jy moet maar altyd sorg dat hy nie miere het op hom nie en dat hy nie te veel water kry nie, want dan gaan sy wortels vrot en hy...jy weet daar is goeters wat hom skade kan doen en dis hoekom 'n mens so goed na hom moet kyk. Jy moet weet, jy moet ingelig wees. Kan nie net goed aanhou en dan weet jy nie waarom dit gaan nie.

Navorser: Mhmm. Dit is hoekom ons die mans moet aanhou nie ☺

Deelnemer: Of mans ons moet aanhou nie ☺

Navorser: Ok, ek gaan nou vir jou 'n paar goedjies terug lees, jy weet wat jy gesê het.

Deelnemer: Ok.

Navorser: Dan wil ek hê ons moet bietjie dink, hoe is dit dieselfde in jou lewe. Verstaan jy, hoe wat jy vir my gesê het, hoe kan ons dit terugbring na jou lewe toe, in verband bring en wie jy is as 'n mens. Jy kan my onderbreek, ek sal goedjies sê wat ek dink en jy kan vir my sê wat jy dink dit beteken het.

Deelnemer: Ok

Navorser: Ons wil net dink aan jou eie lewe, want hierdie is 'n projeksie.

Deelnemer: So verwag ja.

Navorser: Ok, jy het gesê jy is 'n bosserige boom en hy moet kan groei en ek dink dis jy ook. Jy gaan nie kan, mens kan nie jou beperk nie. Jy wil, jy's oop vir alles en jy wil groei en jy lees baie oor dinge en jy wil leer, dit is, dis hoe jy.. Jy wil nie beperk voel nie. Dalk is ek verkeerd?

Deelnemer: Nee, ek wil nie beperk nie. Ek kan nie in 'n kantoor sit met 'n cubicle nie. Oh hel ek sal...dan sal ek vrek. Dit is soos...

Navorser: Jou siel sal doodgaan

Deelnemer: Ja,...ek sal. Dis hoekom, ek kan geen beroep.

Navorser: Jy wil groei en leer en ontwikkel en jou eie besluite maak? Jy wil nie van 9 tot 5 vir iemand anders werk nie?

Deelnemer: Ek het al probeer om net ter wille van finansies te gaan werk. Ek kan nie lank uithou nie. Drie maande nê, dit begin, dan voel ek dit.

Navorser: Is dit oor die roetine?

Deelnemer: Dis daai ingehokdheid. Ek kan, ek kan werk, ek is mal oor werk, maar ek moet kan uitkyk, daar moet 'n groot venster wees, ek moet kan son hê, ek moet kan uitkyk. En ek moenie beperk wees tot...nou moet jy dit so, so, roetine nie. Ek kan nie, ek, roetine is goed, ek stem saam daarmee en dit gee ook in 'n mate groei vir myself ook, jy weet soos toe ek vir Jaco ook byvoorbeeld gewerk het. Dit is die enigste werk waar ek twee jaar gewerk het. Maar dis omdat ek nie beperk was nie, hy het nie my brein in, hy het my gelos dat ek bietjie dink en ek kon die kantoor run eintlik soos wat ek wou. Hy't goeters van my verwag, dis deel van die roetine. Ek moes Vrydag sorg dat my filing gedoen is, maar wanneer ek dit gedoen het, maak dit nie saak nie...uhm...jy weet so daar was pligte en daar was deadlines en dit was fantasties, dis lekker...

Navorser: Ja, jy weet wat van jou verwag word.

Deelnemer: Yes, Yes.

Navorser: Maar jy kan dit op jou eie tyd doen.

Deelnemer: Daarsy! En ek kan dit beplan en ek kan dit doen, struktureer soos wat dit vir my werk.

Navorser: Ja.

Deelnemer: En ek sal in enige werk, ek kan nie in 'n bank werk nie, ek het al probeer. Standard Bank werk nie vir my nie. Ek het my beste probeer. Dis nie eers die geld nie, ek kan met geld werk en het al met groot somme geld in my lewe gewerk, geld pla my nie, dis nie 'n commodity wat ek nou sal voel ek moet dit steel om daarvan te kan hê nie, maar uhm...ek kan nie in daai cube werk nie.

Navorser: En daar's geen mense verhoudings nie.

Deelnemer: Niks. Kyk daar's alle kleure van mense en geure en alles nê, niemand kan dieselfde wees nie, maar ek sal dit gelike het byvoorbeeld om uhm soos 'n, ek sou graag 'n berader wil wees, want ek kan my mense sien en met hulle praat en werk en alles. Dit is baie dieselfde soos jou opset.

Navorser: Hulle ondersteun.

Deelnemer: Daarsy...dis hoe ek is. Ek kan nie beperk word nie.

Navorser: En jy wil iets vir hulle beteken.

Deelnemer: Ja, nee hel ek wil darem voel ek dien 'n doel. Ja wil nie net asemhaal nie.

Navorser: Goed deposit wat enige iemand kan doen nie. En jy het genoem jy's medium na groot en ek dink jy is nog besig om te groei, jy weet as 'n mens. Jy's definitief nie meer so klein soos toe jy in die kindershuis was nie?

Deelnemer: Nee, nee.

Navorser: Jy't baie gegroei sedert toe, maar jy's medium, jy word nog groot?

Deelnemer: Daar's altyd plek vir groei. Ek voel ek het nog nie my doel in die lewe bereik nie, definitief nie. Ek weet wat ek wil doen, maar dit shit ek weet nie hoe dit gaan regkry nie. Ek sit en bedink dit nog.

Navorser: Die drama om nog te gaan swot.

Deelnemer: Daarsy.

Navorser: Jy's besig om kinders groot te maak en te help met die besigheid en julle huis.

Deelnemer: Maar ek wil nie meer so erg op die besigheid wees nie, ek sal, ek wil na-uurs met die besigheid besig wees. Ek sal hulle boeke doen en ek sal alles doen wat ek nog kan doen, maar my, ek wil hê iets in myself, want ek kry nie erkenning nie.

Navorser: Ja?

Deelnemer: Jacques erken glad nie dit wat ek doen nie, hy sê vir my hy erken dit maar ek hoor hoe praat jy met mense. Jy weet hy't ons amper in 'n kontrak ingedruk wat baie nadelig sou gewees het, die ou het so cocky geraak hy wou die besigheid se naam verander en hy wou 'n ander bankrekening gestig het en ek weet nie wat alles nie en ek moet fokkit, ek het hard gewerk aan die stigting van daai besigheid om 'n logo en kleur en styl skrif en al die invoices en kwotasie papiere en dokumentasies en kontrakte en goeters op te stel. Dit was ek gewees jy weet.

Navorser: Jy was soos 'n grafiese ontwerper.

Deelnemer: Alles en weet jy wat nê, hy't gegaan, nadat ek vir hom gesê het: Moenie dat hierdie ou, want die ou wou sommer 50 persent van die kontrak ook gehad het. Toe sê ek vir hom, maar fok hierdie ou kom van die straat af, hy het nie, niks geïnvest in exclusive carpentry nie, hoe kan hy toelaat dat 'n vreemdeling dit doen nie en jis, dit frustreer die wit-waks kak uit my, nê. Jacques het my nie geglo nie. Die ou was skelm, dis straight forward nê, helder soos daglig, maar Jacques wou my nie glo nie en dit is wat my die seerste gemaak het punt nommer een. Dit was die seerste deel van die hele

saak is dat Jacques wou my nie glo nie. Ek is 'n 50 persent aandeelhouer in die besigheid hy het gaan, voortgegaan om met mense kontrakte en ooreenkomste aan te gaan sonder dat ek enige iets bygewoon het. So hy erken my nie, so dit was die twee goeters wat my baie seergemaak het en toe ek vir hom gesê het: "Jis Jacques nê, jy gaan al die werk doen nê en die ou gaan net sit en pocket, jy kan dit mos nie toelaat nie. Toe wou hy my nie glo nie. Hy het daarop aangedring. Hy het aangedring daarop dat ek met die boekhouer praat en by haar eers haar opinie kry en toe ek dit vir haar sê toe het sy omtrent sewe flip-flappe gemaak. Toe sê sy vir my daar is nie 'n manier nie. Hy kan nie 50 persent kry nie, hy kan either vir julle werk op 'n kontrak basis of 'n sub-kontrak basis en hy sal met sy gewig deel moet bydrae, maar dis dit. Die ou kan nie net...en toe ek dit vir Jacques sê, toe glo hy dit eers. Nadat ek met die boekhouer gepraat het, en weet jy wat, toe hy nou na die tyd met sy pa hulle en met ander mense nou oor die hele scenario nou praat toe sê hy, maar hy't gesien hoe die ou besig is om ons in te doen en hy het toe besluit om met die boekhouer te praat en hy het toe gesien maar dit gaan nie werk nie. Net om dit vir jou te sê nê, hier, is soos fokken...so...ek belowe vir jou, dis hoekom ek dit nie meer wil doen nie. My niggie sê ja nee, but let it go, nê maar uhm fokkit dis nou al...

Navorser: Dis geen acknowledgement nie.

Deelnemer: Niks...dis nou al vir 12...na 12 jaar. En Jacques kan nie enige erkenning gee nie, so wat sê dit? Hy's so selfsugtig hy kan nie eers dink daaraan dat ek is partner in die besigheid nie. As hy van die begin af geweet het...en weet jy dit is nie die eerste fight wat ons daaroor gehad het...dit is nie die eerste keer dat dit gebeur het nie dit is nou al die honderdste keer dat dit gebeur. En met alles in die lewe gaan dit so, met enige iets in die lewe aangaan, hy erken my nie, hy sê vir my oh ja-nee hy kan my nie verloor nie, hy kan nie, wie gaan vir hom die besigheid goeters doen en alles en warra-warra-warra. Maar as dit kom by belangrike besluite en dinge en ek is 'n 50 persent aandeelhouer van die besigheid dan word ek glad nie eers ge-erken nie. Word glad nie in ag geneem nie, ek is, ek word heeltemal op sy gestoot, ek word, ek, dan word ek skielik die poppie in die kantoor...ja...maar wanneer die werk gedoen moet word.

Navorser: Dan's jy 'n aandeelhouer.

Deelnemer: Dan's ek nou fokken belangrik hoor. Ja jy sien...nou't ek weet nie, nou's ons skoon van die punt af.

(Beide lag)

Navorser: Waar was ons? Jy't gesê jy wil wild groei en ek dink dis maar hoe jy is, jy wil nie beperk word nie.

Deelnemer: Ja ek wil my eie ding doen. Dis hoekom ek sê ek wil vir Jacques in sy moer in stuur...

Navorser: Sodat jy kan groei?

Deelnemer: ...en vir hom sê stel jou kantoor poppie aan...

Navorser: Ja.

Deelnemer: Gaan aan daarso en betaal haar 'n salaris, want fok ek kry nie eers 'n salaris nie omdat ek 'n aandeelhouer is...uhm so ek...ek wil my eie ding doen.

Navorser: Ja.

Deelnemer: Ek wil net asseblief fokken my eie ding doen. Ek wil dit nie meer, ek wil nie meer vir iemand...

Navorser: ...werk nie.

Deelnemer: Nee, ek wil my eie geld maak

Navorser: Besluite maak?

Deelnemer: Ja.

Navorser: Ok en dit is wat jy gesê het met hierdie roosboom ook, jy wil nie beperk wees nie en jy wil nog steeds netjies wees.

Deelnemer: Ja.

Navorser: ...jy weet op die oog af, alles in plek, alles is jy netjies. Hou jy ook daarvan om in 'n omgewing te wees as dinge op hulle plek is en as dit deurmekaar is dan word jy mal?

Deelnemer: Ek haat chaos, ek haat dit.

Navorser: So jy wil nie dit hê nie?

Deelnemer: Moet netjies wees. Ek fokken haat die situasie waarin ons sit nou, want ons bly nou in 'n kantoor.

Navorser: Ek onthou jy het dit gesê.

Deelnemer: En as die kinders goeters laat rondlê en die plek is nie netjies nie, ek kan nie sonder 'n bediende klaarkom nie.

Navorser: Dit maak jou mal as jy by die huis kom en jy sien dit?

Deelnemer: Ja, dis soos naels op 'n bord. Ek voel ek is nie...en ek is jammer en ek sê dit met alle respek, maar ek is nie 'n huis-mait nie. Ek dink die Here het my genoeg intelligensie gegee om iets beter met my tyd te maak.

Navorser: Iets vir iemand te beteken.

Deelnemer: Ek is nie 'n huis-mait nie. Ek haat dit om huis skoon te maak, ek haat dit om skottelgoed te was, ek sal sover gaan nog om nog kos te kook, maar ek sal vinnig die mait leer koskook ook. (Lag) Ek wil iets anderste doen met my lewe, maar, dis die frustrasie wat praat. Dis nie, ek, vandat ek jou laas gesien het dit pak so op.

Navorser: Dit voel asof jy gaan ontplof?

Deelnemer: Kan ek nie maar 'n kamer in Denmar kry nie? Ek's ernstig. Ek kan dit voel. Ek sê dit nou al vir lank.

Navorser: Dis hoekom jy jou horlosie stukkend gooi?

Deelnemer: Ja.

Navorser: Jy het gesê jou roosboom sterk. Ek dink ook jy is baie sterk. Jy groei op en oop.

Deelnemer: Te sterk na my sin.

Navorser: Jy is uniek en jy sê jy's 'n sonneblom, ag 'n roosboom maar met 'n sonneblom se kleure daarin.

Deelnemer: Ja, ja.

Navorser: Uhm en warm kleure en dis hoe jy ook is? Jou persoonlikheid is maar soos ook, dis warm, daar's rooi en daar's geel en oranje, sulke diep kleure. Jy is 'n warm mens, jy is baie opreg. Ek weet altyd waar ek met jou staan. Jy's opreg sonder pretensies.

Deelnemer: Ja, maar jy gaan dit tog sien en hoor. Ja nee ek is forgiving, ek gaan dit nie vir altyd teen jou hou nie.

Navorser: Jy is 'n warm mens en jy wil netjies wees, en trim, maar dit is maar met jou omgewing ook het ons gesê. En daar is buds en daar's oop blomme en ek dink baie van jou het al gegroei en dis oop maar daar is tog gedeeltes in jou wat nog kan groei, soos jou beroep?

Deelnemer: Ja. Daarsy.

Navorser: Jy he genoem dat die wortels is diep, uhm, ja en die wortels moenie blootgestel word nie, dit moet bedek wees. Is jy konservatief? Jy het goeie morele waardes, jou wortels gaan...jy weet jy glo aan reg en verkeerd en dis hoe dinge gedoen moet word.

Deelnemer: Ja, verseker.

Navorser: Maar almal sien dit nie altyd nie, jy wys nie altyd alles nie?

Deelnemer: Die groot ding ja,

Navorser: Dis baie versteek onder die grond, maar tog is dit daar en dis diep en dit gaan nie verander nie?

Deelnemer: Nee, ek sal sê...kyk ek weet ek is definitief 'n ekstrovert en ek is outgoing en ek kan...ek is oop, soos jy sê ek is oop vir alles, nê...en ja ek is konserwatief. Daar is sekere goeters wat ek nou rêrig nie sal probeer nie, maar daar is tog goeters wat ek sal probeer wat mense sal skok, wat hulle gedink het...oh wat de hel.

Navorser: Ek het dit nie van jou verwag nie?

Deelnemer: nê, jy weet ek kan mense ook, nê deur om goeters te doen wat nie normaal is nie, maar ek dink dit gaan meer, my emosies. Dit wat ek regtig voel en dink is baie diep in my hart. Ek sê dit nie sommer vir enige iemand nie en my vriende weet dit ook, hulle weet ek sal byvoorbeeld soos Kasper het nou die dag vir my gesê ons moet weer bietjie gaan koffie drink en koek eet en alles, want hy weet daar is nie judgment tussen ons nie. Ons praat eerlike reguit met mekaar en ek sal vir hom sê hori jy jaag kak aan of weet jy kom by. Jou vrou is nou al vir 'n jaar oorlede en jy sit met vyf kinders so wat de hel het jy gedink hoe lank gaan jy vat. Jou kinders word groot, jy sal een of ander tyd jou moet afsny en jou kinders moet laat aanhou groei en dis baie wat...dis wat ek doen dit. Ek sny my emosies en

behoefte af om te sorg dat my kinders nog aangaan. Daar was 'n ou wat ek eenkeer ontmoet het. Jis en hy was soos die perfekte man, dit was nou presies wat ek wou gehad het, maar toe's ek getroud met Jacques en het kinders so sorry vir jou poppie vergeet maar daarvan. Jy moet maar daai emosies bietjie afsny, vergeet daarvan. Ek is baie hard en kras op myself met sulke goeters so....uhm ek mis Josh baie, maar ons het niks intiem gehad nie, ons het nie seks of enige iets gehad nie jy weet, maar dit is daai...

Navorser: Connection.

Deelnemer: Hy is 'n boer, hy is lief vir diere, hys lief vir die natuur, dis wat hy doen, hys 'n goeie besigheidsman, hys 'n leier, hy neem leiding en so 'n stunning ou het in my belanggestel. Dit is soos wat? Kan nie moontlik wees nie nê, toe kom net daai een dag wat ek so skuins kyk vir hom en ons staan in daai beeskraal. Dit was soos 'n hou oor die kop, maar wat kan jy maak? Jy kan maar net huil oor die melk wat ge-spill is. Gaan niks werk nie.

Navorser: En hoop vir die toekoms dat daar moontlik iets sal wees?

Deelnemer: Nee, jy kan nie, want wanneer gaan die regte tyd wees? Hy is intussen saam 'n ander girl en waarop gaan ek dit wil opneuk. Ja, sien so stoot jou emosies op sy, moenie nou worry of jy nou nog jonk is en jy nou nog die vrugte van jonkheid kan pluk daaruit nie. Jy gaan nou maat moet either met 'n kerie moet loop eendag en dan moet daaraan dink. So julle gaan nie oor die gras vlaktes hardloop en skinnidip nie...jy weet so ja. Dit is baie soos die storie van Titanic. Daai ou tannie was altyd lief vir Jack en Jack was haar hart. Saam met Jack is haar hart ook dood, so iets gebeur. Ek is lief vir Jacques...sy was ook lief vir haar mans. Ek het daai scène so goed verstaan.

Navorser: Jy kan lief wees vir meer as een persoon. Ok en jy hou nie van dorings nie. Ek weet nie, vermy jy konflik of jy hou nie van mense wat moeilikheid veroorsaak in jou lewe nie?

Deelnemer: Ja, ek is, weet jy wat konfrontasie pla my glad nie. Ek hou nie van konfrontasie nie, maar ek kan konfronteer as ek voel.

Navorser: So is daar dalk mense wat nie goed is in jou lewe nie?

Deelnemer: Ja, ja ek hou net nie van mense wat my bullshit nie.

Navorser: Ja,

Deelnemer: Moenie my bullshit nie en ek gaan dit gou agterkom en as jy vir my lieg dan gaan ek dit ook agterkom en ek gaan die moer in raak daaroor. Ek gaan dalk, dit hang af hoe ons vriendskap gegroei het. As ons nou nie 'n moerse vriendskap aan die gang het nie dan gaan ek nie eers die moeite doen om vir jou te sê weet jy wat jy is besig om my te bullshit nie, ek gaan jou los.

Navorser: Want jy worry nie.

Deelnemer: Jy kan maar bullshit dan nou maar want môre is jy anyway weg, ek gaan jou net vermy dan, maar as jy my vriend is en ek waardeer jou vriendskap en ek wil jou an 'n mens nie verloor nie dan

gaan ek jou konfronteer en as jy na daai konfrontasie jou moer pluk en my maar afskryf dan is dit nou maar so, maar as ons van daar kan opbou dan isit nice.

Navorser: Konflik lei na groei.

Deelnemer: Ja, dit doen.

Navorser: Wanbalans.

Deelnemer: Vriende slyp mekaar.

Navorser: Soos verhoudings ook maar.

Deelnemer: Dit is nie dat ek nie van konfrontasie, ek hou nie daarvan om te baklei nie, ja dit is nie lekker nie. Ek wil eerder lag, my kinders weet ook ek wil...jis maar Jacques...

Navorser: Jy vermy die dorings?

Deelnemer: Jacques kan partykeer baie, hys nie baie humoristies nie, so...ons het nie vreeslik baie lag in die huis nie.

