

Developing Professional Resilience

The Impact of Working with Violent
Offenders on Criminal Justice Social
Workers Working in Scotland

Dawn Gray

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the award of the degree of

Doctor of Criminal Justice
of the
University of Portsmouth

September 2017

Abstract

Criminal justice social workers in Scotland work with clients who have been convicted of violent offences or who present as violent and/or aggressive during supervision sessions. Additionally, part of the role of a criminal justice social worker is to analyse offences committed by their clients, which involves hearing or reading detailed descriptions of those offences. This potentially places practitioners at risk of harm, both physically and psychologically, and may result in criminal justice social workers being absent from work due to illness or stress. Absence from work will have an added cost to local authorities who are increasingly required to manage resources with less finances available. The research aims to investigate the professional and personal impact that working with violent offenders may have on criminal justice social workers working in Scotland. The potential consequences for criminal justice social workers of working with such clients has not previously been investigated.

Methodical hermeneutics was utilised as a methodological approach to grounded theory methods. Semi-structured interviews, of a purposive sample, of eighteen Scottish criminal justice social workers were transcribed and analysed in accordance with Embodied Categorizing (Rennie & Fergus, 2006), a constant comparative method. Four main categories: Potential Contaminants to Self; Safety and Wellbeing; Developing Professionally; and Perception of Professional Worth evolved from sub-categories and categories. A core category of Developing Professional Resilience emerged from the four main categories.

The findings demonstrate that although participants experience negative consequences resulting from their work with violent and/or aggressive clients, they took responsibility for their own safety and wellbeing, utilising various sources of support and coping strategies.

One category which traversed three out of four main categories is 'colleagues' and the role they play in offsetting the negative effects, supporting professional development and maintaining professional identity and morale. Furthermore, initial training in criminal justice was identified as limited. The thesis concludes with a discussion of the implications and recommendations of the research findings.

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Declaration

Whilst registered as a candidate for the above degree, I have not been registered for any other research award. The results and conclusions embodied in this thesis are the work of the named candidate and have not been submitted for any other academic award.

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Abbreviations

CJSWs	Criminal justice social workers
CJSW	Criminal justice social work
CJSWer	Criminal justice social worker
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
FOI	Freedom of Information
UK	United Kingdom
CPO	Community Payback Orders

Dedication

*In memory of my dad, James Currie Gray, and my friend,
Gillian Walker Macneil, who always encouraged and
supported me, but sadly passed away before I could fully
demonstrate their belief in me was not misplaced.*

I will be forever grateful.

Acknowledgements

Although this thesis is entirely my own work, there are several people without whom the research would not have come to fruition. First to Professor Mike Nash, who took over as my academic supervisor at a very late stage, thank you for your expertise, your words of encouragement and wisdom.

To Dr Jane Winstone and Dr Nick Pamment, thank you for your advice and guidance at the initial stage of the research.

To the participants, I owe a debt of gratitude for your honesty, openness and commitment. I could not have completed this without you.

To my family, friends and colleagues, thank you for your patience and support. To Isobel and Ian, thank you for your support and for Ian's artistry.

Lastly, but by no means least, thank you Marijke for your advice, patience, understanding, and for sometimes gently (and sometimes not so gently) pushing me along the path. Most of all though, thank you for your friendship and for your belief in me.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research Rationale

In Scotland, statutory work with offenders, i.e. supervision on licenses and Court Orders, is the responsibility of social work. Although there is much research regarding work with offenders in terms of, for example, the 'what works' agenda and The Desistance Theory (McNeill, 2006), rarely is research focussed on criminal justice social workers' experiences of their work. This is perhaps because in other areas of the United Kingdom (UK) work with those who offend is the responsibility of the probation service and as such criminal justice social workers (hereafter CJSWs), due to the relatively low numbers, may not have attracted research attention from outside Scotland. Nevertheless, the findings of research on criminal justice social work (hereafter CJSW) may have implications for staff, working with those who offend, within the UK and beyond.

Much like their probation counterparts, CJSWs work with violent offenders on a daily basis. Moreover, it has been reported that nine out of ten social workers have been the victims of workplace violence (McGregor, 2010) and although CJSWs may have been the victims of client violence, this is not the focus of this study, which aims to explore the professional and personal impact of working with violent offenders. Although, O'Beirne, Denney and Gabe (2004), have studied the impact of fear on probation officers' risk assessments of violent offenders, there is no such research exploring the impact of working with violent offenders on CJSWs. As a criminal justice social worker (hereafter CJSWer), I read and listen to graphic accounts of violent offences committed by my clients. Some accounts can invoke strong feelings within me, which I need to contain in order that they are not transmitted to the client. Moreover, there is evidence that clinicians working with offenders suffer similar vicarious trauma symptoms as

those working with victims (Kassan-Adams, 1995; Pearlman & MacIan, 1995; Steed & Bicknell, 2001). Evidence also suggests that many offenders have themselves been victims of violence (Deadman & MacDonald, 2004), which is something that may be uncovered as part of the supervision process. Despite this evidence, which suggests CJSWs may be affected by their work, no previous research has been undertaken on this subject with CJSWs. Furthermore, those working in health and social work services have the highest rates of depression, anxiety and work-related stress in Great Britain, which may be related to factors intrinsic to the role (Office for National Statistics, 2014). Additionally, public sector workers and those in caring or service roles were almost twice as likely to experience sickness (Office for National Statistics, 2016). Therefore, not only are employees affected by the work they do, but organisations and their delivery of services can also be affected by practitioners' work related stress either through absenteeism or high turnover of staff (Ravalier, 2017). Additionally, employers have a duty of care to their employees and should seek to reduce the risk of harm to their employees which includes psychological harm (HMSO, 1999).

Additionally, confidentiality and the Data Protection Act 1998 (HMSO) precludes social workers from discussing much of their work. This research may provide CJSWs an opportunity to discuss their work through the perceived impact it has on them, be it positive, negative or both.

1.2 Research Aim and Question

The aim of the research is to discover the perceived professional, personal and emotional impact that working with violent offenders has on criminal justice social workers. Therefore, the research question is:

What are the professional, personal and emotional effects of working with violent offenders on the criminal justice social worker?

This is an under-researched area and discovering the effects of working with violent offenders on CJSWs may have implications for staff retention or absence management policies. Consequently, the research could potentially be used as a means to support a wider scope for supervision, not only administrative supervision, i.e. that which, discusses cases and the management of clients, and is not particularly concerned with the wellbeing of practitioners. There is also an expectation that workers will work with all offenders yet there is no evidence of trauma informed practice with staff. I accept, however, this may simply reflect my experience as a CJSWer.

The outcome of the research could be important for universities regarding education on CJSW courses, for example in the university I attended there was only one, two-hour module on criminal justice in eighteen months of tuition on the Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work. One implication for policy and practice is perhaps a need to co-work violent offenders in a similar way to work with sex offenders and a move toward an organizational risk management mode in the same way as Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) for sex-offenders. MAPPA was originally intended for 'serious violent and sex-offenders', though, in Scotland it has only recently been implemented for violent offenders, largely due to the resource implications. Statistics indicate that there were almost twice as many violent offences committed between 2012 and 2013 than sex offences (Office for National Statistics, 2014b), however the means to identify serious violent offenders is more problematic than sex offenders which is defined by the crime committed. The next section will provide a brief introduction to criminal justice social work in Scotland.

1.3 Criminal Justice Social Work in Scotland: A Brief Introduction

Scotland's criminal justice system, is separate and distinct from the rest of the UK (Croall, 2006; McAra, 2008; Young, 1997). Indeed, the assessment, community supervision and throughcare (i.e. those released from prison) of offenders are the responsibility, not of a Probation Service as in the rest of the UK, but of local authority employed criminal justice social workers (McNeill & Whyte, 2007). However, this has not always been the case.

Criminal justice social work, in Scotland, has its roots in the Kilbrandon Report of 1964. The inquiry was set up to examine the rise in juvenile crime in Scotland. Kilbrandon (1964) recommended that each local authority develop a single social service department for both children and adults. The principles of social education which underpinned the Kilbrandon Report laid the foundation of the welfare-approach to offenders. Furthermore, the Social Work (Scotland) Act, 1968, enforced the joining of Scotland's probation service with other welfare services, placing a duty on local authorities to 'promote social welfare' (Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968: section 12). Scotland, since that time, has adopted a welfare-oriented approach to offender services (McAra, 2008). Criminal justice services, competing with other services, such as child protection, was therefore marginalised (McCulloch & McNeill, 2011). This resulted in inadequate supervision of offenders, with one Sheriff describing probation as the 'sick man of the criminal justice system' (Lothian, 1991). Consequently, during the 1980's, the use of probation decreased and the imposition of custodial sentences increased, resulting in widespread overcrowding and disorder in Scottish prisons. (McIvor & McNeill, 2007).