Navorser: Jy en Daniel het?

Deelnemer: Daarsy ja.

Navorser: Jou kinders is jou soulmates?

Deelnemer: Mhmm, baie.

Navorser: En jy het gesê die boom is op 'n plaas en in die natuur en die wolkies blou. Ek dink jy hou baie van die natuur en jy wil nie in 'n pot wees nie. Dis daai hele ding van moenie my beperk nie ek wil in die grond wees en daar's 'n heininkie om vir veiligheid sodat nie net enige iemand na jou kan stap en naby jou uitkom, en sulke goeters nie, maar jy is nog steeds naby aan 'n huis, daar's veiligheid. Naby aan ander mense, jy's 'n ekstrovert, so jy wil nie alleen iewers in die middel van die oseaan wees nie. Jy's naby aan 'n huis en ander mense.

Deelnemer: Ja, ja.

Navorser: So as jy in 'n goeie omgewing is wat jou goed ondersteun en wat jou nurture en wat jou waardeer en jou erken dan sal jy eers kan groei?

Deelnemer: Daarsy...presies so.

Navorser: Andersins gaan jy nie kan ontwikkel as 'n mens nie. Kry jy dit op die oomblik?

Deelnemer: Ja en dis wat my so frustreer. Ek is verskriklik frustreerd.

Navorser: Dis hoekom jy hartseer is op die oomblik en dit borrel op in jou want jy het nie spasie om...jy word nie ge-nurture nie, jy word nie waardeer, jy word nie erken nie, jy het nie goeie grond om in te kan groei nie, op die oomblik is die hele situasie met die besigheid, dit beperk jou van wie jy kan wees en wat jy vir ander mense kan doen. Jy kan nie verder groei nie?

Deelnemer: Daarsy

Navorser: Jy wil in die natuur wees, jy wil nie in 'n pot wees. Jy het gesê, wie de hel wil in 'n pot wees?

Deelnemer: Ja, presies.

Navorser: Jy soek goeie grond, jy soek spasie, jy wil nogsteeds netjies wees, maar dit moet jou nie beperk nie soos met die heininkie om jou.

Deelnemer: Ja en in die natuur. Ek verlang so daarna

Navorser: Dit sal jou gelukkig maak en help om verder...

Deelnemer: Ek verlang na dit.

Navorser: Weet jy hoekom?

Deelnemer: Dis vir my so lekker as my vriende na my toe kom en jis ek het baie ure op Kasper gesit waar ek baie met hom gesels het op die telefoon en op whatsapp 'n alles wat ek hom bygestaan het. So dit is vir my lekker om dit te doen.

Navorser: Ja en jy voel jy het 'n doel?

Deelnemer: Ek weet Jacques het my nodig, ek weet Jacques is lief vir my, ek weet dit nê, maar somehow weet ek nie hoekom werk dit nie uit nie. Ek weet nie hoekom voel ek so ongelukkig nie. Ek kan nie verstaan hoekom voel ek ongelukkig saam met hom nie, maar dit is nie dat ek nie lief is vir hom nie en ek weet hy's lief vir my. So hoekom werk dit nie uit nie. Wat is die probleem. Lê die fout by my. Is dit ek?

Navorser: Wat dink jy?

Deelnemer: Is dit iets wat ek. Is my expectations dalk nie reg nie, wat is die probleem? So ek verstaan nie dit nie, dis soos 'n plek waar ek nie my vinger kan opsit nie.

Navorser: Gee hy vir jou wat jy nodig het?

Deelnemer: Maar is my verwagtinge nie dalk verkeerd nie. Hy sal byvoorbeeld as ek vir hom sê ek wil graag berading kom...dis hoekom ek dit nog nooit gedoen het nie. Waar Josh het sommer die eerste dag ook al net...hy het gesê dis sommer kak hierdie dat ek nie my drama klaar geswot het nie, hy't sommer lus en stuur my terug dat ek dit klaar gaan maak. Verstaan jy? Iemand soos dit, wat bietjie vir my, sê nee fok weet jy, jy het nou genoeg vir die samelewing gedoen wanneer doen jy iets vir jouself. Dit is sulke goeters wat my aangetrek het tot Josh. Ek meen dit kon enige iemand anderste gewees het, maar hy het regtig, jy weet dis asof hy gesien het, daar is definitief potensiaal en hy het dit raakgesien.

Navorser: en hy moedig jou aan?

Deelnemer: Daarsy. Dis hoe ek ook daaroor voel, want Jacques weet ek wil graag berading gaan studeer en ek wil graag hierdie goeters doen en ek doen dit nooit nie, want ek kry nie aanmoediging van hom af nie.

Navorser: Dis wat jy gesê het dis meestal ek wat agter die boom kyk, behalwe as jy iemand leer om dit te doen.

Deelnemer: Dis hoe ek voel.

Navorser: Dis jy. Ek het gevra wie kyk agter en wie snoei dit en hou dit netjies en alles en toe sê jy meestal ek wat agter die boom kyk...behalwe as ek iemand kan leer om dit te doen.

Deelnemer: Spesifiek emosioneel.

Navorser: Emosioneel.

Deelnemer: Definitief emosioneel.

Navorser: Dan het jy nou jou pelle wat jou bietjie ondersteun en help?

Deelnemer: Maar ek het selfs nie baie tyd daarvoor nie, want ek moet daar wees en ek kan nie die heeltyd aan my vriende aandag gee nie. Jy weet hulle kla ook hulle kry my nie in die hande op my foon nie. Sulke tipe goeters.

Navorser: Jy's te besig

Deelnemer: Daar is net nie tyd daarvoor nie.

Navorser: Met die besigheid en jy run alles.

Deelnemer: Dit is wat vir my so sleg is. Ek is maar net daar en ek voel misbruik en weet jy wat as Jacques nou hier gesit het, sou hy gesê het maar dit is nie so nie.

Navorser: Dit is so as jy so voel.

Deelnemer: Maar wat anderste is dit dan. Want hy sê so en ek sê so en dit is heeltemal die teenoorgestelde so wie's nou reg of wat is die waarheid? Is my verwagtinge te hoog of vereis ek dalk te veel? Wat is die probleem? Want dit voel rêrig vir my en dis hoekom ek dink ons so baie baklei is dat hy en dit frustreer my want hys gelukkig in 'n pot. En jy weet hy druk my ook in daai pot in. Die probleem is. Kyk omdat Jacques tevrede is om in 'n pot te bly groei ons nie finansiële soos wat ons moet wat dit vir my kan moontlik maak om daai kursusse te loop nie, want as die geld daar beskikbaar was. Tyd is nie 'n probleem nie, maar as die geld daar was, het ek my ingeskryf. Maar nou is hy gestagneer tot die pot en ek het hierdie ideale en drome en ek wil graag, jy weet hy sê ook hy het dit, maar dis asof...

Navorser: Hy's happy met waar hy is.

Deelnemer: Dis net vir my so moeilik. Dit wat hy sê en dit hoe hy optree is nie dieselfde nie. Dit is wat my so frustreer want hy sê een ding en dan wil ek hom graag glo, maar hy bly in die pot, hy bly beperk en groei nie uit nie. As ek vir hom sê kom ons moet by die deadline hou dan...dan sê ek vir hom Jacques die werk kry nie klaar nie, want julle werk nie vinnig genoeg nie of hy neem nie leiding met die werkers nie. Maar dan sê hy dis wie hy is.

Navorser: Ek dink ek moes jou eintlik gevra het om 'n sonneblom boom te geteken het. Want jy draai altyd jou gesiggie na die son toe alhoewel jy, daar is slegte goeters wat gebeur jy bly steeds optimisties en jy't hoop en jy's positief en jy beweeg...ek weet nie, jy gaan lê nie en draai jou gesig weg vanaf die vreugde en warmte van die lewe nie.

Deelnemer: As dit bewolk is dan soek ek maar die son en ek raak verbouereerd as daar nie daai son is nie, maar ek glo dat die son môre weer sal skyn. So ek raak bedruk en ek raak depressief ja ek doen. Ek raak partykeer verskriklik depressief, ek raak so depressief ek voel ek kan selfmoord pleeg.

Navorser: Dit raak net te veel?

Deelnemer: Maar ek het al baie kere begin dink my lewe is vervloek en ek is vervloek en ek kan net geen sukses bereik nie, want daar's iets fout met my. Jy weet so ek was al so depressief en frustreerd dat ek al my testament geskryf het. Solank as wat ek versorg word gaan ek 'n goeie toekoms hê. Moenie dat ek neglected word nie, want dan gaan ek eers kan floreer want as niemand vir my gaan omgee nie gaan ek vrek. Seisoene gaan aangaan maar ek gaan nie noodwendig my potensiaal bereik nie, want daar gaan goggas wees. Sonder iemand wat jy ondersteun 'n ma en 'n pa en mense wat jou expose so goggas, jy weet slegte mense wat jou kom afbreek of met jou doen wat hulle wil en jy gaan vrek as niemand vir jou gaan omgee nie. As jy nie daai gaan kry nie...sjo...die sonneblom wat kos gee. Al die blommetjies wat jy het, het 'n doel. Dis vir kos, dis vir...die nie noodwendig vir reuk nie, dit alles het 'n doel. So jy sal 'n uitstekende berader maak, maar ek dink nie jy groei en floreer soveel as wat jy kan op die oomblik nie. Is daar rêrig iemand wat daar is vir jou en wat vir jou omgee en jou ondersteun, jou nurture en jou versorg. Word jy nie neglect op die oomblik in jou huwelik nie? Seksueel, emosioneel, ek weet nie.

Navorser: Niks kan groei en floreer as dit neglect word nie.

Deelnemer: Nee, jy kan nie, daar is geen manier nie.

Navorser: Goggas gaan kom en ek weet nie of dit besig is om op die oomblik met jou te gebeur nie?

Deelnemer: Dit is hoe ek voel. Dis hoekom ek vir jou hierdie gaan lees wat ek op my facebook geskryf het so rukkig terug. Dit is hoe ek voel en ek voel skuldig omdat ek so voel.

Navorser: Kan jy glo jy teken vir my 'n boompie en al hierdie goed kom uit? Watse boodskap het jy gekry uit hierdie aktiwiteit. Watter boodskap het jy gehoor? En weet jy wat, nie ek nie, jy het dit vir jouself gesê.

Deelnemer: Nee, dit is definitief reg.

Navorser: Jy kon vir my iets heeltemal anders gewys het maar jy het besluit om hierdie inligting vir my te gee. Dit kom van jou af, jy probeer vir jouself 'n boodskap stuur.

Deelnemer: Want dis regtig hoe ek voel, dit voel vir my asof ek besig is om dood te gaan. Dit voel vir my asof my einde naby is. Dit voel asof ek enige tyd hierdie jaar gaan doodgaan. Ek dink my tyd is naby want ek voel so doelloos en dit voel vir my asof ek net niks bereik nie, dis regtig hoe ek voel, ek voel ek gaan net 36 jaar oud word en that's it.

Navorser: Weet jy hoe uniek is daai blomme, dis geel en rooi en oranje en dan gaan daai boom dood dit is die sadste ding want dit staan uit, dis striking, dis uniek, dit het so baie om te offer vir mense.

Deelnemer: Dit voel nie so nie.

Navorser: Jy het nog nie die medium gevind van hoe jy dit kan doen nie?

Deelnemer: Onderdruk ja en ek moet dit heeltyd onderdruk want daar's nie tyd of plek of geld of niks daarvoor nie. Jy weet as ek net die ondersteuning gehad het en die toerusting gehad het nê, dan kon ek dit doen, maar omdat dit nie daar is nie, gaan dit nou maar verwelk en dit gaan nou maar gaan. Ek het hierdie geskryf so rukkie terug en dit was toe ek nogal baie erg so gevoel het: As haat soos 'n kanker sel stadig en stil vermeerder, as hy kom steel wat eens iets was, as hy soos olie op water gaan lê om te smoor, waar is jou einde doring in my vlees, waar is jou krag met jou hande styf om my keel geklem, met jou vinger diep in my keel afgedruk, ek wil jou uitbraak maar my lippe pers saam, hoe stop 'n mens iets wat eens niks was.

Navorser: Het jy dit geskryf?

Deelnemer: Mhmmm.

Navorser: Skryf jy baie sulke goed?

Deelnemer: Ek dink dit is hoe ek oorkook. Ek prit en prit en dan kook dit so.

Navorser: Skryf jy hierdie goed in 'n boek neer?

Deelnemer: Ek het klomp dinge wat ek al neergeskryf het in 'n boek.

Navorser: Wil jy dit nie vir my saambring as ek jou weer sien nie?

Deelnemer: Ek sal.

Navorser: Dan kan ons daardeur werk, net die waarmee jy gemaklik voel, jy weet om te deel.

Deelnemer: Ja, net vinnig nog een. Die moeilikste ding wat ek al in my lewe ondervind het, is om voor te loop. Die wind, die storms, die aanslae en die vernedering te trotseer, jou baan uit te veg. Om die skild te wees en die swaard te dra, alhoewel ek myself kon troos met gedagtes heldinne voor my, kon ek myself net indink hoe hulle soms kon huil sonder trane, kon voel hoe 'n ark roekeloos verwoes word en die hunkering na erkenning van die een mens wat werklik sou saak maak, hoe hulle met 'n verslae hart net kon wonder, hoe het hulle hulself elke dag gemotiveer om net weer te probeer, net een keer 'n kans te vat, vir my is dit dankbaarheid vir wat ek het vir die pêrels en edelstene wat ek in my kinders se oë en harte ontdek het. Die wete dat daar wel 'n skare sigbaar en onsigbaar vir my kyk en dan die een ding wat ek dink ons almal deel 'n ongelooflike hardkoppigheid om net nie te gaan lê nie. Al is daar merke op ons vlerke al is daar letsels op ons harte want iewers is daar iemand vir wie jy veg om te lewe vreesloos. Ja, baie toevallig dat ons oor dieselfde goed gesels.

Themes:

- Positive future perspective = wants to grow / flourish
- Doesn't like to be controlled or limited → often the case at children's homes
- Needs to be viewed as positive / to make a change / to have purpose
- Avoids being hurt → self protection

- Need to be accepted / loved / nurtured / emotional support
- Relies on self for nurturing
- Mistrust / then “teach” them how to take care of her
- Tries to attract the positive in her life → not sustainable
- Going through difficult times but still growing / positive
- Resilience → stronger after adversity
- Wants to become a counselor-life goal / intense need for intellectual & life growth
- Need for recognition & acknowledgment
- Not heard / respected in marriage
- Need to control her environment & independence
- Poverty / unstable housing
- Brackets own emotions and needs for the sake of her children – compromise
- Attracted to another man whilst she was married – strong, protection
- Difficulties in her second marriage - sadness and emotional pain
- Enjoys spending time with her friends / support / make a difference
- Depression / suicidal thoughts
- Allowing her husband to sabotage her growth
- Feels guilty when she shares her emotions / stands up for what she wants
- Doesn’t have a purpose in life / feels that she did not achieve anything
- Suppresses and pretends that she is strong – but sad & depressed / outburst

Dakota Session 5

22 February 2014

NAVORSER: Jy gaan seker eers so bietjie moet dink daaraan maar ek wil hê jy moet vir my 'n bietjie dink aan 'n monster in jou lewe.

RESPONDENT: 'n Monster?

NAVORSER: Byvoorbeeld dit kan iets wees waarvan jy nie hou nie. Wat op die oomblik met jou gebeur, soos nou dat jy so besig is by die werk. Dit kan wees iets wat jy nie hou van jouself nie, sê nou maar, net voorbeelde, jy drink baie, dan kan jy 'n alkoholis monster teken of sê nou maar jy kan nie wiskunde doen nie dan kan jy 'n wiskunde monster teken. Sê nou jy vloek baie, dan kan jy 'n vloek monster teken. Dit kan iets wees waarvan jy nie hou nie of iets wat jy doen of iets in jou omgewing wat jou pla of jou frustreer. Soos byvoorbeeld 'n eks-ou wat jou nie wil uit los nie of iets wat sleg met jou gebeur het toe jy klein was, soos molestering of jy weet, jou ouers kan 'n monster wees.

RESPONDENT: Sjoue daar is baie. Ek sal moet kies.

NAVORSER: Ja, dis amper soos iets negatief wat jy nie binne van jouself hou nie, of die omgewing of 'n situasie in jou lewe. En dan moet jy dit net vir my teken. Dis 'n terapeutiese tegniek. Baie mense teken net vir my soos 'n swart kol en sê dis my monster en dan gesels ons daaroor. Dit gaan nie oor die tekening nie. So ja dis bietjie moeilik en jy moet aan dit dink. Ek gaan dan vir jou vragies vra oor daai monster. Party mense as hulle te veel eet, dan teken hulle soos 'n chocolate monster. Hahaha. Daar's so baie soos jy sê, so jy moet dalk eers 'n bietjie dink wat is belangrik vir jou..

RESPONDENT: So dit moet gebasseer wees op die current?

NAVORSER: Uhm. Dit kan ook wees in die verlede. Iets wat sleg met jou gebeur het. Byvoorbeeld 'n kar ongeluk. Of 'n ou wat op jou gecheat het, of as jy nie lojaal is nie, kan dit ook 'n monster wees. Ek probeer altyd myself in dink hoe ek sou gevoel het as ek in jou stoel was en iemand sê nou vir my om so iets te doen. Maar ten minste as jy nou proposals lees van sielkundiges en jy sien die monster tegniek of die rosebush tegniek dan kan jy sê jy het dit al gedoen. Dis dalk 'n goeie ding.

RESPONDENT: Ja wel ek sal dit try.

NAVORSER: Jy kan musiek ook aansit as jy wil.

RESPONDENT: Laat ek nou eers dink.

NAVORSER: En partykeer kry daai monster babatjies, en klomp ander monsters. Soos jy weet 'n monster is iets negatief of iets wat jy dalk nie van jouself aanvaar nie.

RESPONDENT: Wel op hierdie oomblik is my monster dat ek flippen sleg slaap. Dis maar my monster op hierdie oomblik.

NAVORSER: Ek het nie besef dis so erg nie.

RESPONDENT: Ek dink dis omdat ek so gestres is en dan voel ek bedonderd die volgende dag.

NAVORSER: Maar dis goed dat jy vir my sê. So dit gee soos nog baba monstertjies.

RESPONDENT: Ja, want nou is ek ongeduldig, bedonderd, nie lus vir die lewe nie en depressed. Insomnia.

NAVORSER: Sjoue.

RESPONDENT: Wel ek slaap wel so ek kan nie sê dis insomnia nie. Dis darem nie so erg soos dit was nie, maar dis steeds daar. So my lyf en nek raak even verskriklik seer.

NAVORSER: Mmm.

RESPONDENT: Ja, want my lyf kan nie ordentlik rus nie. Maar, ja ek dink dis maak 'n kombinasie van dinge. Ek weet nie. Byvoorbeeld en het Woensdag aand by my vriendin gaan slaap, want al waar ek kan deurslaap is by Cathy. Ek weet nie of dit 'n subconscious ding is dat ek elke keer bang is as ek alleen slaap nie, want ek het nog altyd sleg geslaap, of is dit net stres, of die yskas wat so fokken raas. Gaan jy die vloekwoorde uithaal?

NAVORSER: Wil jy hê ek moet?

RESPONDENT: Ag ek gee nie om nie. Of as ek bang is sal ek met die lig aan slaap.

NAVORSER: Maar bly sy hier naby? Bly sy in Johannesburg?

RESPONDENT: Sy bly so halfuur hier vandaan. Ek slaap baie sleg as ek alleen slaap, maar sê nou maar ek's in 'n huis waar daar mense om my is dan slaap ek ok.

NAVORSER: En by Ida hulle se huis? En by die see?

RESPONDENT: By die see was dit anders, toe het ek deur die nag wakker geword.

NAVORSER: 'n Nuwe omgewing dalk.

RESPONDENT: Dalk. Ek weet nie. Ek dink dis omdat ek in die kinderhuis was, waar daar altyd baie mense was. Dink jy nie. Ok ja, dis my monster. Kom ons maak hom sommer net swart en rooi.

NAVORSER: Dis die ergste as jy nie kan slaap nie.

RESPONDENT: Ja, kyk ek word aan die slaap maar ek word soos 5 of 6 keer wakker. Ok, gisteraand was nou nie so erg nie. Ek het gisteraand net soos 3 keer wakker geword. Maar...

NAVORSER: Word jy dan dadelik weer aan die slaap.

RESPONDENT: Ek sal either gaan piepie, water drink of 'n sigaret rook. Gisteraand het ek in my slaap geloop. Ja. Ek loop in my slaap baie keer. Ek het al in my slaap kos gemaak.

NAVORSER: Met jou oë toe?

RESPONDENT: Ek het al 'n kers in my slaap aan gestee en amper die bank af gebrand. Maar toe het ek melatonin gedrink. So toe was ek nie lekker nie.

NAVORSER: Maar hoe weet jy jy loop?

RESPONDENT: Ek word wakker terwyl ek op is, ja. En dan onthou ek die volgende oggend hoe ek wakker geword het. Soos byvoorbeeld ek sal wakker word as ek hier kom. Soos gisteraand, jis hierdie is weird, ek dink nounet hieraan. Ek het dit in my slaap gedoen, so ek was nie wakker nie. Ek het na

my badkamer toe gegaan en my nuwe groen handdoek gaan afhaal van die hoek en daar op my bed uit gegooi en toe ek hier is toe word ek wakker. Hahahaha.

NAVORSER: Ek is bly jy lag want dan kan ek ook lag. Hahahaha.

RESPONDENT: Ek het al oats pap gemaak in my slaap of ek het al koffie in my slaap gemaak. Of partykeer in my slaap geëet. Maar ja dis wanneer ek onder baie stres is.

NAVORSER: Dis hoekom ek nie meer chocolates bring nie...

RESPONDENT: Ek het gisteraand chocolates in my slaap geëet.

NAVORSER: Regtig? Waar het jy die chocolates gekry?

RESPONDENT: In hierdie onderste laai. Maar dis as ek stressed is. Dit gebeur nie gereeld nie, net so once in a while.

NAVORSER: Ja en jy wil nie hê dit moet dan gebeur nie, want dis wanneer jy jou slaap die meeste nodig het.

RESPONDENT: Exactly. Hy moet 'n snor kry.

NAVORSER: Ek het geweet daarvan, maar nie geweet dis so erg nie.

RESPONDENT: Ja wel dis nie altyd wat dit so erg is nie. Dis maar van tyd tot tyd. Nou op die oomblik is dit erg. Maar ek was actually nog altyd 'n slegte slaper. Al van kleintyd af as babatjie. My ma moes altyd met my rondry om my aan die slaap te kry en ek wou nooit in die aande bed toe gaan nie as 'n kind.

NAVORSER: Slaap jy nogsteeds met die lig aan?

RESPONDENT: Ja.

NAVORSER: Is dit 'n lampie of 'n groot lig?

RESPONDENT: 'n Groot lig, in die gang, hierso.

NAVORSER: Altyd?

RESPONDENT: Ja ek het gisteraand probeer om dit af te sit, maar toe kon ek nie.

NAVORSER: En al die deure is gesluit?

RESPONDENT: Ja.

NAVORSER: En was daar al ooit inbrake gewees by hierdie woonstel?

RESPONDENT: Nie toe... maar daar was 'n vroultjie gewees wat selfmoord gepleeg het.

NAVORSER: Hier binne? Of 'n ander woonstel.

RESPONDENT: In my garage. Maar ek weet nie watse garage nie.

NAVORSER: In haar kar?

RESPONDENT: Ja sy het haarself vergas. Ek dink.

NAVORSER: Jy weet net om my bang te maak.

RESPONDENT: Nee, ek belowe jou. Hahahaha.

NAVORSER: Ja kinders like mos spookstories.

RESPONDENT:Ja ek weet, ons het mekaar in die kindershuis altyd bang gepraat. Ja, maar ek was maar net nog altyd 'n slegte slaper, van klein tyd af. Even by die kindershuis. Ek het altyd laat gaan slaap. Ek het nooit die reëls gevolg nie en die probleem is ek werk goed in die aand, want ek sukkel in die dag.

NAVORSER:Ja, ek ook.

RESPONDENT:Ja, hierdie het begin toe ek so baie moes begin werk en dan moes ek in die aand my PhD doen. Toe het die wakker word in die aand begin, dit was nooit so al die jare nie. So... maar ek drink maar melatonin. Dis natuurlik.

NAVORSER: En die ander ding is jy drink nie.

RESPONDENT: Ek het actually die... Op 'n stadium het wyn vir my gehelp. Maar toe op 'n stadium toe werk dit nie meer vir my nie.

NAVORSER: Toe hou dit net op. Toe werk dit nie meer nie?

RESPONDENT: Nee. Ek sal nie kan slaap nie verstaan, en dan voel ek nie lekker die volgende dag nie. Twee weke terug het ek iets gedrink. En toe slaap ek nie.

NAVORSER: Het jy nie al gedink om vir hulle te vra vir slaappille nie?

RESPONDENT: My skat ek het al. Ek het al alles getry. Jy verstaan nie. Zopimed, Dormicum word ek wakker op. Stilknox word ek wakker op. Tripiline, Xanor. Daar is nie 'n slaap pil op die... Glo my ek het al soveel verskillende slaappille gedrink. En die probleem met slaappille is, ek loop in my slaap met slaappille.

NAVORSER: En dan word jy wakker terwyl jy loop?

RESPONDENT: Gisteraand het ek melatonin gedrink. Ek dink die ding is, wat gebeur...sien as ek nie 'n slaappil drink nie dan loop ek nie in my slaap nie, maar as ek dit drink... kom ek wys jou wat drink ek. Hierdie het ek gisteraand gedrink en in my slaap geloop.

NAVORSER: Met jou groen nuwe handdoek daar uitgesprei.

RESPONDENT: Ek weet nie. Dit was...kom kyk hier. (Stap kamer toe en wys pille)

RESPONDENT: Ek dink hoekom ek dit gisteraand gedoen het met die handdoek...ek is mos so obsessed met kieme en ek mag byvoorbeeld nie in my bed slaap as ek nie gestort of gebad het nie, nè? En ek mag nie op my bank slaap vuil nie, ok nie vuil nie. Maar sê nou maar ek kom van die werk af en ek wil gou 'n middag slapie vat, dan sal ek gewoonlik 'n handdoek of klein kombersie op die bank gooi. En ek dink gisteraand, gisteraand het ek nie gebad nie, want die ousie sou vandag die beddegoed omruil. So ek dink ek het gedink ek gaan op die handdoek lê en slaap. Hahahaha. Kom ons gee vir hom 'n tong.

NAVORSER: Het jy 'n wasgoeddraad hier?

RESPONDENT: Ek het een van daai rakkies wat mens so ophang.

NAVORSER: Dan het hy nog rooi oë ook. Dis dan mos juis as jy nie slaap nie, dan het jy rooi oë.

RESPONDENT: Hi, ek het nie daaraan gedink nie. En hy moet tande kry. Geel tande. 'n Dokter wou my mos na 'n slaapkliniek toe verwys het. Toe sê ek, flip jou daar is nie 'n manier dat ek na 'n slaapkliniek toe gaan nie. Dan spuit hulle jou met allerhande drugs. En my probleem is nie om aan die slaap te raak nie. Die probleem is, dis nie omdat ek mal is nie, dis net omdat ek gestres is. Of wat sê jy sielkundige? Wat dink jy is dit?

NAVORSER: Dis hoekom ons nou hierdie gaan doen om meer insig te kry.

RESPONDENT: Ok. Hy moet bene kry. Ek het toe op 'n date gegaan met my ex-boyfriend so twee weke terug.

NAVORSER: Is dit die een wat vir jou gesê het om hom nie te gebruik nie...hier is verskillende bruine. Dis mos die een wat...jy sou mos een aand saam met hom uitgegaan het.

RESPONDENT: Ja, maar blykbaar het ek dit verkeerd gehad.

NAVORSER: Ja, jy wou mos kontak hê.

RESPONDENT: Ja en toe het hy my mos nooit gekontak nie. Toe die week daarna toe hoor ek van hom en toe vra hy, hi are we still on for Friday? Toe sê ek I thought it was last Friday. Toe sê hy nee next Friday. Maar ek bedoel in Afrikaans as ek sê volgende vrydag dan is dit soos oor twee weke.

NAVORSER: Ja.

RESPONDENT: Ja, so dit was maar net miskommunikasie en dit was my fout gewees. Ja so hy was toe actually reg gewees. Dit was my fout gewees. So watter kleur sal sy skoene wees. So ja, toe was dit nou heel nice gewees, ons het toe gegaan vir dinner by Dopio Zero in Rosebank. Hy het my gemaak tequila drink omdat ek laat was.

NAVORSER: Wat gaan aan met die potlode.

RESPONDENT: Hulle wil nie teken nie. Haal my frustrasie op jou potlode uit. (lets val). Moenie worry nie ek is amper klaar.

NAVORSER: Druk maar hard. Dis 'n monster so jy moet hard druk.

RESPONDENT: Ek wonder of hy ore moet hê. Moet ek vir hom ore gee, nee dis 'n duiweltjie. En daai is vlammetjies.

NAVORSER: Ek dink as jy nie genoeg slaap kry nie, is dit hoe jy die volgende dag lyk. Sonder die snor 😊

RESPONDENT: Ok, gee maar vir my.

NAVORSER: Jissie, hoeveel punte het jy gebreek.

RESPONDENT: Sorry man. Hahahaha

NAVORSER: Hoor hierso, jy het hard gedruk, want kyk gou die papier waarop jy gedruk het.

RESPONDENT: Ja, o shit.

NAVORSER: Ok, nou gaan ek vir jou 'n paar vragies vra, maar jy kan hom hou voor jou. Soos met die roosboom.

RESPONDENT: Ja dan kan ek nog goed oorteken.

NAVORSER: Ja jy kan nog teken. Sê nou vir my, hoe lank bestaan hierdie monster al? As jy nou moet mooi dink. Soos jy het netnou al vir my gese van klein tyd af moes jou ma al met jou rond ry want jy wou nie gaan slaap nie en jy het altyd met 'n lig aan geslaap, want jy was bang.

RESPONDENT: Dit was nog altyd daar. Maar dis erger die laaste paar jaar.

NAVORSER: Kan jy onthou toe jy klein was, of jy ook so baie wakker geword het, of is dit net nou?

RESPONDENT: Ek was maar as 'n kind...ek het altyd tussen my boeties geslaap want ek was bang om te slaap. Ek onthou.

NAVORSER: Dink jy nie jy was oor-gestimuleer nie, dat jy sukkel om af te skakel, of daar is te veel goed in jou omgewing?

RESPONDENT: Ek weet nie. Ek onthou ek het een keer langs my ma gelê en toe sê ek vir haar ek kan nie slaap nie. En ek onthou toe sê sy vir my probeer net aan niks dink nie. Ek onthou hoe ek nog probeer het om aan niks te dink nie en hoe moeilik dit was.

NAVORSER: Ja, want daar is heeltyd goed in jou brein?

RESPONDENT: En hoe meer ek probeer het om nie aan dit te dink nie, hoe meer het ek aan goed gedink. Is dit nie dalk soos ADD nie?

NAVORSER: Miskien interne afleibaarheid, ja.

RESPONDENT: Ja, want ek slaap verskriklik lig. Maar die ding is ook my donderse yskas raas.

NAVORSER: Nou en dan of aan mekaar?

RESPONDENT: So nou en dan sal hy 'n paar keer. So nou slaap ek met my deur toe. Ja, dis seker maar die yskas, want hy het 'n icemaker, en toe word ek wakker van die icemaker. Dis seker maak dit.

NAVORSER: Maar jy het al probleem gehad met slaap al voor die yskas?

RESPONDENT: Ja maar nie so erg nie.

NAVORSER: So jy moet eintlik jou omgewing beheer soos alles toe maak, deure toe maak, dit moet stil wees. En het jy al die waaier om jou aangesit? Dan kan jy niks ander hoor nie, en dan raak jy gewoon aan een geluid. Want dan gaan dit daai geluid...

RESPONDENT: Oordonder.

NAVORSER: Dit is aanhoudend, en dis koeler op jou, en dan kan jy niks om jou hoor nie, soos as die helper in kom.. En jy kry seker warm in die aande?

RESPONDENT: Ja.

NAVORSER: En dit maak al die ander geluide om jou...En dan raak jy gewoon daar aan.

RESPONDENT: Ja dit is 'n idee.

NAVORSER: Ja, want dis nie lekker om, daar is niks meer frustrerend as wat jy nie lekker kan slaap nie. Jy sê dis maar nog altyd. Het daar ooit iets met jou gebeur, in die aand wat jou bang gemaak het?

RESPONDENT: As ek 'n geluid in die aand hoor, ja.

NAVORSER: En toe jy 'n kind was? Of iets wat sleg gebeur het?

RESPONDENT: Ek kan nie regtig onthou nie.

NAVORSER: Dalk het iets gebeur terwyl jy rustig geslaap het en dit gaan ook oor beheer.

RESPONDENT: Uhm. Nee nie iets spesifiek nie. Nie waar ek nou bly nie.

NAVORSER: En hoe oud was jy gewees toe jy, wat jy nou kan onthou, toe jy gesukkel het om te slaap?

RESPONDENT: Wel dalk het dit te doen met die molestasie en goed. Want ek kan net onthou van daai ouderdom af, graad twee.

NAVORSER: Vandat jy so sewe is?

RESPONDENT: Ek kan nie regtig voor dit onthou nie. Ek onthou daai tyd dat ek gesukkel het om te slaap.

NAVORSER: So toe het dit begin? RESPONDENT: Ek kan nie voor dit onthou nie.

NAVORSER: Dis ook die skooljaar se begin tyd.

RESPONDENT: Uhm.

NAVORSER: Dalk is jy net iemand wat baie bekommerd is?

RESPONDENT: Ja dalk ly ek aan 'n anxiety disorder.

NAVORSER: En sodra jy gestimuleer word intellektueel, jou brein is heeltyd aan die gaan.

RESPONDENT: Ja, die problem is ook as ek in die aand werk, dan sal ek wakker word deur die nag. Ek weet dit. En die laaste paar weke moes ek in die aand tot laat werk. Tot soos 9uur die aand. En dit stimuleer my ook, dan is my brein overstimulated.

NAVORSER: En dan moet jy probeer om af te skakel en te slaap. Dan is jou gedagtes heeltyd besig. Dis interne afleibaarheid. Dis jou eie gedagtes en bekommernisse, ervarings en denke maak jou letterlik wakker. Sukkel jy om op een ding op 'n slag te fokus ook?

RESPONDENT: Partykeer ja.

NAVORSER: Dan spring jou gedagtes. En as jy oor onderwerpe gesels. Dan gaan jy van een onderwerp na die ander?

RESPONDENT: Ja partykeer vergeet ek wat ek mee besig was.

NAVORSER: Jy moet dan Neurovonce gebruik. Want dalk help dit jou.

RESPONDENT: Dink jy so?

NAVORSER: Dis 'n chemiese samestelling, maar jy nodig nie 'n voorskrif. Dalk help dit jou om rustiger te wees. En toe jy in die kindershuis was, was jy altyd veilig gewees en daar was klomp ander mense om jou. So ek dink dis 'n kombinasie van klomp verskillendes wat dit getrigger het.

RESPONDENT: En nou gee hy nog geboorte aan ander monstertjies van geireteerdheid, of my lyf is seer of ek is angstig.

NAVORSER: Daai is nou weer ander monstertjies.

RESPONDENT: So 'n fisiese monster. Ja, my tannie sê vir my, hoekom kan jy nie stil sit nie.

NAVORSER: Jy probeer jouself stimuleer deur klomp goed te doen. Ok, wie weet nog van hierdie monster?

RESPONDENT: Almal.

NAVORSER: Weet almal daarvan in jou lewe?

RESPONDENT: Ja, want ek kla altyd daaroor.

NAVORSER: Wat maak jou bang oor hierdie monster?

RESPONDENT: Dat ek nie beheer daaroor het nie. Nou het ek nie beheer. Ok wat maak my nog bang daaroor? Dis vandat ek alleen bly. Ek bly nou al vyf jaar alleen. Ja dis hoekom ek by Cathy gaan slaap. Ek het verskillende vriende waarby ek gaan slaap. Ja ek weet nie wat dit is nie.

NAVORSER: Dalk hou jy net nie daarvan om alleen te wees nie. Dalk is dit net vir jou lekker. Voel jy partykeer eensaam?

RESPONDENT: Ja ek doen. Ek hou partykeer daarvan om alleen te wees, maar nie altyd nie.

NAVORSER: Maar jy's nou gereed vir 'n verhouding en 'n ou. Dink aan trou en kinders?

RESPONDENT: Ja, ek weet nog nie van 'n babatjie nie, maar dit sal nice wees om 'n ou te hê. Nee ek wil nie alleen wees vir die res van my lewe nie. Soos nou die aand. Dit was Woensdag aand toe ek by Cathy gaan kuier het. Toe het ek my werk na haar toe gevat en deur my voorbereiding gegaan vir my volgende klas. En sy het aandete gemaak en bietjie TV gekyk en toe gaan slaap. Ek het so relieved gevoel. Ek dink ek dink ook baie as ek alleen is en as ek by haar is dan dink ek nie so baie nie, jy weet? Dan relax ek net.

NAVORSER: En dan kan jy rustiger word. Want jy was al rustig en het gekuier met die mense, nog voor jy gaan slaap het.

RESPONDENT: Ek dink wel dit is 'n kombinasie van veiligheid, want soos ek slaap met die lig aan. Ek kan by die huis nie sonder 'n lig aan slaap nie. Maar as ek by iemand anders slaap. En by die huis, simpel, ek is al in my dertigs en ek is steeds bang vir die donker. Ek slaap met my kop toe onder die duvet.

NAVORSER: Wat dink jy is in die donker?

RESPONDENT: Ek weet nie, spoke. Hahaha. Dis simpel ek weet, maar my verbeelding is te. Soos as ek goed in die aand hoor dan dink ek, wat is daai geluid? Ek weet dis simpel en ek is intelligent maar steeds. Ek sal partykeer in die bed lê en dink aan die dag se werk.

NAVORSER: En dis dan juis wanneer jy dit nie kan bekostig nie. Dis moeilik vir ons om af te skakel en te sê ek is nou by die huis. Nadat my kliente ook weg is, dan dink ek aan allerhande goed.

RESPONDENT: Overstimulated.

NAVORSER: Wat maak jou bang oor hierdie slaap monster.

RESPONDENT: Dit affekteer my.

NAVORSER: Soos hoe?

RESPONDENT: Soos ek is gewoonlik 'n baie happy en positiewe mens eintlik, ek is nie 'n depressed mens nie en as ek moeg is dan voel ek net nie lus vir die lewe nie en dan voel ek depressed. Ongeduldig, frustreerd, kort van draad.

NAVORSER: Is jy ongeskik met mense?

RESPONDENT: Wel, nee. Ek is nie ongeskik met mense nie. Maar ek sal vinnig ongeduldig en frustreerd raak. Ja maar ek sal darem nie die studente uithaal nie, darem nie. Waar my baas skree op mense.

NAVORSER: Is dit?

RESPONDENT: Ja.

NAVORSER: Maar jy voel dit binne jou. Jy is nie jouself of positief nie.

RESPONDENT: Ek voel dan ook nie so produktief nie.

NAVORSER: Brand jou oë? Waar voel jy dit in jou liggaam?

RESPONDENT: My nek, my tone. Ek weet dis weird. Patykeer word ek wakker met 'n hoofpyn omdat ek te min geslaap het. Ek sukkel darem nie met rooi oë nie.

NAVORSER: So mense sal nie kan sien as jy moeg is nie. Maar jy gaan dit voel.

RESPONDENT: Miskien is ek lucky dat ek 'n donker vel het. Party mense wat 'n ligter vel het lyk sommer net rooi.

NAVORSER: Jou ogies het al aan gepas met hierdie min slaap en dis asof hulle al gewoon is daaraan.

RESPONDENT: Maar my een kollega sal vir my sê as ek moeg lyk. 'n Man. Hy sê, you look tired. Dan sê ek net, yes I did not sleep. My rug voel seer en my kop voel dik. Dit voel asof jy 'n hangover het as jy te min slaap.

NAVORSER: En as jy dan vanmiddag slaap en jy word wakker.

RESPONDENT: Middag slapies love ek.

NAVORSER: Dan word jy van self wakker. Jy stel nie 'n alarm nie?