Since late 1980's the Scottish criminal justice system has experienced significant policy and legislative change. It was accepted that

imprisonment was less effective than social work intervention in the community in bringing about behavioural change and reintegration of offenders (McAra, 2008). In 1991, central government guaranteed the funding for the CJSW services and published the National Objectives and Standards, which set out the priorities, services and service delivery for CJSW services. (Social Work Services Group 1991). Moreover, there had been a growing awareness of the connection between crime and social exclusion (McIvor and McNeill, 2007), which was also acknowledged in the Criminal Justice Social Work Services: National Priorities for 2001 – 2002 and onwards. The aim of Priority three is to ‘Promote the social inclusion of offenders through rehabilitation, so reducing the level of offending’ (Justice Department, 2001, p.3).

Following devolution in Scotland in 1999, criminal justice was subject to much political and media debate and it was feared that its welfare tradition would be compromised (Croall, 2005; McNeill & Batchelor, 2004). The focus on public protection by reducing reoffending was the ideology behind the Management of Offenders Act 2005, which aimed to improve joint working and the assessment and management of high-risk offenders. However, concerns remained regarding the excessive use of custodial sentences and several policies were introduced which appeared to move toward community reparation (McIvor & McNeill, 2007). In 2010, the Scottish Government enacted the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010 which introduced several changes in sentencing, including the presumption against short-term prison sentences and the introduction of Community Payback Orders (CPO) in which offenders pay back to the community for their offending. The CPO contains nine requirements (including community supervision, unpaid work, mental health treatment, drug and alcohol treatment and programme) which can be imposed on an offender. Despite the introduction of different policies and legislation, the current core

priorities for criminal justice social work are: 'Community safety and public protection; the reduction of reoffending; and social inclusion to support desistance from offending' (Scottish Government, 2010).

Section 27 of the 1968 Act (as amended) provides the legislative framework for the duties and powers of CJSW. CJSWs are responsible for: provision of pre-sentence reports to the Court; supervision of offenders, 16 years of age and over subject to community disposals; supervision of those subject to statutory post-custodial supervision; voluntary throughcare services; and home background reports to the Parole Board. Criminal justice social work departments work with criminal justice partners, other social work and health services, housing providers, and voluntary services to ensure that the core outcomes are achieved. For more detailed background please see McCulloch & McNeill, (2011) and McIvor & McNeill, (2007).

1.4 Researcher's Stance

As a criminal justice social worker I have worked in community and custodial settings. Prior to commencing the Professional Doctorate, I had been a qualified social worker for approximately eight years. I previously worked as a prison officer for 14 years, until I was medically retired, having been assaulted and severely injured by a client. While working as a prison officer, I began my academic journey, embarking on a psychology degree with the Open University. Following my medical retirement, I remained committed to working with people who are disadvantaged and disenfranchised, therefore I undertook the social work training. My interest in the research topic developed from my experiences of working with those who commit violent offences (or present as aggressive or intimidating) and reading/hearing accounts of violent crimes. I am mindful that my experiences as a practitioner may influence my interpretation of the data and consequently I continued to reflect during the research process.

1.5 Note to Reader

Although, throughout the thesis the term violent offender(s) is utilised, it should be noted that this term is simply used for reducing word count and making the thesis flow more easily. I am aware that labelling someone as a 'violent offender' suggests a static homogenous grouping of people who are identical. This is not the intention here. People who come into the criminal justice system are individuals first and foremost with a range of strengths and needs, with the ability to change. It should also be noted that the term is also used to encompass individuals who have not been convicted of a violent offence but are known to behave in a violent and/or aggressive manner. Additionally, the term client(s) rather than service user(s) is utilised, again to minimise words used but also because neither term is used exclusively by CJSWs.