RESPONDENT: Nee ek stel nie 'n alarm nie. Ek sal gewoonlik so uur slaap of 45 minute. Ek is gewoonlik ok na dit. Ek het actually 'n ding gelees oor slaap. Hulle sê soos Einstein het oor die weg gekom met soos twee ure slaap 'n aand.

NAVORSER: Jou liggaam raak gewoon daaraan. Jy kan jouself kondisioneer.

RESPONDENT: Ek weet nie eers op hoeveel ure ek is nie want ek word so baie wakker.

NAVORSER: Jis maar dis nie 'n goeie ding nie.

RESPONDENT: Ja.

NAVORSER: En soos vakansie tye soos desember. Dieselfde of bietjie minder?

RESPONDENT: Wel die ding is ek het nog elke jaar gewerk. Hierdie jaar was nou anders gewees want ek was weg gewees. Desember was fine gewees, want ek was kere by die kindershuis, kere by Oreal en by Cathy.

NAVORSER: Het jy by die kindershuis gaan slaap?

RESPONDENT: Ja een aand. By tannie Magda. Deur geslaap.

NAVORSER: In jou ou kamer?

RESPONDENT: Nee sy is mos nou by 'n ander kindershuis. Ja nee ek weet presies want soos 'n week terug het ek baie foute gemaak. Verkeerde memo geplaas. Ek kan myself so frustreer want ek haat dit om foute te maak.

NAVORSER: En jy besef dit nie.

RESPONDENT: Ja, soos ek sal 'n email vir iemand stuur wat ek nie moet nie. En dit is nie soos ek nie, ek haat dit. Dit frustreer my. En een van die groot foute wat ek laas keer gemaak het is, ek het die dean op sy naam genoem. Ek vergeet goed, dis die ding.

NAVORSER: En ek dink dit maak jou ook bang oor hierdie monster want jy het nie beheer oor goed wat jy gewoonlik het nie. Is jy bereid om met hierdie ding aan te hou lewe?

RESPONDENT: Met wat?

NAVORSER: Met hierdie monster?

RESPONDENT: Flip dit nee, ek wil nie.

NAVORSER: Want hierdie kom nou al jare.

RESPONDENT: Ek probeer regtig alles, ek het al alles probeer.

NAVORSER: Behalwe die slaapkliniek.

RESPONDENT: Ag man fok die slaapkliniek.

NAVORSER: Hahahaha

RESPONDENT: En ek gym nie op die oomblik nie, want ek het nie tyd nie. Maar die ding is as ek gym dan slaap ek ook beter. En ek hou van gym, so dit is ook die ding.

NAVORSER: Ja en dit bring mos endorphins in jou brein en bring jou dopamine vlakke hoër. Soos 'n happy drug. Dis hoekom jy beter kan slaap as jy gegym het.

RESPONDENT: Ek moet maar saam met iemand intrek dan moet ons maar gaan gym.

NAVORSER: Kan jy vir hom 'n naam gee. Kan jy vir hom 'n naam gee?

RESPONDENT: Flip dit. Kom ons sê the Nocturnal Beast. Waste kleur? Is dit 'n goue een?

NAVORSER: Hierdie Nocturnal Beast is dit die hele jy, of net 'n gedeelte van jouself. Sê nou maar hierdie is jy, is dit net so kolletjie of is dit jou hele menswees

RESPONDENT: Dis soos. Op die oomblik voel ek dis die hele ek want ek voel moeg. Maar ek weet dis nie die hele ek nie.

NAVORSER: Daar is baie ander gedeeltes van jou wat nie...soos jou liggaam is gesond en jy kan nogsteeds goed funksioneer. Dis soos net 'n klein gedeelte. Dis nie die hele jy nie.

RESPONDENT: Uhm.

NAVORSER: Maar dit voel vir jou of dit die hele jy is.

RESPONDENT: As ek moeg is voel dit vir my dis die hele ek, maar natuurlik is dit nie die hele ek nie.

NAVORSER: Wie dink jy voer hierdie monster? Wie hou hom aan die lewe?

RESPONDENT: My fokken werk. Seker ja my werk. Want my werk vat tyd van gym af weg. Dit vat tyd vandat ek kan gaan date en iemand ontmoet. Want dan kan ek dalk saam met iemand intrek. Dit het te make of ek gebalanseerd lewe of nie. Soos kom ons sit hier 'n weegskaal.

NAVORSER: Sjoue daai is diep, hoor.

RESPONDENT: Want dit het te make met stres en tyd. Doen dit nie?

NAVORSER: Ja. Dit gaan oor balans.

NAVORSER: So jy het nie balans op dierveld oomblik nie.

RESPONDENT: Nee.

NAVORSER: En jy dink dit is wat hierdie monster veroorsaak. Want teen tye wat jy rustiger is slaap jy beter.

RESPONDENT: Yes.

NAVORSER: So jy sê dis maar meestal oor die werk. So waar kom die lig in?

RESPONDENT: Ja, want lig hou my nie aan die slaap nie.

NAVORSER: So dan wonder ek die ding wat jou maak om met die lig aan te slaap, jou ook nie keer om te slaap nie.

RESPONDENT: Die lig?

NAVORSER: Is jy is bang en dis hoekom jy met die lig aan slaap?

RESPONDENT: Seker.

NAVORSER: Is dit nie dalk die rede waarom jy sukkel om te slaap nie?

RESPONDENT: Ja wel as ek by ander mense slaap dan slaap ek met die lig af.

NAVORSER: En jy vat jou werk saam. En toe jy dit vat na Cathy toe, toe kon jy slaap reg deur?

RESPONDENT: Ja, maar ek het net vining deur my slides gelees. Dit was nie 'n intense...

NAVORSER: Teorieë nie.

RESPONDENT: Dalk moet ek vanaand sonder die lig aan slaap, maar dan word ek wakker en sit die lig in my slaap aan. Dit is die probleem.

NAVORSER: Maar as dit is wat jy op hierdie stadium nodig het dan is dit reg. That is the space that you are in.

RESPONDENT: Ek slaap nie met die lig daar binne aan nie, ek slaap met die gang lig aan.

NAVORSER: Sodat jy kan sien as iets by die gang afkom na jou toe.

RESPONDENT: Dis simple maar ja.

NAVORSER: Jy kan hom sien voor hy jou sien want jy lê in die donker.

RESPONDENT: Simple maar ja.

NAVORSER: Jy sal dit hoor voordat jy dit sien, want jy slaap baie lig. So jy hoef nie te sien nie.

RESPONDENT: Hahahaha. Ek het nie so daaraan gedink nie.

NAVORSER: Ja, want jy word wakker met enige geluid, so jy hoef hom nie te sien nie. En sê nou maar iemand kom na jou toe in die middel van die aand, wat sal jy doen om jouself te beskerm?

RESPONDENT: Nee fok nou maak jy my bang Melanie. Ek het 'n flitslig.

NAVORSER: Gaan dit jou?

RESPONDENT: Ja.

NAVORSER: Wat gaan jy doen, hom oor die kop slaan met dit ☺

RESPONDENT: Weet jy wat? Toe ek klein was het my ma altyd vir my gesê 'n lig hou die spoke weg. So dis hoekom ek dit het. Maar dis wat ek nog glo, seker in my onderbewusse.

NAVORSER: So dit het 'n indruk gemaak.

RESPONDENT: Ja ek dink dit het. Ek meen ek is 31 jaar oud.

NAVORSER: Onthou 'n lig maak hom ook sien waar is jy. Jy is veiliger in die donkerte. Want hy kan jou nie sien nie.

RESPONDENT: Nou wie is hy?

NAVORSER: Wie ookal jy dink dit is. 'n Identiteit of 'n mens.

RESPONDENT: Hahahaha. Ek het al met my bybel langs my geslaap.

NAVORSER: Soos glo jy regtig in spoke? Soos daar is bo-natuurlike wesens.

RESPONDENT: Ek weet nie. Ja ek doen actually. En ek het al te veel movies en shit in my lewe gekyk, so nie meer nie. Want ek sal glad nie meer slaap nie.

NAVORSER: Ja want as jy scary movies kyk sal jy glad nie slaap nie.

RESPONDENT: Ek het opgehou met dit die laaste paar jaar. Ja nee ek dink ek is seker nog bang vir die bo-natuurlike. Hoekom de fok, weet ek nie. Dalk het daar iets al met my gebeur. Ek dink net al die spoke is sleg.

NAVORSER: Dalk is dit 'n goeie spook wat net lonely is en 'n vriendin soek.

RESPONDENT: Hahahahaha.

NAVORSER: En hoe gaan die lig jou beskerm?

RESPONDENT: Want ek wil sien wat gaan om my aan.

NAVORSER: En jy is 'n baie rasionele mens. Dit is interessant.

RESPONDENT: Ja, ek dink dit is 'n kombinasie van baie goed.

NAVORSER: Hoekom wil jy hierdie ding aan die lewe hou, as dit net sleg is in jou lewe? Wat laat jou hierdie monster aan die lewe hou? Wat bring hy vir jou?

RESPONDENT: Ek wil nie.

NAVORSER: Wat is goed aan hierdie monster?

RESPONDENT: Niks.

NAVORSER: Wat doen hy wat goed kan wees?

RESPONDENT: Ek kan met min slaap oor die weg kom as ek moet.

NAVORSER: So dit help jou as jy moet werk. Dan kry jy meer werk gedoen. So in 'n manier het dit daai voordeel.

RESPONDENT: Maar ek wil dit nie hê nie, want ek staan op om werk te doen. En ek wil net ordentlik slaap. Maar onthou nou dis hoe ek ook vanoggend voel, want ek het sleg gisteraand geslaap. Dis nie elke liewe dag nie, maar die laaste ruk is dit.

NAVORSER: So dis half die laaste ruk waar dit slegter is en nou gaan dit weer beter.

RESPONDENT: Ja, ja. Ok maar ek kan nog die volgende dag ok wees as ek sê nou maar een keer wakker word. Daar was al stadiums, dit was nou nie gisteraand byvoorbeeld, maar waar ek elke liewe uur wakker word.

NAVORSER: Maar hoe lank vat dit jou om aan die slaap te raak?

RESPONDENT: Soos 'n half uur, maar ek sal byvoorbeeld 10 minute vat om aan die slaap te raak. Wat ek gewoonlik doen is ek, terwyl ek bid, dan sal ek aan die slaap raak. Dis soos my roetine. En dan sal ek 'n halfuur nadat ek aan die slaap geraak het wakker word. En dan, soos gisteraand, 'n half uur nadat ek aan die slaap geraak het, raak ek wakker. Toe weer 'n uur na dit, toe ek in die bed gaan klim het. En toe iewers deur die nag het ek die sleep walking gedoen.

NAVORSER: Is dit die geluide, soos jou yskas? Dis nie hooters, dis baie stil hier nê?

RESPONDENT: Nee, hierdie kompleks raas actually moer baie, my slaap is actually baie slegter in hierdie kompleks as wat dit was in die vorige kompleks.

NAVORSER: So dis maar karre of mense?

RESPONDENT: Ek hoor even as mense hulle ligte aan sit of toilet trek in die aand, so dis ander ding wat ook...Maar ek sal nie in 'n huis alleen bly nie, want ek is te bang in die huis.

NAVORSER: So Cathy se woonstel waar sy bly, is dit rustig daar, stil?

RESPONDENT: Ja, dit is stil ja.

NAVORSER: So jy is baie sensitief vir geluide, jy is baie bewus wat om jou aan gaan.

RESPONDENT: Kom ek skryf dit als neer, al die monstertjies van die slaap. Ek wil ook nou hierso die problem analiseer. Dit is senses, eyes, light .

NAVORSER: Wat jy hoor, jou ore.

RESPONDENT: Ja, dan...is dit die werk en die stres en angs.

NAVORSER: Ja, die werk wat jou oorstimuleer. Angs moet dalk onder 'n ander een wees, moet angs nie dalk onder kinderlewe wees nie. As die angstigheid by die werk.

RESPONDENT: Dan gaan ons... dalk is ek ook nog gefrustreerd deur my kinderlewe. Childhood issues. Ag nee man...

NAVORSER: Goed wat daar gebeur het.

RESPONDENT: Ek skryf verskriklik hard, hoor. Sorry. Issues en dan...

NAVORSER: Wat van control?

RESPONDENT: Security, physical security en dan wat, control?

NAVORSER: Ja, want as jy slaap wat gebeur?

RESPONDENT: Wat nog?

NAVORSER: Is dit nie loneliness, dat jy wil iemand langs jou hê?

RESPONDENT: Wag, ja dit is die emotional goed. So hierdie is een van emotional. Ja wat hier is nog 'n emotional een. Is dit nie? Ok nee, wag. Daai is ook emotional.

NAVORSER: Maar daai is ook emotional, tog 'n bietjie.

RESPONDENT: Physical. Ons kyk nou na al die manifestasies daarvan. Hierdie is, umh, is dit nie soos motoriese funksies, soos jou senses? Motories.

NAVORSER: Uhm.

RESPONDENT: Emotional. En dan lonely. So, die, daar is twee physicals. Want physical en motories is maar dieselfde nê? Want dit gaan oor die motories is physical.

NAVORSER: Ja, dis reg.

RESPONDENT: So daar is twee fisiese simptome en dan is daar drie, nee vier, emosionele outway die fisiese en dis die cause daarvan.

NAVORSER: Die grootste factor is emosioneel.

RESPONDENT: Uhm dalk moet ek vanaand bietjie my lig af sit. Ek is net gewoon daaraan. Ek sal dit vir hom sê. Hahahaha. Piss off. Ja, ek drink baie koffie, maar my liggaam is al so gewoon aan koffie. Ja, fear is ook nogal 'n groot manifestation.

NAVORSER: Waarvoor is jy so bang? Wat dink jy gaan gebeur as jy slaap?

RESPONDENT: Maar alleen wees. Want as jy daaraan dink as ek by ander mense is slaap ek goed en vreeslik diep. Pshyco analyse ek myself. Hahaha.

NAVORSER: Hierdie is nie veronderstel om terapie te wees nie, dis mos maar research. Maar ek dink dis 'n goeie tegniek om vir jouself, sommer maar net notas, om vir jouself 'n boodskap te gee oor wat in die oomblik met jou lewe gebeur. As jy nou na al hierdie kyk, waste boodskap dink jy wil jy vir jouself probeer sê?

RESPONDENT: Fok, maar ek het so baie unfinished business.

NAVORSER: Goed wat jy nooit klaar gemaak het nie, jy het nooit daai sirkel...

RESPONDENT: Maar die grootste unfinished business is die cycle van my lewe. Mmm ek weet my ma, my boeties, my stiefpa...

NAVORSER: Jy moet self-nurturing goeters doen soos 'n lang warm bad, 'n movie gaan kyk of shop. Wat ookal jou happy maak. Wat maak jou happy op die oomblik? Wat gee jou joy?

RESPONDENT: Ek hou daarvan om outdoors te wees en om met my vriende tyd te spandeer.

NAVORSER: Maar op die oomblik kry jy nie tyd vir dit nie.

RESPONDENT: So hoe kry mens die balans?

NAVORSER: Dis onmoontlik as jy in 'n akademiese werk is, maar tog moet jy die tyd vat elke nou en dan om net vir jouself te sê... Soos ek gaan nou vir 'n stap met my honde, of gaan shop. Wat bring vir jou joy, wat maak jou happy? Is dit om iets te bak, of om te stort met kerse en sjampanje?

RESPONDENT: Om uit te gaan met my vriende, ja ek hou van gym, maar volgende week sal dit beter wees. Maar, ek kan verskriklik jammer vir myself voel as ek so moeg is. Maar ek vertel nou die dag, want 'n vriendin vra vir my hoekom werk jy jouself so, want goed moet gedoen word, hoe anders gaan ek dit gedoen kry? Hulle verstaan dit nie, hiedie vriendin van my is 'n real-estate agent, sy verstaan dit nie. Sy sê vir my, jy moet kies om vir jouself in jou lewe tyd te maak, dan sê ek, maar ons het al die gesprek die eerste dag gehad. So 'n club of dans, of concerts toe. Ek gaan 30 Secondes to Mars toe.

NAVORSER: Ja, ja, ja. Het jy 'n golden circle ticket?

RESPONDENT: Ja.

NAVORSER: Awesome! Ja ek het gesien hulle kom. Ja, doen sulke goeters wat jou net laat vergeet van alles.

RESPONDENT: Ja maar ek is steeds nie lus daarvoor nie. Hierdie topic, dis vir my baie sensitief.

NAVORSER: Dis hoekom jy nou hier opstaan, ietsie eet en water drink. Soos ek is nou klaar. Ek wil nie hieroor praat nie.

RESPONDENT: Gaan hierdie iemand help Melanie?

NAVORSER: Ja, dit gaan.

RESPONDENT: Dink jy die goed wat ons doen? Maar het jy daai probleem?

NAVORSER: Ek het, of ek het dit gehad, maar weet jy wat gebeur met my? As ek nie genoeg gestimuleer word nie, of as ek nie swot nie, of myself nie ontwikkel as 'n mens nie dan kry ek dit. Dan kan ek nie slaap nie. Dis asof ek bored raak. Ek groei nie, ek leer nie iets nie...

RESPONDENT: Dis die teenoorgestelde met my. Wat beteken dit?

NAVORSER: Dis wat ek nou jou oor wil vra. Wat dink jy beteken dit?

RESPONDENT: Ok maar ek doen nie my graad op die oomblik nie.

NAVORSER: Jy wil nie nou weer iets swot vir 'n ruk nie?

RESPONDENT: Net vir 'n jaar, ja.

NAVORSER: Net vir 'n jaar en dan gaan jy weer begin?

RESPONDENT: Hierdie topic vandag is actually vir my... So vanaand gaan ek ordentlik slaap. Ek raak so frustreed as ek in die nag wakker word. Dis soos die een deel van my lewe wat ek net voel, ek weet nie, dit gaan nie goed nie.

NAVORSER: Verder gaan dit eintlik goed met jou?

RESPONDENT:Ja. Ok maar sê nou vir my, wat is die sielkundige explanation?

NAVORSER: Ek probeer by jou hoor, watter boodskap het jy nou gekry? Wat sê hierdie vir jou?

RESPONDENT: Die boodskap, ek het nog altyd gedink dis omdat ek nie geballanseerd lewe in terme van tyd. Jy weet? Dis wat ek nog heeltid gedink het. Dat ek myself overcommit en dan stres. Maar nou dat ek hierdie mindmap gedoen het kom ek agter dat dis actually emosioneel. Meer emosioneel. Maar then again emosioneel kan 'n produk van die wees.

NAVORSER: Ook.

RESPONDENT: Die boodskap confirm maar wat ek nog altyd gedink het. Dis 'n kombinasie van dinge. Uhm.

NAVORSER: Maar tog weet jy dat jy nie hierdie ding in jou lewe wil hê nie.

RESPONDENT: Defnitief. Ek is nie 'n ongeduldige mens eintlik nie. Ek is nie iemand wat kort af is nie.

NAVORSER: And if you let it go, hierdie monster, wat is die ergste wat kan gebeur met jou?

RESPONDENT:Ja, goeie dinge, I suppose. Ek sal meer uitgerus wees. Of verstaan ek nou jou vraag reg?

NAVORSER: Dis reg, daar is niks. Want dit bring vir jou niks...

RESPONDENT: Dink jy ek kies dit?

NAVORSER: Op 'n manier.

RESPONDENT: Is dit? Wat, om met die lig aan te slaap, om wakker te word? Dink jy dis moontlik?

NAVORSER: Jy het die simptome al vir langer as ses maande? En dit gebeur op 'n daaglikse basis en dis besig om in te meng met jou daaglikse funksionering.

RESPONDENT:Ja.

NAVORSER: Dalk 'n diagnose van 'n slaap versteuring?

RESPONDENT: Uhm. Oraait. En wat doen'n mens? Dalk is dit mal. Is ek mal? Beheer ek dit regtig?

NAVORSER: Is dit meestal fisies of is dit jy wat hierdie veroorsaak?

RESPONDENT: Ek verstaan. Nou weet ek nie. My ma het nooit gesukkel met slaap nie. Maar ek weet nie van my regte pa nie.Dalk moet ek dan maar 'n sielkundige gaan sien. Moet dit 'n psigiater wees of kan ek...?

NAVORSER: Die psigiater moet die pille gee en die sielkundige doen die terapie.