1.6 Thesis Construct

This introduction outlines my motivation for, and research aim to investigate the research question presented in point 1.2. Chapter 2, critically discusses my choice of methodology, methodological hermeneutics by David Rennie (1998, 1999, 2000, 2012), a methodological approach to grounded theory. Ontological and epistemological assumptions and methodological questions will be discussed in relation to Rennie's theory of method. The chapter includes a profile of the participants, data collection process and methods, concluding with an outline of the data analysis process. The following chapter presents the findings, explaining the core category, main categories, categories and sub-categories. The Literature Review, discusses similar research in relation to the main categories in the current study. Chapter 5 examines the findings in respect of the literature review followed by the conclusion which includes limitations and recommendations and suggestions for further research and concluding remarks finishes the main body of the thesis. References and appendices finalise the thesis.

The reader will notice that the thesis structure is different from traditional professional doctoral thesis. The literature review is situated following the Findings chapter, complying with methodical hermeneutics' methodology. Rennie (2000) instructs that researchers be as naïve as possible and, as the researcher is a criminal justice social worker, it was important not to add to existing knowledge which may alter the analysis. A further discussion of the placement of the literature is included in appendix A.

Chapter 2 Methodology

Methodical Hermeneutics as an Approach to Grounded Theory Methods

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is not only to discuss the practical elements or methods of the research but more importantly to make clear the conceptual framework/methodology. McLeod (2001) reminds us, it is not sufficient to provide the choices made but one is required to account for the philosophical and theoretical reasoning behind the decisions taken. This chapter is written in the first person because this has been a personal journey, where the research choices were guided by my personal and professional values, beliefs and principles, which are conveyed throughout the chapter.

2.2 Methodological Journey

While applying for the Professional Doctorate programme, I attended a seminar in which a small group, who were well into their studies, were reflecting on their research methodologies. I felt out of my depth as the delegates discussed the philosophy underpinning their research. I believed I was not 'capable of philosophical debate' feeling it was too academic and reserved for those intellectually superior. One delegate spoke, with passion, of methodical hermeneutics by David Rennie and, although I did not fully understand their debates I scribbled the name on a piece of paper. I searched for methodical hermeneutics on the internet, but found very little information and what there was I could not access given that I did not have an Athens or Shibboleth account. I found this intriguing and as a result, I wrote to Professor Rennie asking him about his 'method'. In his reply, Professor Rennie gently, but certainly clarified, that methodical hermeneutics was not a 'method' but a 'methodology' and he enclosed some relevant articles. These articles

have been invaluable as I navigated my way through the many junctions on my methodological journey. Not only have the articles helped me to understand methodical hermeneutics but they have also highlighted the important issues and choices that require to be addressed when discussing the philosophical foundations of research in general and social research specifically. Now that I have a good grasp of the philosophical arguments I believe there is a good fit between my personal and professional values, beliefs and assumptions and methodical hermeneutics methodology as proposed by Rennie (1998, 2000, 2006, 2012). The next few sections will make clear the choices I have made and the reasons for these.

At the interview stage for the Professional Doctorate I already had in mind my research topic, but felt that it would not be acceptable because it was too 'touchy feely' for criminological research. As a student on the professional doctorate programme, I spent a significant amount of time at the beginning of the course reflecting on myself as a researcher-practitioner. In particular, I considered the various ways in which my previous experience, education, the views of my colleagues and my current practice as a CJSW have shaped the way in which I viewed research. While undertaking both my Honours Degree in Psychology and my Masters' Degree in Social Work, I now see, I held a very narrow view of what constituted valid research. I did not know there were different ways of viewing the world, reality and the ways in which we come to know reality. For me the world of research was black and white. Research was a scientific endeavour that should hold up to scientific scrutiny and rigour. This was largely due to the types of acceptable research I could undertake in both these degrees. Now as a professional doctorate student, I see the many different shades of grey that constitute the philosophical assumptions that underpin all research. With this in mind, it is perhaps important, at this point to compare different paradigms.

A paradigm is a set of guiding principles, assumptions, beliefs or worldviews that contains four interrelated components of ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods (Scotland, 2012). Guba and Lincoln's definition of a paradigm is 'the basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways' (1994, p.105). There are perhaps many different paradigms, however it would be impossible to give even a basic account of all the possible paradigms in a professional doctoral thesis of approximately 50,000 words. I will therefore give a brief account of two of the most relevant paradigms for this research, which are Positivism and Interpretivism.