RESPONDENT: Maar ek wil nie op pille wees nie.

NAVORSER: En dit help nie. So dan as jy nie op pille wil gaan nie, moet jy na 'n sielkundige toe gaan en jou omgewing begin anders hanteer.

RESPONDENT: Uhm. Nou het ek nog iets nuuts geleer.

NAVORSER: Hierdie monstertjie lyk maar vir my bietjie evil met daai tande, hoor? Tande beteken agressie.

RESPONDENT: Is dit? Nou het ek ook iets geleer.

NAVORSER: As ek na daai tande van jou kyk is dit bietjie scary. En daai rooi oë, sonder pupille...Maar daai tande.

RESPONDENT: En 'n snor.

NAVORSER: En die bene.

RESPONDENT: Ok.

NAVORSER: Nou moet jy gaan slaap, nadat ons oor hierdie gepraat het.

Themes:

- Sleeping disorder
- Stress, tension and anxiety
- Impatient, disheartened, moody, depressed and little zest for life
- Doesn't like sleeping alone, when she lived at children's home-many children
- Need for safety / security especially at night (childhood experiences)
- Sleepwalking
- Seeking comfort in food when stressed
- Rebellious - since childhood years
- Alcohol and schedule medication to relieve sleeping difficulties
- Indication of feeling "dirty" → sexually abused as child
- Aggression when discussing problems with sleep / stress
- Very light sleeper - alert and vigilant regarding her environment
- Suppressed memories
- Sleeping difficulties started after she experienced sexual abuse
- Attention difficulties, anxiety and physical restlessness
- Feelings of loneliness
- More relaxed amongst people/friends - needs others in her life to experience a sense of safety
- Scared of the dark
- Lack of sleep affecting her - depressed, short tempered and impatient
- Lacks balance in her life as committed to work
- Feelings of insecurity and vulnerability during evenings
- Fears supernatural beings
- Religious

- Rationalising and using her cognition to try to analyse sleeping problem
- Unfinished business=not having dealt with negative childhood experiences
- Enjoys being outdoors, spending time with friends-feels nurtured when she socialises

Addendum E

Transcripts of secondary participants' dyad interviews Data analysis*

Transcripts of the following data are included as hard copies:

- ❖ Dyad interview, 25 May 2014 (Page 113)

Transcripts of the following data are included on compact disc:

- ❖ Dyad interview, 23 May 2014

Dyad Interview

25 May 2014

NAVORSER: Julle het gehoor dat ek doen navorsing oor kinderhuis skoolverlaters. Dit gebeur soms dat as kinders in kinderhuise tot matriek is, dan as hulle 18 jaar oud word of uit moet gaan na matriek, of na standard agt as jy nou in 'n spesiale skool is. In baie kinderhuise is daar nie 'n transisie huis wat hulle kan ondersteun met vaardighede soos sê nou maar hoe om kos te maak of vervoer of wasgoed. Hierdie kinders, dit gebeur baie, weet nie hoe werk 'n taxi nie, want hulle is met 'n bus skool toe geneem en terug, hulle het nie naweek ouers gehad nie, hulle is nooit blootgestel aan...soos ander kinders, mamma maak kos en kom ons gaan winkels toe en reverse gou die kar uit die driveway. Hulle weet nie hoe om wasgoed te was nie, want daar was 'n helper en hulle was nie toegelaat om dit te doen nie. Hulle weet nie hoe om kos te maak vir hulself nie of hulle weet nie hoe werk taxes nie. Baie kinders was in 'n kinderhuis gewees vanaf drie tot agtien of negentien en dan moet hulle uit en hulle het niks. Nie klere nie, nie geld nie, weet nie hoe om 'n woonstel te hê nie, weet nie hoe die vervoersisteem werk nie, uhm het nie 'n lisensie nie, amper soos 'n baba wat ewe skielik in hierdie grootmens wêreld gesit word. Weet nie van budgets nie, weet nie hoe maak jy 'n elektrisiteit rekening oop nie. Dit is waaroor hierdie navorsing gaan, die transisie vanaf die kinderhuis na volwassenheid daar buite. Juis vir kinderhuise, om vir hulle te sê watter program moet hulle maak vir daai kinders om hulle te ondersteun. Basies sodat hulle kan aanpas na die kinderhuis. Ek weet julle het baie agtergrond en jy het 'n maatskaplike werker agtergrond ook en jy werk nou al hoeveel jare met kinders. So wat ek eintlik by julle wil hoor is, oor kinderhuis verlaters. Het hulle die vaardighede om agter hulleself te kyk?

RESPONDENT 1: Hierdie kinders hier is ongelukkig nog baie klein...hulle is nie groot as hulle na die ander plek toe gaan nie, hulle is maar vier, vyf, ses, sewe, op die oudste nege. Ek het nie sulke groot kinders nie, maar ek het prakties gedoen by uhm Louis Botha toe ek nog maatskaplik geswot het en toe het ek gedink jissie hulle word daar in daai sisteem ingedruk, daar is nie rerig hulp nie...toe het ek al toe ek 'n student was het ek hierdie leemte gesien.

NAVORSER: En daar is nog steeds eintlik niks daaraan gedoen nie?

RESPONDENT 1: Daar is niks daaraan gedoen nie.

NAVORSER: Die kinderhuis gee 'n huis, kos, geld...en as jy agtien is, is hulle uit.

RESPONDENT 1: Daar is hierdie geweldige leemte en daar is niemand wat...dan gaan jy terug na jou ma toe want daar is niemand anders waaraan jy kan dink behalwe jou ouers. En dis soos 'n hondjie, jy kom maar altyd weer terug al skop hulle jou. En waar gaan hierdie kinders heen? Die siklus word maar net weer herhaal, hulle gaan na hul ouers toe terug want hulle het nie daardie plek of skills om te gaan aanpas in die samelewing nie. Dis wat, ek al as 'n student agter gekom het.

NAVORSER: Vertel my bietjie van jou agtergrond?

RESPONDENT 1: Watse agtergrond?

NAVORSER: Soos wat het jy gaan swot en jou ervaring met kinders...

RESPONDENT 1: Ek het maatskaplik geswot...

NAVORSER: Waar het jy geswot?

RESPONDENT 1: Ek het by 'n kollege geswat, dis was deel van UNISA. Ek het daar maatskaplik geswot, maar dis al baie jare terug.

NAVORSER: En sedert toe? Jou ervaring met kinders, behalwe jou eie kinders en kleinkinders...

RESPONDENT: Ek het by volks-welsyn gewerk...

NAVORSER: Moes jy kinders verwyder het?

RESPONDENT 1: Ja, ek moes dit doen...ek kon dit nie meer doen nie. Ek het gesê ek kan nie hierdie goed doen nie, maar ek het lank by die tronk gewerk en dit was vir my baie lekker.

NAVORSER: Terapie daar gedoen?

RESPONDENT 1: Mmm.

NAVORSER: Met jong volwassenes of jeug?

RESPONDENT 1: Uhm in PE, by die rooihawes gewerk en by St Alberts gevangenis. Daar het ek net maksimum sekuriteit, moordenaars en sulke goed.

NAVORSER: Het van hulle al vir jou gesê hulle was in die kinderhuis?

RESPONDENT 1: Weet jy, ek kan nie dit onthou nie. Dit was nie die fokuspunt nie, dis misdaad was maar eintlik die fokus.

NAVORSER: Ok, en jy is nou by die plek van veiligheid vir vyf jaar?

RESPONDENT 1: Ja, my passie...ek kom maar altyd weer terug na die kinderhuis toe. Dis rerig my passie.

NAVORSER: (aan respondent twee). Wat dink jy van hierdie. Is die kinders wat in kinderhuise groot word voorbereid vir wat daar buite is?

RESPONDENT 2: Ek sal sê miskien kinders wat so in 'n sateliethuis bly saam met Amy het dalk 'n beter kans maar definitief nie die kinderhuis kinders nie. Groter instellings is baie beperk met hulle, hulle kan nêrens gaan nie. Jou tiener kinders kan nie onafhanklik ontwikkel deur self dorp toe te gaan of self winkels toe te gaan of self vir hulle klere te koop nie. So hulle is baie beperk, baie ingekort. Hulle moet op 'n sekere tyd naskool by die hekke in wees en dan word die hekke toe gemaak en dan kan hulle nie weer uit gaan nie.

NAVORSER: En die huisies word gesluit.

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, dis 'n baie groot leemte. Hulle kan ook nooit op hulle eie ontwikkel nie, hulle moet altyd in 'n groep van dertien alles saam doen en die leier in die huis, wat outomaties die sterker persoon is, hy vat die leiding so die ander kinders kry nie kans om op hulle eie te ontwikkel nie...hulle eie identiteit op te bou nie. Ag, ek sou sê die kinderhuis se opset is nie 'n goeie ding nie. Dis goed as

jy kind uit onmiddellike nood wil uitvat wat armoede, mishandeling, seksuele aktiwiteite aanbetref, is dit goed maar dis waar dit stop. Dis in geen lyn gesinsverband gefokus nie. Die gevoel van behoort is nie daar nie. Dis hoekom jy sal vind jou groter kinders raak rebels teen die reëls en die hele opset, want hulle voel nie dat hulle daar behoort nie, hulle het nie vryheid nie, hulle behoort nie daar nie, dit voel vir hulle soos 'n tronk. En dan kry jy natuurlik nou wanneer hulle uitgaan dan val die kinders, binne drie maande het hulle almal geval want die druk daar buitekant is te veel. Hulle word nie blootgestel, sê nou die ouderdom van sestien of agtien, dat hulle begin by Mr Price te werk, dat hulle net daai blootstelling kan kry nie. Die kinders stap in 'n grootmens wêreld in en hulle kom as babatjies uit die kinderhuise uit en hulle is definitief nie op hulle ouderdomsvlak nie. Daar is bitter min van hulle wat emosioneel op hulle ouderdomsvlak is, definitief nie ontwikkel nie...

NAVORSER: Dis waar, ek stem saam met wat jy sê. Hulle is volwasse op ander maniere, soos seksueel of blootgestel aan geweld en drank.

RESPONDENT 2: Ons het gevind byvoorbeeld met die matrieks, ek meen jy is elke oggend daar...jy maak hulle wakker, pak jou goed weg, kry jou kamer netjies, kom eet gou-gou, gaan borsel gou tande, was jou gesig, kry klaar ons gaan nou stap...en die oomblik wat jy nie daar is nie dan verval hierdie kinders want daar is niemand wat vir hulle sê doen nou dit en twee-uur eet ons, en drie-uur is dit huiswerk...hulle verval. Kyk, roetine is 'n goeie ding maar hy moet sy perk hê want wanneer daar te veel roetine is waaraan hulle blootgestel is, hierdie kinders is nie aan 'n ander roetine blootgestel nie...ons het hulle daaraan blootgestel so dit kom nie noodwendig in hulle gene nie, so nou staan jy terug, nou val alles plat. En dan is daar kinders wat van die ouderdom van drie jaar to agtien daar was en as hulle uitgaan dan val hulle onmiddelik.

NAVORSER: Val, menend soos dwelms of drank?

RESPONDENT 2: Nee, hulle kan nie die druk buite hanteer nie. Hulle kan nie die druk hanteer van alleen bly en te werk en al jou eie besluite te neem nie. Almal verwag jy moet net inpas en aanpas en inskakel en jy moet perform by die werk, jy moet jouself bewys...die druk is te groot. Hulle kan dit nie doen nie.

NAVORSER: Hulle raak angstig.

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, al ons s'n het terug gekom na ons toe, na drie maande.

NAVORSER: Terug kinderhuis toe? Wat sê hulle?

RESPONDENT 2: Nee, ons moet maar plan maak. Ons moet maar probeer help. Waar moet hulle heen gaan...hulle het niks. En ek meen wat is die doel om hierdie kind vir vyf of tien jaar in die kinderhuis te versorg as jy hom op agtien terug plaas in die waaruit hy gekom het.

NAVORSER: Jy gee kos, jy gee geld, jy gee tyd...

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, anders mors ek my tyd want jy verwag dat my opvoeding wat ek onder die kinderhuis beleid en reëls moes toepas nie dieselfde is soos 'n gewone gesinsverband nie moet hierdie

kind dra na agtien...dit kan nie, hoe kan dit? Dit kan nie, want daar is nie individuele aandag en liefde nie, ek meen mense wat met dertien kinders...op 'n naweek sit ek met twee huise, dis ses-en-twintig kinders op 'n naweek, elke naweek...een dag in die week en elke naweek sit jy met ses-en-twintig kinders...almal het gedrag probleme...negentig persent is verkrag, mishandel, of aan porno blootgestel...maar honderd persent van hulle ly aan verwerping. Die grootste emosionele probleem in kinderhuis kinders is verwerping, al daai kinders ly aan verwerping. So nou kom jy, nou sit jy met ses-en-twintig, daar is outisme, ADHD, gestremdhede...down-sindroom, ek meen wie kry die aandag? Waar gaan jy as een persoon vir ses-en-twintig kleintjies aandag kan gee waar jy kan sê uhm ek het nou vandag vir hierdie kind iets beteken. En jy werk alleen, jy het nie 'n assistent nie, jy werk alleen so dis bad, dis kook, dis skoonmaak, dis wasgoed, versorging, dis huiswerk...kom hulle regtig hulle eed na wat hulle af gelê het. So ja, vir 'n onmiddellike situasie soos haal hulle uit armoede uit, seksuele mishandeling en en...dis great maar kom dit nou regtig by wat hulle vir hulle iets beteken dan weet ek nie. Nie almal word blootgestel aan terapie nie want daar is nie fondse nie, en dan sit jy natuurlik met jou bekommernis van goed wat in die huise self gebeur. Ja so ek meen daar kom kleintjies in soos hierdie wat onskuldig is, wat nie aan seksuele goed blootgestel is nie, nou word hulle deur groter kinders misbruik en ek meen is dit regverdig? Nee, dit is nie. Dis nie hoe dit veronderstel is om te werk nie. So jy as huisma moet seker maak dat jy daai kinders vier-en-twintig uur onder die oog het om so iets te verhoed...om te keer dat dit gebeur.

NAVORSER: Jy moet eintlik jou hele lewe opgee.

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, jy moet jou hele lewe opoffer. Daar is niks van 'n sosiale lewe of jou eie familie nie. Ja nee, 'n man, dit kan jy maar heeltemal vergeet want mans cope nie met dit nie. En ek meen baie van hierdie kleintjies wat inkom wat daaraan blootgestel is...hulle kan nie net ophou nie, hulle kan nie net omdraai en nou is dit nie meer so nie. Jy moet ander maniere kry om hierdie kinders te stimuleer dat hulle nie meer die gevoel vir dit kry nie, jy moet dit vervang met iets anderste. Dis hoekom 'n groep van dertien is nie goed nie, so ek weet nie of dit goed is vir die fondse wat jy ontvang nie maar dit is definitief nie goed vir die kinders nie, dis ook nie goed vir die huisma nie...want dit put jou emosioneel heeltemal uit. Dit brand jou uit. Ek meen, gaan kook jy vir dertien elke dag. Gaan doen shopping vir hulle elke dag, en dan moet jy oueraande bywoon...ek het sewe skole...dan moet jy na sewe oueraande toe gaan. Jy moet bemaking doen vir jou hele huis. As jy nie bemaking doen nie dan eet hulle nie. Hulle moet klere hê... so die druk is baie. Hierdie kinders, nou kom hierdie kind in as 'n verwarde...kom ons sê 'n klein seuntjie wat nou gemolesteer is en hy sit met al daai emosies en drange en woede in hom, hy kry geen mate van terapie nie...ja, hy ontduik nou onder jou liefde en aandag en die huisma is daar, jy gee hom stabiliteit en vertroue en geloof in mense maar wat gaan binne in hom aan...kan jy regtig sê dat daai kind dit verwerk, het deur jou liefde en aandag...nou word hy groot, hy is nou 'n volwasse man met al daai vrese en emosies en woede in hom, so waar het ons hom gehelp? Ek

het vir hom gesê ek is baie lief vir hom, elke dag daar, hy het op my skoot gesit, ek het hom versorg toe hy siek was, ek het hom gewys wat moet 'n ma eintlik regtig doen maar ok nou, wat gaan binne sy kop aan? Wie het dit reg gemaak? Niemand nie. En hulle mag nie rerig terug kom na die tyd en met ons bond of...

NAVORSER: Ja, daar is geen kontak...en as hulle vir jou boodskappe stuur....

RESPONDENT 2: Nee, my kinders praat nou nog met my...WhatsApp en ons gaan Kolonade toe en ons gaan eet ietsie.

NAVORSER: Ok, maar jy het die reël gebreek.

RESPONDENT 2 : Ja.

RESPONDENT 1: By watter kinderhuis was jy?

RESPONDENT 2: Ek was by Abraham Kriel in Nylstroom gewees...

NAVORSER: En Bramley.

RESPONDENT 2: En Bramley.

NAVORSER: Maar Abraham Kriel, hoe lank het jy daar gewerk?

RESPONDENT 2: So vier jaar daar en ek was uhm 'n jaar hier by Bramley, maar voorheen was ek ook mos by Jakaranda gewees.

RESPONDENT 1: Ja, ek het al baie jare gesê hierdie ding werk nie. 'n Kinderhuis is net 'n verplasing...

RESPONDENT 2: Ek het nou drie kinderhuise beleef en jy kan net jou hande saam slaan...en onthou, jy teken 'n konfidensiële eed dat jy moet stilbly, jy mag nie oor hierdie goed praat nie, ek mag nie vertel wat regtig daar gebeur nie en dis hoekom ek uitgeklim het want dit is heeltemal teen my grense, almal teen jou morele standaarde dat sulke...hoe kan 'n onskuldige kind daar inkom en daar verkrag word en dis net fine. Dit is nie fine nie. As dit my kind was, dit is nie fine nie en dit is nie my kind nie, maar ek maak hom groot so dan is dit my kind. Verstaan jy? En dis nie aanvaarbaar nie. Sulke goed is nie fine nie. So hulle kan doen wat hulle wil, ek sê vir jou dis nie fine nie. Dit werk nie so nie. Ja, wel al drie kinderhuise dieselfde. Hulle al drie doen dit. Ons moes by al drie teken.

RESPONDENT 1: Mmm en dit gebeur nie by ander plekke nie. By die ander plekke kyk die mense maar net ander pad maar uhm ja ag hierdie kwessie is al so oud soos die kinderhuise ontstaan. Hulle moet intense terapie kry maar daar is nie geld nie, dit val net deur die sif...

NAVORSER: So jy mors eintlik jou tyd om by 'n kinderhuis te werk?

RESPONDENT 1: Mmm en dan vra jy vir jouself moes hierdie kind nie maar gebly het by sy familie nie...ek het myself al baie hierdie vraag gevra.

RESPONDENT 2 : Weet jy wat né, hy bly al vir sewe of agt jaar in sy omstandighede en hy sou beter af gewees het as jy hom daar gelos het, want op die einde van die dag word hy 'n sterker persoon deur dit wat hy deur gegaan het, want by die kinderhuise doen ons net opposiete...jy vat hom uit sy situasie

uit en jy gaan druk hom in 'n ander situasie in en nou word hy oorlaai met geskenke en hulle kry net alles en hulle dink alles val uit die hemel uit. Wat help dit hom? Niks.

RESPONDENT 1: Hy moet 'n hele ander verdedigingsmeganisme opbou en ja dis al jare so leemte. Ek was al moeg om betrokke te raak by hierdie goeters want daar gebeur niks nie.

RESPONDENT 2: Mmm jy kom nêrens en hulle wil dit nie hoor nie.

RESPONDENT 1: As mens net die uiterste gevalle kan verwyder soos byvoorbeeld 'n kind wat soos...ek dink as mens die ergste gevalle kinders in die kinderhuis sit, ek het al baie gewonder is dit nie beter dat hulle maar weer terug gaan...

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, nou word hulle blootgestel aan seksuele aktiwiteite, bullies....kinders wat groter en ouer is...hulle drange en hulle eise op die kinders af.

RESPONDENT 1: Hulle is baie groter, hulle raak meer intens betrokke.