However, before I discuss these positions, there is still the matter of the definitions of ontology, epistemology and methodology. Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintain that it is crucial to critically discuss these definitions in relation to the research. Crotty highlights though that the terminology applied in the literature is unclear with methodology, methods, epistemology and theoretical perspectives 'thrown together in a grab-bag style as if they were all comparable terms' (1998, p.3). Consequently, given the differing definitions and for the sake of clarity, I will, in the following sections, provide a definition of ontology, epistemology and methodology, which I have found useful in informing my research.

2.3 Ontology, Epistemology and Methodology

2.3.1 Ontology

Ontology, for Crotty, deals with the nature of reality or existence or in his words 'the study of being' (1998, p.10). In a similar vein, Creswell (1998) defines it as how we consider reality to exist. I prefer Lincoln and Guba's definition 'the nature of reality' (1985, p.10). Ontological questions seek to establish whether the social world is external to people or whether people are active in constructing it (Bryman, 2004).

2.3.2 Epistemology

Maynard, (1994) proposes that epistemology is involved with providing a philosophical argument for determining what can and should be considered legitimate knowledge. In Crotty's words, 'how we know what we know' (1998, p.8). Guba and Lincoln (1994) on the other hand define epistemology as 'the nature of the relationship between the knower or would-be knower and what can be known' (p.108). Given that one of the main stipulations of the professional doctorate research project is that the research should make 'An original contribution to the advancement of professional knowledge and practice in the appropriate professional activity' (University of Portsmouth, 2014, p.8), and therefore having a clear understanding of what can be considered legitimate knowledge is crucial to the success of the research project and indeed the doctorate.

2.3.3 Methodology

Methodology asks, 'how can the inquirer (would-be knower) go about finding out whatever they believe can be known' (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p.108). Similarly, Crotty states that methodology 'is the strategy or plan of action which lies behind the choice and use of particular methods' (1998, p.3). In other words, methodology pertains to how data is collected, when it is collected, where it is collected, what participants are necessary to collect it and how the collected data is analysed. The methods employed by researchers should be congruent with the methodological approach, which will have clear ontological and epistemological foundations. The previous three sections have given a brief overview of the definitions of ontology, epistemology and methodology which have guided my choices of methods. I now turn to how these concepts join together in a scaffold or paradigm which supports, justifies and underpins this research.

2.4 Positivist Paradigm

The positivist paradigm, according to Comte (Crotty, 1998) advocates that the study of the social world can and should be achieved by applying the methods of the natural sciences (Bryman, 2004). The ontological assumption is that there is an objective reality, which is independent of human perception and therefore can be accurately measured. Until recently positivism has dominated the study of the social sciences. Positivism is closely associated with quantitative research 'which seeks to explain and predict what happens in the social world by searching for regularities and causal relationships between its constituent elements'. (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.5). While in certain areas, as with the natural sciences, this paradigmatic approach is useful and suitable, others have argued that emphasis on measurement, testing hypotheses and the use of control measures does not capture the complexity of human experience nor does it provide meaning or understanding of human or social behaviour (see for example Punch, 1998). Furthermore, Ponterotto (2005) suggests that the investigation of the social world presents us not with one objective reality but multiple subjective realities, thus theorising about general laws that apply equally to all is not possible. Accordingly, there is growing recognition of the usefulness of drawing on an array of methodologies to support research within and between social science disciplines. In criminal justice there is no singular research strategy, which every researcher employs (King & Wincup, 2007) and in recent years there has been a growing number of researchers conducting research that is situated within an interpretivist paradigm.

2.5 Interpretivist Paradigm

Research that is located within an interpretivist paradigm is often termed qualitative research and utilises a naturalistic approach to studying human behaviours and beliefs within the environment in which they occur. It should be noted that the interpretivist paradigm

does not 'represent a unified set of techniques or philosophy and has grown out of a wide range of intellectual and disciplinary traditions' (Mason, 2002, p.2). However, there is an ontological belief that there is no singular reality or truth and there is an acknowledgement of the existence of multiple perspectives and truths that are grounded in interpretations of the reality of individuals. In this way qualitative research, and therefore an interpretivist paradigm, is not concerned with 'the identification of cause-effect relationships' but is concerned with 'the quality and texture of experience' (Willig, 2013, p.8). Consequently, qualitative research within an interpretivist paradigm considers reality to be shaped by individuals and the meanings they attribute to their physical, cultural and social environments. Within the interpretivist paradigm the emphasis placed on language differs (Rennie, 2000). Within certain approaches, language is viewed as central in the exploration of meaning (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009) and consequently, there is an examination on language construction, how language changes over time and within cultures and how language shapes experiences (Willig, 2013). Within an interpretivist paradigm the researcher is not seen as independent from the research process as is the case with a positivist paradigm, instead the researcher and participant or object of the study is considered to be interwoven and co-create meaning and understanding within the research process (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

I have clearly adopted an interpretivist paradigm to underpin my research. I feel this best fits both my personal and professional view of the world. My personal view is that the social sciences are different from the natural sciences and that one cannot simply transfer scientific methods to study the social world. I do believe that there can be many 'truths' when talking about one phenomenon which is largely dependent on the particular person attempting to understand the phenomenon and on the particulars of the phenomenon. In terms of

my profession, Newberry (2012) points out that social work is interpretive in nature. I interview people daily, with the explicit goal of trying to situate the person in their reality, to understand their experience, in order that both client and I can formulate an action plan based on this shared meaning. It therefore seemed logical for me to adopt an interpretive paradigm to underpin my research. As methodical hermeneutics is used in this research as the methodological approach to grounded theory, I feel it important in the next section to explore grounded theory methodology.

2.6 Grounded Theory Methodology

Grounded theory is both a method and a methodology and although Rennie (2012) proposed that methodical hermeneutics could be an appropriate methodology for all qualitative research, in an earlier paper he set out his arguments for methodical hermeneutics as an approach to grounded theory (Rennie, 2000). Grounded theory as developed by Glaser and Strauss is a theoretical approach to qualitative research, which is inductive, (i.e. grounded in the data) and which they claim is 'more likely to be useful, plausible and accessible' (1967, p.33).

Nonetheless giving an overview of grounded theory is not a straightforward task, not least because of the critics of grounded theory from the positivist and scientific research community, but also because there are differing views within the qualitative research community on what constitutes a grounded theory, how it should be conducted and how it should be written up for example: Glaser and Strauss, (1967); Glaser (1978, 1992); Strauss and Corbin (1990); Charmaz (2005), and Rennie's methodical hermeneutics (1998, 2000). The original theory by Glaser and Strauss has also been criticised, adapted and reformulated (Charmaz, 2005; Glaser, 1992; McLeod, 2001; Rennie & Fergus, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Furthermore, the two co-founders of modern grounded theory, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss are conflicted on

various aspects of the methodology, leading to their separation. While discussing qualitative research and grounded theory Rennie suggests that qualitative research lacks credibility due in a large part to the 'lack of a coherent and unifying methodology' (Rennie, 2012, p.385) and calls for 'pressing need for a coherent logic of justification' (1998, p.101).

Rennie (2006) claims that Glaser's stance seems to adhere closely to the original work of 1967 (Glaser, 1978; 1992) maintaining that grounded theory should be objective and that new theories should be discovered through 'analytic procedures and comparative measures' (Charmaz, 2005, p.509) and that this is a process named induction. However, it appears that Strauss who along with Corbin (1998) shifted his stance to focus on meaning, action and process, which Charmaz notes is compatible with 'the intellectual roots in pragmatism and symbolic interactionism' (2005, p.509) which Strauss recognised in his earlier works (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Charmaz claims that Strauss and Corbin's account of grounded theory 'made verification, through new technical procedures, an explicit goal, bringing grounded theory closer to positivist ideals' (2005, p.509). For Charmaz (2005), Glaser and Strauss and Corbin's account of grounded theory are located within a positivistic epistemology. It is hard to argue against Charmaz given Glaser's requirement to be objective and Strauss and Corbin's reliance on verification. Nonetheless, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) put Strauss and Corbin's theory within a post-positivistic epistemology given their emphasis on validity and structured analysis. McLeod (2001) postulates that the original GT method leans towards positivism, notes that while Glaser's approach to analysis with an emphasis on allowing concepts to develop from the data is phenomenological, the emphasis on procedures by Strauss is more in keeping with hermeneutics.