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, en jy hou die kind in daai probleme, hy kry nie kans om rereg te leer om te verwerp wat met hom gebeur het nie...jy gaan dit nooit regmaak nie, maar jy kan hom leer om te cope met wat met hom gebeur het maar hulle kry nie die kans nie...want die kinderhuise hou hulle in daai...so jy haal hom nou uit daai omstandighede en dan sit jy hom in ander omstandighede en nou word hy net aan ander goed blootgestel so wat is rereg die use van hierdie hele ding.

NAVORSER: So wat kan huismoeders doen, dink julle, om kinders te leer om beter volwassenes te word?

RESPONDENT 2: Verstaan jy, daar is baie reëls en regulasies. So jy is gebind, jy kan nie net enige iets doen met die kinders nie...wat baie sleg is. Ek het byvoorbeeld my meisies gevat, die groter, dan vat ek hulle Kolonade toe...ek het sewe hoërskool meisies gehad en dan sewe kleintjies...en dan het ek hulle afgelaai met hulle geldjies en dan het ek vir hulle gesê hulle gaan shop nou...

NAVORSER: Sakgeld?

RESPONDENT 2 : Nee, geld wat ek ingesamel het. Dan laai ek hulle af en sê hulle gaan shop nou maar vier-uur tel ek hulle hier op waar ek hulle afgelaai het. So as jy nie vier-uur daar is nie dan gaan jy nie weer op jou eie Kolonade toe nie so my meisies het geweet...

NAVORSER: Moes hulle iets spesifiek koop of mag hulle enige iets?

RESPONDENT 2: Nee, hulle kan koop wat hulle wil...haargoed, grimering, onderklere...watokal hulle nodig het.

NAVORSER: Stel hulle bloot aan normale aktiwiteite.

RESPONDENT 2: Laat hulle self deur die winkels loop en self die goed afhaal en self besluit wat is vir hulle mooi en wat wil hulle hê en hoeveel geld het hulle en wat kan hulle spandeer. En dan die kleintjies het ek nou gevat dan sou ek saam hulle gestap het deur die winkels dat hulle nou kies wat hulle wil hê en so aan en dan self betaal. Maar ja.

NAVORSER: En dalk hulle leer om kos te maak of higiëne of budgets.

RESPONDENT 2: Nee, my meisies... ons het een gehad wat net slaai gemaak het, die ander het rys gekook, die ander het warm chips gemaak so ek het hulle geleer om te kook en alles. Dit was nou lekker by ons want ek kon hulle leer hoe om koekies te bak en koek te bak en ons het kos gemaak en alles. Maar dit gebeur nie, dit is nie eintlik toelaatbaar by al die kinderhuise nie. Daar is van die kinderhuise wat glo die kinders mag nie naby die stoof kom nie. Soos Bramley wou glad nie hê die kinders moet naby 'n stoof kom nie en hulle mag nie vir hulle self koffie maak nie want hulle gaan die ketel breek en jy weet, sulke goed.

NAVORSER: Of jy mag nie vir jouself toast maak nie want jy gaan die toaster breek.

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, toe ek daar gewerk het moes ek sonder 'n ketel werk want hulle het die ketel gebreek.

NAVORSER: En as dit gebreek het koop hulle nie vir jou 'n nuwe een nie. Jy mag nie aan die mikrogolf raak nie...

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, hierdie kinders kan niks doen nie. En jy sal vind hulle is baie agter, hulle is ligjare agter. Want as hulle buitekant kom moet hulle inpas en dan is hulle nie eers op die vlak...so nee. As jy daar buite is moet jy kan wasgoed was, petrol ingooi. So eintlik weet ek nie wat was hulle doel met 'n kinderhuis gewees nie.

NAVORSER: Want hulle doen dit verkeerd op die oomblik.

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, want dit werk nie. Mmm nou sit hierdie kind in die aand en studeer tot tien-uur toe maar hulle mag nie vir hulle self koffie maak nie. Sal jy dit nou met jou kind doen? Nee. Dis belaglik. Ek meen, ek het dit nie met my kind gedoen nie...my kinders kon koffie maak as hulle wou koffie hê. Wanneer wys jy nou vir die kind dat jy vertrou hom, dat hy selfstandig kan raak en op sy voete kan kom. Ek meen, ek stap buite dan sê ek ok, kry vir ons 'n twee liter bottel koeldrank, kies watter een julle wil hê en twee pakke chips en so aan, en daar is die geld en ek wag vir julle hier. Dan kom hulle terug en dan is hulle trots want kyk hoe min het hulle betaal en hulle het self gekies. Dis jou enigste manier om hulle te leer om daai tipe goed te doen. Vat hulle shopping, dis al hoe jy hulle leer.

NAVORSER: So jy moet probeer hulle aan normale gesinsaktiwiteite blootstel, maar baie kinderhuise laat dit nie toe nie.

RESPONDENT 2: Die kind moet leer om sy eie besluite te neem, ons neem al sy besluite vir hom...wanneer hy eet, wanneer hy slaap, wanneer hy opstaan, wanneer hy skool toe gaan, wanneer hy studeer, wanneer hy koffie drink, wanneer hy enige iets doen, ons neem die besluite. Maar nou moet hy 'n gelukkige kind wees, hoe moet hy dan. So hulle sukses rate is baie laag. En dan gaan hulle terug na die shacks toe en die gate waar hulle uitgekom het, dan is al jou werk daarmee heen.

NAVORSER: Daai kringloop ja.

RESPONDENT 1: ...'n plaasvervanger maar ja dit hoef nie noodwendig 'n probleem te wees nie...die reëls en regulasies is ook maar vir sekuriteit vir 'n kind maar hoeveel huisouers is rereg daar wat daai

ekstra myl loop saam met 'n kind...want my kwaliteit tyd met hierdie kinders...ek het nou nie 'n probleem van om te sien hierdie kinders is nou oppad uit en wat nou nie want myne is op die oudste agt jaar as hulle hier weg gaan. Maar ons kwaliteit tyd met al die individue kinders...as ek kos maak dan maak hulle saam my kos en dan gesels ons 'n kat uit die bos uit in hierdie kombuis. Maar uhm dis nie die normale situasie in 'n tehuis vir 'n kind nie. Jy moet al die vure ook dood slaan, ek verstaan dit van altwee kante af, wat ek altyd gesê het dit is glad nie 'n oplossing vir 'n kind om in 'n kinderhuis te wees nie want dis waar hy heen gestuur word om intense aandag te kry en daar is niks soos dit nie.

RESPONDENT 2: Jy moet onthou hulle salarisse is ook baie swak, ons het maar vier duisend rand 'n maand gekry en nou wil hulle dit nog verminder ook.

NAVORSER: En dis vier-en-twintig uur se werk.

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, en uhm watter mense wat daar is dink jy is nou rerig daar omdat hulle 'n passie vir kinders het ek meen, net hier by Bramley het ons hope probleme gehad met huisouers wat net daar is vir hulle self of hulle dink dis nou 'n lekker aftree situasie of dak oor jou kop maar dit gaan net oor jouself. Daai kinders kry geen aandag nie, niks en ek meen kinderhuise kry nie sulke mense nie...wie wil werk vir vier duisend rand. Jy boer agter toe, jy kan nie vorentoe gaan nie. En dan vergeet hulle jy het ook 'n gesin, jy het ook 'n familie. Dis net aanmekeer, jy werk net aanmekeer die hele tyd.

RESPONDENT 1: Dis 'n abnormale situasie.

RESPONDENT 2: En soos ek sê, dertien kinders is nie 'n grap nie. Dis nie dertien normale kinders nie. Ons praat nie hier van kinders wat net weg gevat is want hulle het nie kos of dit nie, ek praat van erge probleme.

NAVORSER: Leer probleme ook saam met dit.

RESPONDENT 2: Ek meen, ek het dagga gehad, ek het dwelms gehad, ek het drank gehad. Jy het alles gemeng gehad en jy moet net cope en alles is op die einde van die dag net jou probleem. Die groter verkrag die kleintjies en dis net fine.

NAVORSER: En jy kan niks daaraan doen nie, niks rapporteer of stop nie.

RESPONDENT 2: Dit is nie aanvaarbaar nie. As jy nie wakker is en jou kinders dophou nie, gaan jy nie hierdie gate sien nie, jy gaan nie hierdie goed optel nie. So as jy hulle nie stimuleer met ekstra goed nie dat jy hulle aandag wegvat van dit af raak dit 'n siek kringloop en baie van die huisouers is nie opgewasse vir die goed nie want hulle is nie regtig huisouers nie...hulle is mense wat net in 'n situasie is...

NAVORSER: Hulle soek blyplek, 'n kar, kos.

RESPONDENT 2: Verstaan jy? Dis nie uhm jou passie om hierdie kind op te voed en hom aandag en liefde te gee en te help nie maar as hulle ook beter salarisse betaal word sal hulle ook beter gehalte mense kry. Maar jy sal sien op die charity lys is die huisouer die een wat die laagste aandag kry, die

huisouer. Daar is geen voordele. As daai mense daar uitstap het hulle nie medies nie, hulle het nie pensioen nie. As jy daar uitstap het jy niks. Jy doen dit vir die liefde van die saak.

NAVORSER: Want jy het nie 'n werkskontrak nie, jy het nie medies, niks nie.

RESPONDENT 1: Jou salaris moet nog al hierdie goed dek ook. Jy leef eintlik van niks.

NAVORSER: Hulle is nie eintlik soos 'n ander werksinstelling wat daai goed bied nie.

RESPONDENT 2: En al die kinderhuise...ok, Ahbraham Kriel het darem nou sewe honderd rand medies gegee en dan het ons 'n pensioenskema by hulle gehad, maar dit word afgetrek van jou geld af...so daai goed word eers afgetrek, daar bly amper niks oor nie. En dis wat hulle verwag het, jy moet vir dit werk. Jy moet by PEP-stores klere koop. Dis hoekom die huisouers nie ekstra insit nie. Wie gaan ekstra insit as hulle voel hulle word nie betaal vir dit nie. Jy moet in die oggende ry na sewe skole toe en allerhande sulke goed. Terreindiens, huisdiens, telefoon diens.

RESPONDENT 1: Of in die aand hospitaal toe gaan...

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, jy sit hier die hele nag dan gaan jy daar tussen die swartes in, vrou alleen, nobody cares of jy nou een-uur in die nag by daai plek uitstap en in 'n kombi moet klim wat nou die grootste target is vir hulle dan moet jy nou probeer terug kom hierdie kant toe. Hulle worry nie. Ek weier, ek sal dit nie doen nie. Ek het dit een keer gedoen en gesê ek weier, ek sal dit nie weer doen nie. Want hulle gee nie om dat jy blootgestel word nie. Dis hoekom hulle nie nog mense kon kry om my te help nie want hulle betaal te min, dis hoekom hulle stelsel geflop het. Ek meen, daar het ons naweke dan sit ons met kinders wat uitgaan en dwelms gaan koop dan is die negentig persent van die huis is nou gedwelm vir die naweek...jy moet nou maar net daarmee deal, en Maandag as jy nou iets sê dan sal hulle nou besluit of hulle iets daaromtrent gaan doen...dan is dit nou hy teken 'n kontrak en as ons hom weer vang dit doen dan is hy uit. Daar word nooit iets daaraan gedoen nie, daar gebeur nooit iets nie. Volgende naweek weer dieselfde storie. Jy bly sit met hierdie probleme en jy moet dit nou net dra.

NAVORSER: Sjoe, nou-nou raak een van die kinders aggressief.

RESPONDENT 2: Hulle doen. Ja, hulle doen dis dan wanneer hulle die kleintjies betas en alles en jy moet nou net...hulle steek die kamers aan die brand en sulke goed. Ons praat nie hier van uhm jy kan hulle nie tee gaan nie, jy kan nie vir daai agtien negentienjarige swart kinders, hulle sal jou uithaal daar.

NAVORSER: En jy het ook nie 'n man nie?

RESPONDENT 2: Nee, hy mag nie betrokke wees in elk geval nie so jy kan dit nie waag met daai kinders nie. Dis ook maar moeilik.

RESPONDENT 1: Ek het jare terug baie oor sulke goed gedink...

RESPONDENT 2: Nee, ag dis maar hoe dit werk. Dis hoe dit is. As jy seker maar vat dat die kind in slegte omstandighede sit en hy het hulp nodig dan...

NAVORSER: As jy advies vir die bestuur van die kindershuis kan gee, wat moet hulle doen, wat moet hulle doen om dit te verbeter?

RESPONDENT 2: Kyk, die maatskaplike werkers en die huisouers...dit hang natuurlik ook af by watter kindershuis jy is, want jy kry dat die maatskaplike werker sien jou as die enemy; hulle is daar om die kind te beskerm teen jou en jy is nou die huisma. So waag jy nou en voeter die kind dan is ons almal op jou want ons het 'n eed afgelê om die kind te beskerm. Nou weet ek nie hoekom wil hulle dan huisma's hê nie, in die eerste plek, want hoekom vat hulle nie sommer die pos nie...want dis iets anders om in jou kantoor te sit en vir vyf minute vir Jannie te sien en vir Jannie te sê daar is vir jou 'n lekker chocolate gaan nou huis toe, en Jannie dink hierdie tannie is net te oulik en te wonderlik en pragtig maar hierdie tannie sit nie in die nag met hom wanneer hy tantrums gooi en wanneer hy moedswillig is en nie luister nie want wanneer hy hartseer is en hy probleme het dan is die tannie nêrens nie. Hy hardloop net weer more middag dan kry hy 'n chocolate en dan is dit reg. Maar eintlik is jy die een...

NAVORSER: Die maatskaplike werkers ken nie regtig die kinders nie.

RESPONDENT 2: Nee.

RESPONDENT 1: Dis die groot probleem.

RESPONDENT 2: Jy hardloop, jy staan teen dit.

NAVORSER: En hulle gee nie terapie nie.

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, maar ek moet jou sê by Abraham Kriel het ek vir Teresa hulle gehad wat honderd persent agter jou rug, weet waarvan jy praat, is bereid om te luister, kom na jou huis toe, sien wat gaan aan en dit. Jakaranda... 'n no go, en Bramley het ons ook gevind dat ag he's so sweet give him a chocolate...dan eintlik wil jy hom ophang want hy het nie maniere nie, hy luister nie en hulle dink ag he is so cute. Dan dink ek word net wakker, kom vat die huis vir 'n week dan kyk jy of jy nou weer...een maatskaplike werker het vir my gesê binne tien minute vat hierdie kind van my af weg want ek gaan hom nie druk nie, ek gaan hom dood maak. Toe sê ek vir haar jy oorreegeer, hy is actually normaal. Maar nou kry jy van hulle wat in die kantoor sit en as Sannie nou kom klaar my huisma is misluk met my, sy vat nooit my kant nie, sy luister nie na my nie dan is dit nou maar net so...dan is dit mar net waarom dit gaan. Maar intussen het sy nie idee dat die kind tel nie haar goed op nie, sy bring nie haar kant in die huis nie...verstaan jy. So daar is twee kante aan 'n saak en hulle sien dit nie. So hulle help nie die kind nie, ek meen, wie gaan dissipline op 'n kind toepas vir die lekkerte...wie gaan dit doen? Jy gaan mos nie met 'n kleintjie raas en vir hom sê dis hoe jy dit doen en optree nie, jy gaan hom help...jy gaan dit nie doen omdat dit nou spur of the moment is nie. So hoekom gaan jy nou die enemy van die kind wil wees as jy die kind probeer help. Dis hoekom ek sê al die maatskaplike werkers moet vir 'n jaar lank 'n huis gaan hardloop en dan moet hulle, hulle kan nie. Ek het gesien daai twee by Bramley ook. Die een het gevlug, sy sê net good luck en daar gaan sy. Hulle sien nie kans daarvoor nie want hulle gaan dit nie, nee, verstaan jy.

NAVORSER: Het enige van daai drie huisies 'n transisie huis gehad vir skoolverlaters?

RESPONDENT 2: Nee. Jy moet uit ja. Daar is niks van dit nie. Jy moet fisies uit.

NAVORSER: So as jy advies vir huismoeders kan gee, wat sal jy vir hulle sê?

RESPONDENT 2: Sterkte, krag en genade van bo af, sterkte. Verstaan jy, daar is te veel goed teen die huisouer. Jou kanse is skraal...daar is kameras wat jou dop hou en as jy iets verkeerd doen dan word jy aangekla. Ag jy steel altyd hulle goed, almal steel altyd hulle goed.

NAVORSER: Hulle meubels of geld of kos.

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, almal dra altyd hulle goed weg. Ek het so baie van my eie, ek weet nie wat ek met hulle goed sal wil maak nie maar ja. Ek het mense daar gesien wat in kom wat onder daai druk, binne 'n maand twee maande...kan dit nie vat nie. Hulle prioriteite lê heeltemal op die verkeerde plekke.

NAVORSER: Materialisties, nie op die emosionele aspek van die kind self nie.

RESPONDENT 2: Nee, jy as huisma is die enigste een wat regtig vir hierdie kinders fight en omgee want jy ken elke kind, sy geaardheid, jy weet hoekom doen hy wat hy doen, jy weet wanneer jy moet intree en hom moet help. Hulle weet nie, hulle ken nie eers die kinders nie. Dis niks om 'n kind 'n chocolate te gee en dan te dink hy is cute nie, ek kan dit ook doen. Enige iemand kan vir jou sê ek is so lief vir kinders...dan moet jy somer weet hy is besig om te gorrel. Niemand is somer net lief vir kinders nie. Dis 'n groot lieg storie. Daar bestaan nie so iets nie. Geen mens is lief vir 'n kinderhuis kind somer maar net nie. Hulle vat hulle, dan bring hulle na die naweek terug en dan sien jy hulle nooit weer nie want dit is nie 'n gewone kind nie. Jy moet absolute begrip en passie hê om hulle te verstaan.

NAVORSER: Mmm dis baie harde werk.

RESPONDENT 2: Dis nie net somer maar net nie en ek het dit nou weer besef toe ek buitekant was. As ek sien die hoeveelheid mense met wie ek te doen kry teenoor hulle gesindheid, teenoor 'n kinderhuis kind...'n kleintjie, dan kan ek duidelik sien iewers in my lewe moes ek ver verkeerd gegaan het want nie een van hulle dink soos ek dink...wat wil jy nou met iemand anders se kind maak, vir wat bopper jy nou, gee hom terug...jy weet, daai tipe ding. Jy kry dit nie, jy kry nie mense wat daai ekstra passie het vir hulle nie. So as hulle dit kry, waardeer die kinderhuis dit nie...

NAVORSER: Dan gaan die persoon weg...

RESPONDENT 2: Ja. Verstaan jy? Dan verloor hulle sulke mense. En 'n ander ding wat ek met hulle gevind het, hulle wil nie hê jy moet betrokke wees by die kinders nie, hulle wil nie hê jy moet vir hulle omgee en lief wees nie...jy moet net daar wees vir; daar is vyf dinge wat hulle vir my gesê het ek moet doen...kos gee, kyk dat hy versorg is, kyk dat hy klere het, kyk dat hy skool toe gaan en kerk toe gaan, dis al. Ek is nie daar om vir hom lief te wees nie, want ek is nie sy ma nie. En die hoof het dit vir myself gesê. Hulle het my aangekla en gesê die kinders is te lief vir my, maar ek kan jou sê daai kinders vir wie ek liefde en aandag gegee het, het almal hoofmeisies geword, prefekte geword, springbok

gimnaste geword, hulle is op universiteit vandag. My twee oudstes werk al vir twee jaar stabiel, die ander is op universiteit. Dis mense wat my aangekla het dat die kinders is te lief vir my.

NAVORSER: Kinders wat sukses gevalle was.

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, my kinders wat sukses gekry het. So jy gaan daar in met hierdie passie in jou maar hulle maak dit vir jou dood. Al wat hulle reg kry is hulle maak jou passie dood.

RESPONDENT 1: Vir my persoonlik is dit nog steeds 'n passie. Ek vertel hierdie kinders...al ding wat hulle het is die Here. Niemand gaan hulle help nie, as jy verkrag is en goeters...hulle neem die Here aan hierso en dis wat in my eie lewe gebeur het, self verkrag, self gemolesteer, al hierdie goeters dis hoekom ek 'n passie vir hierdie kinders het want ek het dit self verwerk. Al wat my deur gehelp het is die Here, en dit is wat ek vir hierdie kinders ook mee help. Hulle neem elkeen die Here aan, party verander totaal en al, deur al die goed wat hulle moes deur gaan en hulle verander nie maar die Here gaan saam met hulle deur die vuur en saam met hulle deur die water en Hy loop 'n pad met hulle. As Hy begin het met 'n pad met hulle loop Hy al die pad met hulle, en dis al hoop wat ek het vir hierdie kinders. Dit is so 'n wonderlike belewenis om 'n kind te sien verander en 'n fighting-spirit te begin kry saam met die Here om te veg vir hulself. Dis al wat my hier hou en dis al wat ek doen wat rerig ewigheids waarde het, om saam met die Here iets te doen anderste was ek lankal nie meer hier nie. Vier-en-twintig kinders, dis 'n totaal ander storie, dis hoekom ek nie saam praat nie want dit is 'n nagmerrie.