Charmaz (2005), from a constructionist point of view, presented a different version of grounded theory which distanced itself from the dominant positivist objectivism which is apparent in the original grounded theory. Charmaz (2005) was not so concerned with the notion of objectivity in research noting that once the researcher had chosen a topic there was already a bias and therefore objectivity was not achievable and therefore the quest for this was flawed. Charmaz criticised the grounded theory by Glaser and Strauss (1967) arguing that it was simply ethnographic research which was more in keeping with a constructionist philosophy. Although Charmaz argues from a constructionist point of view, she does not explicitly incorporate the researcher's own experience of the data into the analysis and subsequent findings. West (2001), from a heuristic stance, appears to incorporate this element into his writings when he writes about his 'disease' when undertaking a grounded theory (p.128). Furthermore, Moustakas (1990), a heuristic researcher, talks of 'indwelling' and 'engagement' when analysing data. He emphasises the importance of intuition during the analytic process. Both Moustakas (1990) and West (2001) appear to resonate with Embodied Categorizing method of analysis proposed by Rennie and Fergus (2006), which will be discussed under the methods section. Given the number of variations to grounded theory and the differing epistemological stances it is not perhaps difficult to understand Rennie's issues with the credibility of the approach. How then does Rennie philosophically support methodical hermeneutics as an approach to grounded theory?

2.7 Rennie's Methodology

In supporting his proposal for methodical hermeneutics as a valid methodological approach to grounded theory, Rennie (1998; 2012) draws on various philosophers and philosophical arguments, the first of which is phenomenology. Husserl, who lived around the turn of the twentieth century is largely credited with being the founder of

phenomenology. Husserl focused on the 'essence, eidos or idea' (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p.12) of things, and in particular human lived experience. Husserl 'attempts to get at the content of conscious experience' (Smith et al., 2009) and focuses on 'the experience itself and describing it in terms of its particular and essential features' (p.14). In applying this to research with human participants, Husserl's goal is to access the essence of personal, subjective experience of participants and therefore focuses on, and occupies himself with, the specifics of the phenomenon of the research. For Husserl, the critical question was 'What do we know as persons?' (Reiners, 2012, p.1) therefore Husserl's quest was more epistemological. Although Husserl's development of phenomenology was an attempt to rival the predominant positivist paradigm, it is noticeable that he still leans toward scientific objectivity and states that phenomenology is not concerned with interpretation but rather when focused on the phenomena one simply describes the essence. In order to do this, researchers need to 'bracket' their own experiences, expectations, beliefs and hypotheses in order to capture the essence of the phenomenon (Smith et al., 2009; Rennie, 1998; Rennie, 2012). Smith et al., (2009) explain the need 'to bracket the taken-for-granted world in order to concentrate on our perception of that world' (p.13). Another important aspect of maintaining objectivity for Husserl is reflexivity (Smith et al., 2009) an activity which is also crucial in Rennie's work. Being reflexive within the account for Husserl maintains the notion of scientific objectivity (Bowie, 2003).

Whereas Husserl was more interested in the epistemological question of how we come to know, Heidegger, a student of Husserl, was more interested in the ontological question of 'Dasein' or 'being in the world' (Reiners, 2012, p.1, Creswell, 1994). Heidegger rejected Husserl's notion that phenomenology is essentially a descriptive activity and that objectivity could be achieved through bracketing. Heidegger argues that one cannot simply describe phenomena and as a result the activity of understanding experience is interpretive (Creswell, 1994). Heidegger's