RESPONDENT 2: Vier-en-twintig 'n naweek...dan moet ek kyk dat hulle nie seksueel aktief raak nie, jy kan hulle nie alleen laat stort nie...ek moet by die storte staan, ek moet kyk dat hulle nie peuter nie, jy moet intussen die kos klaar maak, skottelgoed was en jy word op die kameras dop gehou...is jou huis skoon, hy kyk tot in die wasbak in om te kyk of is daar nog skottelgoed oor, as hy (die hoof) hier in gestap het was jy al lankal aangekla...dissiplinêr aangekla. En uhm kas inspeksies, yskas inspeksies...so daar is baie, dis baie moeilik. So jy kan nie die kinders kwalik neem dat hulle dan nie bo uitkom nie.

NAVORSER: As 'n mens nou dink aan 'n huis vir hulle vir transisie, die matriek kinders byvoorbeeld, wat moet in daai huis gebeur?

RESPONDENT 2: Wel daar moet ook maar 'n huismoesie wees wat daar is vir hulle...

RESPONDENT 1: As mens so iets wil doen moet mens rerig nie dieselfde pad as die kinderhuis loop nie, want as jy dit so gaan veralgemeen dan gaan dit ook nie weer werk nie.

NAVORSER: So dit moet anders wees as die kinderhuis?

RESPONDENT 1: Die mense wat vrywillig wil werk moet hulle nie net uit die bad gooi nie, daar moet meer mense wees wat besluite maak, 'n paar wat in beheer is besluite neem en soos nou daai hoof waarvan jy praat. Daar moet baie mense betrokke wees om te verhoed dat hulle dieselfde pad loop as die kinderhuis, anders beteken dit niks nie.

NAVORSER: Menend soos kursusse kom aanbied?

RESPONDENT 1: Ja, vrywilligers moet baie meer betrokke wees.

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, sien jy...dis eintlik goed wat alreeds in die kindershuis moet gebeur wanneer hierdie kinders al hoërskool toe gaan...moet die kinders aan hierdie goed blootgestel word maar hulle word nie, nou mis hulle uit. Dis hulle ontwikkelings jare, dis wanneer 'n mens hulle eintlik leer...

RESPONDENT 1: Kan mens nie sulke kursusse dan in daai huise aanbied nie, soos naskool kursusse...skill kursusse...te verbind met so huis. Dat dit half 'n opleidingshuis is.

NAVORSER: En hoe weet 'n mens as hulle nou reg is om uit te gaan?

RESPONDENT 1: Mmm totdat jy 'n groenlig het dat jy gesettle is met 'n blyplek en 'n werk en stabiel is. Daar moet 'n manier wees om die gemeenskap meer te betrek om daai kind te borg en vaste opleiding...skills. Ja, soos ek sê my meisies...my kinders praat nog met my maar ja hulle verkies dit dat jy daai band met hulle hou, maar dit maak dit moeilik vir die volgende huismo...dan band sy nie met die kinders nie wat seker ook nou maar sin maak maar ek meen ja, dis maar moeilik.

RESPONDENT 1: Maar dis so 'n bese siklus, vir die maatskaplike werkers...hulle het so 'n groot werk en hulle skuil ook maar daar agter. Wie gaan nou daai ekstra myl loop as jy vyftig kinders het wat jy moet sien en wie gaan daai ekstra myl loop om tot in die nag nog verslae te skryf en hulle salaris is ook maar nie baie nie...tien duisend rand.

RESPONDENT 2: Dis tien duisend rand, Magda het my gesê sy kry tien duisend. En dan het hulle baie werk ook. Dis hoekom hulle nie betrokke raak nie.

RESPONDENT 1: En hulle ouens wat oor hulle aangestel is, is almal hierdie staatsdiensamptenare wat afgetree het, predikante, hulle kon hulle eie bestaan maak in hulle eie wêreld en dan kom hulle dan is hulle in beheer hier. Dit is 'n siklus...

RESPONDENT 2: Elkeen het sy eie idee van hoe dit moet werk, jy weet.

NAVORSER: Ok, laaste vragie, watter wysheid of advies het julle vir kindershuis kinders?

RESPONDENT 2: Ja, hulle moet nou op sestien uit, sestien nou as jy in 'n spesiale skool was. Dit het laas jaar ingekom.

RESPONDENT 1: Maar julle, ook 'n oulike ding nou wat mens met die kleintjies doen is hierdie...om hulle voor te berei, volgende keer gaan jy nie laat iemand met jou lol nie...niemand mag weet ek doen dit nie...ek doen hierdie spel met hulle laat ek leer hulle om te skreeu en nee te sê...rolspel met al die kinders...en dit help. As jy kan leer een keer om nee te sê dit help. Baie keer bly hulle net stil, hulle het nie daai wil meer nie...

RESPONDENT 2: Wat ook gebeur is uhm hulle is bang as hulle terug geplaas word dan is hulle bang hulle word weer weg gevat so dan bly hulle maar liewerste stil en vat die abuse. Ja, want dis al wat jy het op die einde van die dag, maar jy weet, baie van hierdie kinders het emosionele probleme en as hulle emosionele probleme het kan jy hulle nie leer nie. Dan sit hulle met leer probleme ook.

NAVORSER: Ja, konsentrasie.

RESPONDENT 1: As jy vir jouself terug dink, as iemand dit vir jou gesê het en jy is so emosioneel en jy het self so baie baggage...jy hoor nie eers wat hulle rerig vir jou sê nie. Jy dissosieër...klomp goeters net om te cope. So aan die einde van die dag wil ek amper 'n lelike ding sê; of jy het dit, of jy het dit nie. En as die Here jou genadig is dat jy by iemand beland wat saam jou 'n paadjie kan loop...dis hoekom ek sê jy moet goeie mense kry, daar is sulke mense daar buite. Maar hulle moet gelei word, bekeer word en gelei word om rerig te verstaan wat hulle eintlik gaan doen. Nie net sommer kom 'n vrywilliger en liefde gee vir 'n kind want dit beteken niks om 'n naweek 'n kind te vermaak...jy moet hulle oplei.

RESPONDENT 2: Baie van hulle wat daar aankom het die verkeerde idee uhm van wat hulle wil doen en dan is die kinders nie wat hulle gedink het hulle is nie, en dan is hulle geskok en dan draai hulle. Dan kom hulle ook nie weer terug nie. So hulle kom so een of twee keer dan sien hulle nee hierdie...

NAVORSER: Dis harde werk.

RESPONDENT 2: So jy moet oppas om jou kinders bloot te stel as konyne aan buite mense wat wil besluit is dit vir hulle of is dit nie vir hulle nie. Jy kan nie heeltyd hierdie kind voorentoe stoot vir dit nie, dis nie regverdig op die kind nie want hy het ook 'n eie identiteit, daar is hierdie stigma aan hierdie kind gekoppel, hy moet altyd sê dankie, hy moet altyd smile, hy moet altyd dankbaar wees want die oom en die tannie is goed vir hom en ek meen of jy gee iets omdat jy dit wil gee maar jy gaan gee dit nie omdat die kind jou nou moet honderde dankies sê nie die huisma moet vir jou duisend maal dankie sê en sê ag jy is so goed hoor...dan het jy twee bottels koeldrank en 'n koek gebring...so what? Dit het nie eers aan jou beursie geraak nie. Either doen jy dit omdat jy wil want jy gaan nie hemel toe gaan as jy dit doen nie, die Here kyk nie daarvoor nie...so hierdie kinders word heeltyd vorentoe gedruk sodat die kinderhuis kan geld kry maar jy sien nie die geld in die kinders nie. So hierdie kinders is al so skeef, as hulle groepe mense sien hier kom, die grotes loop weg en weier om enige iets met die mense te doen te hê.

NAVORSER: As hulle vir hulle goed bring...

RESPONDENT 2: Hulle wil niks met die mense te doen hê nie, hulle kom nie naby hulle nie, hulle stel nie belang nie...ons sukkel ons morsdood om almal bymekaar te kry net om bietjie te sosialiseer met die mense dan kom hierdie mense met goeie bedoelings dan stel hierdie kinders nie belang nie want hulle is nou al so moeg vir dit...hulle wil nie meer nie. Hulle haat dit al. Hier by Bramley, ag jy kon doen wat jy wil...

NAVORSER: Hang ook seker af waste persente hulle bring...

RESPONDENT 2: Nee, baie bring nie persente nie...baie bring net koek of so jy weet. So verstaan jy? Hulle bly in hulle kamers, weier om uit te kom, jy kan hom nie force nie...hoe gaan jy hom forseer?

NAVORSER: Nou kom die mense ook nie terug nie want hulle het nie daaruit gekry wat hulle gedink het nie.

RESPONDENT 2: Mmm, hulle kom nie terug nie. So ja, dit is maar moeilik... 'n moeilike ding. Die oorbruggingshuis gaan maar moeilik wees, dit gaan 'n baie moeilike...

RESPONDENT 1: Maar jy moenie so daaraan dink nie, as jy iemand wil help dan kan jy dalk drie mense help... dan het jy darem drie kinders gehelp so dit is 'n baie wonderlike ding... 'n groot leemte.

Themes:

- Lack of support for care leavers
- Young adults return to primary care giving situation-only resource-cycle repeats itself
- Lack of skills to adapt to society
- Limited freedom during their time in care, limited opportunities to make decisions/independent
- Children's homes = influence on identity and decisions as adults
- No sense of belonging
- Emotional development not on par – cannot cope with real life world / challenges out there
- Grade 12 students dependent on housemother-wakes them up, pack away your things
- Challenge to continue independently e.g. having a routine
- Emphasis on too much pressure → can't cope with living and working
- Don't have anything / one to rely on = no resources / back-ups
- Not a child anymore when they turn 18, so not the children's home responsibility anymore
- No individual attention and love at children's homes
- Children's home children raped, abused, exposed to pornography before placed in care
- Work load unrealistic = 1:26 over weekends, variety of disorders / problems in children / learning difficulties
- Lack of funds for therapy
- Housemothers exhausted emotionally, need support
- Added pressure of raising money for food and clothes, attend parent evenings at school
- Housemothers try to provide love and attention, but doubts remain whether it does help
- Housemothers not allowed to bond with children - have to limit the contact after they leave care
- Juvenile offenders at children's homes
- Question remains: Is a child better off in children's home or not?
- Children receive lots of gifts and material things – problematic when they leave the home
- Both participants-very despondent
- Bad behaviour between children in children's homes, sexual activities and bullying
- Not a safe haven-exposed to situations that contributes towards other crises situations/trauma

- If housemother makes additional effort, children get exposed, e.g. shopping
- Children not allowed to cook or touch appliances-too expensive when it breaks
- Young care leavers do not know how to do washing or to fill petrol
- What is the purpose of a children's home?
- If housemother chooses, teaches skills, this is not according to children's home rules
- Children's homes should be more like a family home and less like an institution
- Child needs to learn to make own decisions-ease their transition period
- All decisions are made for children = often fall back to old pattern = cycle repeats
- Payments / salary = insufficient
- Often attract houseparent's who don't have pure intentions
- Drugs, alcohol and sexual abuse at children's homes
- No additional benefits for houseparent's, e.g. pension or medical care
- Relationship between social worker and housemother strained-no agreement between them
- Some social workers are not keen to work with the children
- No transition plan for children leaving the children's home in these three children's homes
- Children's homes concerned about materialistic items-less attention to the emotional aspects
- Housemother also sees the world as "outside" and the children's home as "inside"
- Houseparent's not permitted to be emotionally involved with the child
- Housemother only allowed to provide food - ensure clothed, ensure they attend school/church
- You are not his parent, no love allowed-care leavers who receive love are more successful
- Children's homes are understaffed and housemother's are overworked
- Housemother needs to be present at transition home
- Voluntary individuals be more involved at transition home, skills highschool, short courses
- "Training house"
- Needs to monitor children until they're settled-work and accommodation
- Involve community members
- Should be allowed to keep in contact with housemother after they leave
- Introduce a responsible mentor during their final year before leaving care
- Staff needs to be trained
- Children are rejected and abandoned by parents and children's home over their lifespan

Addendum F

Transcripts of secondary participants' reflexive interviews Data analysis*

Transcripts of the following data are included as hard copies:

- ❖ Reflexive interview: 18 February 2014 (Page 131)

Transcripts of the following data are included on compact disc:

- ❖ Reflexive interview: 11 December 2013*

Reflexive Interview

18 February 2014

NAVORSER: Ek wil graag vandag met jou gesels oor Brooke. Hoe het julle by haar uit gekom?

RESPONDENT: Ja, weet jy ons was betrokke by Jakaranda kindershuis en ons het uhm juis besluit die kinders het baie ondersteuning wanneer hulle daar is en wanneer hulle uitgaan is dit juis wanneer hulle die groot ondersteuning nodig het, en ek kan nou nie rerig dis baie jare terug, dit is seker tien jaar terug omtrent uh ons het saam gesels oor wat sy kan doen. Sy was 'n baie handige persoon, akademies het sy nie so goed gevaar nie. Ons het voor dit toe het ons 'n rekenaar kursus laat aanbied by die kindershuis waaraan sy, Brooke, en Skylar deelgeneem het en hulle was baie kwaad omdat hulle nie die toets deur gekom het nie, hulle het nie gewerk daarvoor nie so die rekenaar storie was duidelik nie 'n opsie vir hulle nie. Uhm toe het ons op haarkappery afgekom en sy het toe besluit sy wil dit doen en op daai stadium was ons oppad. Dit was einde van haar Matriek jaar wat ons eintlik daarop besluit het en toe die volgende jaar is ons Stellenbosch toe so ons het haar uhm met borge en van verskeie oorde het ons dit reg gekry om haar jaar by Centurion Akademie te finansier.

NAVORSER: En haar verblyf?

RESPONDENT: Ons het haar gehelp intrek by haar plekkie en die hele kit te koop wat nogal duisende rande waarde was.

NAVORSER: Hoe het julle haar gekies?

RESPONDENT: Sy was die oudste een in die huis, en hulle huis het verskillende ouderdomme kinders gehad so die een wat eerste sou uitgaan. En die persone by Centurion Akademie het haar baie ondersteun en haar omstandighede geken en hulle was baie goed vir haar. Sy het in 'n woonstel gebly, nee, in 'n komunne tipe setup sou sy bly en soos ek sê ons het vir haar yskaste geleen en gekry en van baie oorde af het ons haar ingerig. Wat my baie opgeval het van haar is die eerste aand toe sy nou alleen daar sou slaap, en dis dan nou ook saam ander student in hulle eie kamers, was sy baie bekommerd oor wie die lig sou af sit, want Skylar het dit altyd gedoen. Toe het ek nou maar vir haar gesê jy moet nou maar self die lig af sit so sy was baie afhanklik van haar sussie, hulle het baie, ja, so hulle was baie afhanklik van mekaar en ek dink hulle het baie op mekaar geleun so sy was baie op haar senuwees om weg te gaan. En omdat ons, ek was hoog swanger en uhm toe ons haar...ek dink die Januarie toe ons haar help intrek het...en sy het goed gevaar by die Akademie en soos ek sê die mense het haar vreeslik geondersteun en toe het hulle ook van hulle kant af baie moeite gedoen om haar by 'n baie goeie haarkapper in te kry.

NAVORSER: Na sy klaar geleer het?

RESPONDENT: Na sy geswot het en sy't gekom van waar sy gebly het in Centurion uhm ek kan nie presies onthou wat...hoe dit verloop het of sy 'n taxi moes neem of watokal nie, en sy het goed gewerk maar toe sou sy op 'n stadium skuif na Groenkloof toe en in 'n kamer daar bly en die person wat uhm

by wie sy die plek sou huur was baie ontstel want sy wou nie eintlik 'n kleurling meisie hê wat daar bly nie. Ons het mooi gepraat en alles maar sy het 'n kêrel gehad, ek dink Bryan, wat 'n baie slegte invloed op haar gehad het en hy was toe obviously ontsteld want die vrou wou nie gehad het hy moes daar kuier nie uhm wat ek kan verstaan dat hy onsteld is oor maar hy was ook byvoorbeeld betrokke in gewapende roof waar sy was saam met hom een keer en hulle is toe altwee in die tronk ook gegooi en 'n nag of twee in die tronk geslaap of so iets. Ek is nie presies seker oor die detail daarvan nie, dit het my baie laat skrik want ek het gevoel ek het 'n gesin, en 'n klein kindjie, stel my en my gesin bloot. So dit was vir my nogal 'n groot probleem dat dit die geval is en sy is 'n baie sensitiewe en sagte kind, oulike kind maar baie sensitief en baie sag. Hy het op 'n stadium toe vir haar gesê sy moet haar werk los en sy sou haar kwalifikasie kon kry na haar praktiese jaar en hy het toe nou so met haar baklei en met haar kop gesmokkel dat sy haar werk gelos het, want hy het gevoel sy kan eerder spoeg eet en by haar ma gaan bly as wat sy nou aanhou werk en die moeilikheid vat van die tannie wat die verblyf probleem veroorsaak het. So hy, ek kan sy onsteltenis verstaan, hy het 'n vreeslike groot invloed op haar en sy was obviously afhanklik en het liefde gesoek en is waarskynlik een van die eerste of die min mense wat liefde aan haar betoon het so sy was baie afhanklik, so sy het absoluut gely deur hom. Ek en sy het baie gesprekke gehad oor om nie swanger te word te gou nie uhm dat sy haar studies kan klaar maak. Ek het vir haar gesê jy sal iets anders moet doen as jou ma, ek het duidelik vir haar gesê ek sien nie neer op haar ma nie, ek praat nie sleg van haar ma nie, maar ek is seker sy wil nie self hê haar kinders moet na die kindershuis toe gaan nie uhm dit is nogals die beter plek om te wees as by jou ouerhuis, maar ek het probeer die hele ding tuis bring van as jy iets anders doen mag dit dalk met jou anders gaan en toe het ons nou op 'n stadium Kaap toe getrek en toe sy nou haar werk los en saam met Bryan die lewe invaar het ons kontak gestop met haar. En die ding is net met so kind, en dis jammer soos ek sê ek was fisies ver en die mense met wie sy gemeng het is gevaarlike mense uhm dan is jou betrokkenheid by so 'n persoon nie meer vir jou die moeite werd nie. Wat ek sleg en skaam oor voel dat dit so is maar uhm mens wil nie iemand help ten koste van jou eie gevaar, jy weet ten koste van jou eie sekuriteit nie en dit is die storie van Brooke. Dit is vir my baie sad want sy was handig en sy sou iewers kom, al sou sy haar eie haarkappery in die lokasie kon oopmaak, sy is 'n handige kind. Ek wens ek kon hare sny en sy't die hele kit en alles, en dis toe toegesluit omdat sy nie die huur betaal het nie en nie...ek's nie seker hoe daai ding uitgeloop het nie. Sy het eintlik so goeie skill...dit is vir my sad dat uhm dat dit eintlik so uitgewerk het. Ek dink haar sussie het baie meer manne moed gehad, sy was 'n fighter. Brooke was nie 'n fighter nie en jy moet in sulke omtandighede, moet jy kan fight anders gee jy op en ek dink daai hele ding van as jy nie fight nie wat gebeur dan met jou en 'n persoon wat uit 'n gelukkige situasie uitkom besef ek moet fight vir sekere goed, ek moet opstaan vir sekere goed, ek moet hard werk, ek moet my deel doen anders gaan dinge by die drein af...en ek weet nie of sy net moed opgegee het, want dis net makliker nie. Ek weet nie mooi met 'n kind wat so is, met

sulke tipe persoonlikheid...weet ek nie mooi hoe kry jy haar deur die sisteem sonder dat dieselfde goed nie weer gebeur nie. Ek het nie die antwoord vir dit nie, jy weet dis vir my...ja, ons is ver maar ek self was nog baie jonk om iemand te ondersteun en uhm ja jy weet jy het nie...ons kom uit huise waar ons ouers vreeslik hard gewerk het so, só kind het nie noodwendig daai voorbeeld nie. Sy het vir tannie Santa gehad wat mooi na hulle gekyk het, tannie Santa het haar arms af gewerk om hulle te versorg maar sy het nie 'n voorbeeld van iemand wat eers gaan werk en in die aand sit en artikels skryf of watokal en naweke deur werk om te sien maar ek moet dalk hard werk om dit te maak. Om brood op my tafel te hê en daai voorbeeld het sy nooit gehad nie. So ek weet nie hoe bring so kind dan alles bymekaar en beseft maar ek moet, dit hang van my af en daai hele ding van as jy in die kinderhuis was is daar bad goed wat gebeur het maar jy kan. Dit is nou maklik van 'n persoon wat bevoorreg is om te sê maar jy kan jou storie oorskryf, jy kan eintlik 'n hele nuwe storie oorskryf...wat eintlik baie exciting is. Jy moet 'n sekere...jy moet wil. Ek weet nie of sy hard genoeg wou nie dit is wat ek weet nie...soms is dit net makliker om op te gee, dink die persoon, en dan kom jy waarskynlik op 'n punt waar dit net te laat is. Ek weet nie, ek weet nie of jy nog iets wil vra nie maar dis my...dis die kort en lang van die storie. Ek kon dinge waarskynlik anders gedoen het maar ek weet nie mooi wat presies nie. Iemand moet self wil en ek weet nie hoe laat jy iemand self wil nie. Jy weet, dis vir my baie moeilik om dit te weet...hoe laat jy iemand beseft jy moet self wil. Soos wat ek vir jou sê, ons is geleer en het ons kinders ook geleer dat jy werk vir jouself, jy werk nie vir jou ouers nie, jy werk vir jouself. As jy genoeg omgee vir jouself sal jy hard werk vir jouself. Maar as jy nie daai voorbeeld het nie sal jy nie, dalk gee jy nie genoeg om vir jouself uhm om vir jouself te wil hard werk nie. Ek weet nie, dis moeilik. Dis moeilike goeters want ek weet nie hoe dit met haar sussie in vergelyking gaan nie, en ek het ook nie baie tyd met haar sussie spandeer om 'n vreeslike analise oor haar te gee nie maar die bietjie wat ek weet is sy fight, sy's 'n fighter en al gaan dit swaar sal sy waarskynlik makliker opstaan want sy't 'n vegters gees in haar. Maar soos ek sê ek ken haar nie goed genoeg om te kan sê maar jy weet ek het net gevoel dat die klein sussie die lig moet af sit in die aand uhm word daar baie geleun...dalk maar wedersyds op mekaar. Ek weet nie of dit jou troos nie, ek weet nie of dit jou noodwendig sterker maak of swakker maak as jy 'n sibling het saam met jou in so situasie. Dit kan jou dalk af bring, dit kan jou dalk optrek, dit kan dalk die enigste rede wees hoekom jy dit maak. Daarvoor sal mens seker baie ander tipe ondersoeke moet doen en navorsing of watokal. Dit sal seker interessant wees. Ek weet nie of jy iets wil vra wat jy kan aan dink wat ek dalk kan beantwoord.

NAVORSER: Askuus, ek gaan nou bietjie terug. Was daar geen ander opsie gewees vir haar by die kinderhuis nie?

RESPONDENT: Uhm waarskynlik. Ek is nie seker nie, dis te lank terug om eerlik vir jou te kan sê wat aangaan. Ek weet nie wat jy dit sou noem... 'n oorgangshuis van Matriek tot...maar ek dink amper daar was nie vir haar 'n opsie om daar te bly op daai stadium nie en in dis hoekom ons besluit het miskien

as ons haar iewers kan help sal dit dalk 'n bietjie beter kan gaan. Ek dink sy het sakgeld gekry, haar kos en verblyf en studies is betaal. Uhm as ek nou moet sê of dit voldoende was vir haar om te oorleef, en haar boeke en haar kits en leefgeld, sakgeld en studiegeld...as sy wou verder ekstra werk doen dis nie 'n probleem nie. Ons het nie vir haar gesê sy moet vir 'n deel daarvoor werk of watokal nie. Uhm soos ek sê dit is so lank terug, dis normaalweg hoe ons oor hierdie goed dink.

NAVORSER: En toe het sy net verdwyn?

RESPONDENT: Ons was in die Kaap en die laaste wat ek...soos ek sê dis so lank terug, dis tien jaar terug. Ek kan nie onthou presies hoe ek, ek weet nie of Santa ons gekontak het of wie ons gekontak het nie maar ek weet net na sy haar werk wat hulle met baie moeite vir haar gekry het by eintlik 'n baie goeie haarkapper, uhm net gelos het en alles gelos het...het ons ook nie meer kontak gehad met haar nie.

NAVORSER: Was Bryan saam met haar in die kindershuis gewees?

RESPONDENT: Ek weet nie waar hy vandaan kom nie, ek weet nie of hy in die kindershuis was of wat nie. Dit het gevoel of hy ook gebly het waar haar ma gebly het maar ek weet nie of hy ook in die kindershuis was nie. Ek is nie heeltemal seker hoe, maar sy het obviously baie op hom geleun ook. En ag obviously het sy baie liefde gesoek, sy mening baie hoog geag. Ek weet nie of hy gedrink het nie uhm dis moontlik dat hy ook by haar gebly het in die kamer. Ek is nie seker nie. Daai details weet ek nie, ek het baie min met haar te doen gehad want ek was in 'n moeilike...ek was ver, dit was 'n moeilike tyd gewees. Sover ek weet het dit met haar goed gegaan by die Akademie. Die mense was...as sy siek was het hulle my gebel ook as sy my nie in die hande kon kry nie, uhm dit het eintlik goed gegaan met haar. Daar's baie deurnis gewees vir haar en sy het, ek dink, baie hard probeer. Ek neem aan as hy nie deel was van haar lewe nie sou sy vandag waarskynlik in 'n salon gewerk het, hy was haar groot downfall uhm hy het haar ook geondersteun, ek neem nie daai rol weg nie maar uhm hy het ongelukkig 'n te groot rol in haar lewe gespeel dat sy...en hy was ook waarskynlik maar net 'n kind, hy was dalk 'n jaar of twee ouer as sy sover ek kan onthou. En wat weet jy op daai ouderdom. Jy weet, so ek kan verstaan...ek neem haar nie kwalik nie. Ek voel net baie sad vir haar want sy't 'n kans gehad en ja...

NAVORSER: Sy't dit nie gebruik nie...

RESPONDENT: Ja, sover ek kan onthou sy was redelik opgewonde oor die kursus want soos ek sê sy was 'n handige kind, sover ek weet het sy haar Matriek deur gekom. Ek kan nie onthou die punte nie...maar sy was opgewonde oor die kursus en sy kon, ek kan nie onthou hoe het ons presies daarop afgekom op dit nie maar uhm ek het 'n gevoel gehad dat sy opgewonde was en sy was goed in haar werk...ek weet ook nie of die ou ontevrede was oor die haarkapper by wie sy prakties gedoen het nie. Toe het sy nou net hierdie hele drama en op die ou end toe die gewapende roof en die tannie wat nou moeilik was...wat ek altwee kante van die frustrasie kan verstaan want sy is ook bekommerd oor haar

veiligheid en die feit dat sy betrokke was by gewapende roof stel so persoon haar ook bloot om enige iemand net daar te laat bly. So ek kan dit verstaan uhm ja.

NAVORSER: So akademies het sy haar kursus geslaag?

RESPONDENT: Ja, sy het die akademiese deel voltooi, sy moes net die prakties klaar maak.

NAVORSER: En daai jaar toe gebeur al hierdie emosionele dinge.

RESPONDENT: Ja, en ek weet nou nie as ons nader was...ek dink ons was in die jaar wat sy prakties moes gedoen het was ons vroeg daai jaar, nee die vorige jaar is ons uhm Kaap toe. So ons het baie van die goed probeer telefonies oplos, as ons hier was kon ons met haar gepraat het maar weereens ek weet nie uhm Bryan het nie baie tyd vir mense gehad nie want soos ek kan verstaan vir verskeie redes, ek neem hom ook nie kwalik daarvoor nie. Ek weet nie of ons sin in haar kop in sou kon praat nie, mens weet nie wat so persoon sal sê nie, manipuleer hy haar, vat hy haar geld, vat hy haar goed jy weet...as hy sê sy moet spoeg eet, ek voel net as hy...dis weer die ding van as 'n vrou te goed doen dan is die man vining om haar te dreig. Dalk het sy gevoel hy sal vir haar sorg, ek weet nou nie wat die beloftes tussen hulle twee was nie. Ek voel net die oplossing daar is sy moes geweet het...dis dan die verkeerde verblyf...kom ons maak 'n ander plan. Kom ons kry ander verblyf want dit sou nou lekker wees in die stad dan sou sy nie taxi moes geneem het en so nie. Uhm dit sou lekker wees as sy by haar vorige verblyf 'n plek kon kry maar hier was nou 'n goeie haarkapper, met 'n goeie naam in Groenkloof. Waar jy dan ook baie studente, want dis nou naby die universiteit, wat sy ook kon studente sny. So ja, dit is uhm sad jy weet...ek weet nie. Mens het nie al die antwoorde nie en dis 'n volgehoue betrokkenheid by so 'n persoon wat baie kere, want baie kere as sy nou klaar geswot het dan kom sy in ander fases in haar lewe waar sy ook volwassenes nodig het...batedbouers dink ek...waar iemand jou help om deur die lewe te gaan. Want ek dink baie van die...die geheim lê dan daarin om verder betrokke te wees as net die studies want mens het mense deur jou lewe nodig, of jy veertig of vyftig is of twintig dis altyd goed om mense te hê wat meer lewens ervaringe het as jy om te gaan vra vir raad want meeste van ons het nie die antwoorde vir jou eie vrae en probleme nie en uhm so volgehoue betrokkenheid by so 'n persoon is waarskynlik uhm iets wat maak dat 'n kind nou tot aan die einde wat 'n kind 'n suksesvolle huwelik en 'n suksesvolle gesin het want so kind kom uit so 'n gebroke situasie en het nie voorbeelde van hoe dit werk in 'n gesin nie so dit is ook goed wat aangespreek moet word. So ja ek weet nie, dis wat ek dink.

NAVORSER: Watter advies sal jy vir kinders gee wat nou in kinderhuise is, iets wat jy uit daai situasie geleer het of sommer persoonlik?

RESPONDENT: Weet jy, vir hulle sal ek seker, as ek nou van Brooke se omstandighede 'n les moet leer en dit is nou moeilike raad...is om nie te betrokke te raak by iemand in 'n liefdesverhouding te gou nie, uhm dit is moeilike raad want hulle soek almal liefde maar mens is baie jonk en as jy 'n geleentheid het moet jy dit probeer aanpak en as jy nie weet nie moet jy praat. En ek dink die kinderhuise, dink ek

meer waarskynlik...want ek onthou nou soos ons praat ek het met Brooke gesit eendag en ek het vir haar 'n voorbeeld van 'n begroting, hoe dit werk het ek vir haar uitgeprint en gesê onthou nou dit is wat jy tipies betaal in 'n maand en so, dis die tipe goedjies so die kinderhuis dink ek moet hulle miskien voorberei, soos 'n kursus, amper soos skoolverlaters tipe kursus...van ok dit is hoe die regte lewe werk uhm dis hoe jy basies met kos te doen, basies met veiligheid, higiëne...ja, want daar is selfs vir iemand wat in 'n gesonde gesin situasie wat 'n kind in die wêreld in stuur wat baie agtergrond het, wat baie skills het, wat kognitief daar is en alles is dit nogsteeds 'n kommer want die wêreld daar buite is baie daunting en dis vol mense wat as mens nou goedgelowig is en jy't 'n goeie hart dan kan jy meestal nie dink dat iemand jou so kan gebruik of misbruik nie, dis ondenkbaar so ek weet nie hoe berei 'n mens iemand emosioneel voor om in hulle self te glo en om vir hulle self om te gee en dit is waarskynlik 'n baie lang proses. Ek weet nie of dit help as jy net vir 'n kind sê jy moet vir jouself omgee...hoe doen jy dit...so kursus byvoorbeeld, dis waarskynlik 'n lang pad...ek weet nie. Hoe kan jy jouself lief hê...en hoe kan ander mense jou ook lief hê as jy nie vir jouself omgee nie uhm so ja dis 'n vraag vir my wat julle kan oor dink hoe berei jy 'n kind emosioneel voor. Dit is waarskynlik 'n groot ding uhm wat die kinderhuise kan aan werk...

NAVORSER: Want hulle sit soveel tyd en aandag, hulle sit geld in en gee vir hulle kos, hulle vat hulle skool toe en dan ewe skielik...

RESPONDENT: Is al daai weg.

NAVORSER: En hulle is nie voorbereid nie, want ek dink nie hulle is rerig juis voorberei nie.

RESPONDENT: Hulle is hoegenaamd nie want hulle is agtien-jariges...dis hoekom ek vir jou sê Brooke het nie die lig gaan af sit nie dan moet jy nou weet let alone al die ander goedjies wat moes gebeur en dan persoonlike higiëne en goed soos onderhoud goeters en skills jy weet as jy...ek weet nie of hulle net al daai kinders moet leer tik ten minste by die skool nie, tik verpligtend maak, fokus op skills wat 'n kind kan help om...as die kinderhuis hulle net kan help om iewers te plaas en uhm...soos by 'n werk jy weet of hulle leer...ek weet daar's 'n organisasie "Get On" wat byvoorbeeld mense help op lei om met talle of point of sales equipment te werk. En selfs so iets waar jy kan werk kry in 'n winkel en dis min van hulle wat beurse kry maar al gaan werk hulle in 'n winkel vir tyd en wyl tot hulle iets beters kry of na-uurs kan swot jy weet. Uhm skills net dink ek. Ja, ek meen wat kan sy nou doen met wat sy het. Ek dink beroepsopleiding dink ek miskien...almal leer tik op die regte manier. Dit is alles goed wat geld kos en iemand se tyd kos om daai kinders deur dit te sit maar as mens kan kyk wat is daar beskikbaar, watse skills kan mense vir kinders...daar's baie keer ou ooms of tannies wat afgetree het wat so wys en soveel goed kan doen wat daai kinders eintlik ook sulke kinders kan leer om naaldwerk te doen of in die tuin te werk of watokal jy weet. Daar is baie mense beskikbaar in ouetehuse soos ek sê wat nutteloos voel. As mens eintlik die groepe mense bymekaar kan bring sonder dat iemand nou fisies in gevaar is jy weet. Want mens is altyd bang vir 'n ou oomie se kop hom gelos het of watokal. Maar uhm

as mens dink hoe kan mens hul voorberei, watse tipe werkie...want selfs goeie mense verhoudings, kommunikasie skills...

NAVORSER: En terapie...

RESPONDENT: Ja, kyk dis nou obviously ook nodig vir terapie in só 'n situasie. Louis het as deel van sy spelterapie praktiese goedjies, het hy 'n paar sessies met hulle gehad en dis baie interessant maar ja...

NAVORSER: Ook by Jakaranda?

RESPONDENT: Nie by Jakaranda nie, by daai huis wat ons kerk mee skakel. Maar ja verder weet ek nie veel. Die ding is daar is baie studente wat nou kon gaan en help...beraders. Soos ek sê ons het op 'n stadium klomp rekenaars gekry vir die huis en ander mense ook, ek kan nie onthou wie was almal daar betrokke nie en uhm my niggie het klassies daar gaan aanbied om te kyk...as jy net op Word kan tik dan kan jy ietsie doen.

NAVORSER: Jy kan 'n PA wees...

RESPONENT: Ja, uhm daai tipe goed...ek weet nou nie van die seuns nie. 'n Man kan ook 'n point of sales doen en rekenaars is gelukkig...as jy kan tik...tik is nie 'n slegte skill nie...dis nie meer net vir meisies nie, dis gelukkig nie meer soos die ou dae dat net meisies kon tik nie.

NAVORSER: Of dalk gasvryheid...

RESPONDENT: Of onthaal, kombuise in die koshuise hierso. Daar's 'n dogtertjie, sy was eintlik 'n baie talentvolle kind ook, Tia, sy't nog 'n gedig geskryf wat gehang het in die voorportaal...sy het ook die verkeerde boyfriend gekry en hoesmedisyne gedrink so met die naweke wat sy uitgegaan het en by haar ma gaan kuier het en sy's toe in graad tien uit die skool uit en het gaan werk by 'n veldskool in die kombuis.

NAVORSER: Was sy ook in 'n kinderhuis?

RESPONDENT: Ja, sy was saam met Brooke hulle en dit was baie sad vir my...ek was baie hartseer oor daai kind. Die groot sadness is as hulle terug gaan huis toe en die mense by die huis trek hulle verder af of steel hulle goed as hulle nou iets bymekaar maak of dan kom die ma en steel die matrasse en sulke goed. Baie keer is dit net beter om nie daai mense te sien nie, nou dit is vreeslike woorde om te sê want obviously is dit ook jou mense, maar baie keer trek daai mense jou so af dat jy nie uit dit kan kom nie en hulle ook as hulle agter kom jy kan iets doen of jy is iewers gelink waar hulle vir jou geld gee dan probeer hulle dit steel ook vir drank en dwelms en watokal jy weet...so dis altyd vir my so sad om te weet hulle gaan huis toe, ek weet dit klink terrible...dan gaan hulle vakansies huis toe en dat hulle nie tough genoeg is om te weet jy moet hierdie deur sien en dit is jou mense maar ek wil iets anders doen as dit nie...dan trek hulle jou af. Want daai mense is ook half hulpbehoewens en of verslaaf of het 'n sielkundige probleem, hulle kan dan ook nie die leiding gee wat so kind nodig het om dit te maak nie en dit vat deesdae vreeslik baie van baie goed...eienskappe, geld en resources vir so

kind om dit te maak in die wêreld. So ja soos ek sê moenie swanger raak nie, probeer om boyfriends en girlfriends vir eers net so bietjie op ys te sit. Ja, ek weet nie hoe praat mens met 'n kind op so manier dat hy nie voel dat jy neer kyk op sy ouers of op sy omstandighede uhm afkraak nie maar jy wil ook hê hulle moet gaan dink dat hulle vir hulle self eintlik iets beter gun. En om dit reg te kry is daar baie werk wat jy self moet insit en aanhou, daai perserverance, aanhou en nie halfpad stop nie tot dit klaar is jy weet...want die ding is daar is mense wat betrokke is en vir jou geld insamel en hulle raak teleurgesteld maar dis nog steeds jy wat die koste moet dra...

Themes:

- Tried to support one of the primary caregivers siblings after leaving care-support failed
- Young adults leaving care in need of additional support
- Wanted to support a school leaver, selection based on age
- Helped with accommodation, hairdressing course and hairdressing kit
- Boyfriend-bad influence, crime, financial neediness, prison
- Need for love - dependent
- Influenced by boyfriend-dependent on him for love and acceptance
- Emotionally vulnerable care leaver-provided financial support but needed emotional support
- Gave too much independence too soon-gradual process
- Dropped out / ended work / job
- Helper moved away - perceived as abandonment / rejection
- No adult supervision - felt safe with her boyfriend
- Support from housemother NB
- During their time in care taken care off-lack the value of working hard and motivation
- Mentors and sponsors should receive training regarding the emotional needs of care leavers
- No transition home at this specific children's home
- Care leaver dependent on her sibling during time in care, after leaving dependent on boyfriend
- Program: financial skills (budget), hygiene, typing, intimate relationships, communication, interpersonal skills and eating habits
- Completed the academic, but not practicals
- Mentorship-remain actively involved in young adult's life
- Mentors provide example of family life
- Sudden, overnight, loss of childhood, overnight
- 18 years old not ready for the "real world"
- Children's homes have limited bursaries

- Career guidance
- Involvement with community members: gardening, computer programs and needlework
- Need for counselling
- Tertiary institutions actively involved with care leavers
- Returning home - cycle repeats - pulled down
- Successful care leavers: characteristics, money, resources, perseverance, effort, hard work

Addendum G

Visual data of post-modern data collection techniques*

A selection of the visual data included as hard copies