explanation of this is that 'being in the world' pre-exists consciousness and therefore researchers cannot 'bracket' their own prejudice, experience or knowledge and that they become enmeshed in the experience of the other. Smith et al., (2009) refer to this as 'the phenomenological term inter-subjectivity' (p.17) where meanings are co-constructed. Heidegger's interpretive phenomenology draws on the work of Dilthey (1833-1911) who also focused on experience and how that experience was interpreted and expressed (Bowie, 2003). Furthermore, Heidegger highlighted the role of language in the construction of meaning stating that 'Immediate inner experience is only accessible to others via the public medium of language' (Bowie, 2003, p. 201). This appears to be an aspect of meaning construction that Dilthey neglects. Heidegger explains that along with 'Verstehen', or 'fore-understanding' (Smith et al., 2009, p.25; Bowie 2003, p.200) the language one speaks is already pre-determined at birth and that language has certain rules which makes communication within that language meaningful. People do not create their own language (Bowie, 2003). This is important to me as a social worker because I realise that my task of understanding a client's experiences and the meaning the clients attach to this is entirely dependent on shared communication. I have had times where I have needed an interpreter because the client did not speak English and I note how difficult this is and much more time is spent trying to 'get to the bottom' of what they mean. I am also aware that both Husserl and Heidegger are German philosophers and perhaps much of what they intended has been lost or modified in translation as there was not a direct alternative that could convey the intended meaning.

One of Heidegger's main focuses was on 'what it is for things to be', which Bowie proposes is 'a linguistic matter' (Bowie, 2003, p.202) In the development of interpretive phenomenology, Heidegger is seen to extend hermeneutics (Reiners, 2012), the philosophy of interpretation (Creswell, 1994). Smith et al., (2009) explain, in creating a link between

phenomenology and hermeneutics Heidegger not only looks at what appears on the surface of the phenomenon under investigation but he acknowledges the importance of establishing that which is hidden, or latent, in the phenomenon because both are inextricably linked. Heidegger's account is thus, any analysis of a phenomenon is an interpretation of an interpretation of the phenomenon and therefore, Smith et al., (2009) point out, that Heidegger's interpretive phenomenology is hermeneutic in nature (Rennie, 1998; 2012).

Like Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961) points to the centrality of language in conveying meaning, which Collinson and Plant illustratively relay as:

'The words and turns of phrase needed to bring my [meaningful] intention to expression recommend themselves to me...There is a 'linguagely' meaning of language which effects the mediation between my as yet unspeaking intention and words, and in such a way that my spoken words surprise me myself and teach me my thoughts' (2006, p.248).

Furthermore, and equally important for my research is Merleau-Ponty's belief that we 'fulfil our moral potential and therefore develop and express our moral autonomy, through our choices' (Collinson & Plant, 2006, p.247). Merleau-Ponty additionally remarked that we perceive and absorb more than that which presents itself to us. My interpretation of this could be explained in the following example: when I look at a tree in the field, I am comparing that tree to my previous concepts of what a tree is for me, not only by its shape but also its colour, I also come to know whether it is spring, summer, autumn or winter by the look of the tree, the tree may be lop-sided and I would imagine what made it like that and so on. It is this which leads me to agree that to make sense of what presents itself to us we are not simply observing that which presents itself to us we are actively interpreting what we experience.

Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger place emphasis on our interpretation of our place in and relationship to the world. However, Merleau-Ponty focused on the 'embodied nature of that relationship to the world' (Smith et al., 2009, p.18). Furthermore, Smith et al., explain that, no matter how understanding or empathic we are, we cannot truly understand the experience of the other as this experience is uniquely personal to that individual (2009). As we are not able to precisely understand the other's experience this would seem to be reflective of the hermeneutic aspect of research in that as researchers we are interpreting the interpretation of the other's experience. I would also add here that Merleau-Ponty's assertion would also seem to promote the idea which is central to my beliefs that people are experts in their own lives and if we are to support people we need to listen to them.

Another German philosopher, Schleiermacher (1768-1834) also a hermeneut, recognised the centrality of language, before either Merleau-Ponty or Heidegger, stating 'there are no thoughts without discourse' (Bowie, 2003, p.157). My understanding of Schleiermacher's statement is that language is required for me to be able to convey my experience and thoughts of that experience to others. There is no way that someone can directly access my experiences without me verbalising and thus interpreting them first. As noted previously language is pre-determined at birth and therefore may shape the conveyance of experience. When discussing with clients their difficult experiences, some have said 'I have no words to describe how I felt' and while the client and I engage in dialogue to help the client relay that experience I am aware that the meaning is co-constructed and will only ever be an approximation of that experience as the client 'settles' for a verbalised account of their experience.

In summary, the preceding outline of the philosophical viewpoints of Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Schleiermacher are all concerned with experience of the individual and the relation of that

person to their environment. Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Schleiermacher agree on the importance of language, both oral and written, as a means of conveying that experience. Furthermore, as they adapt, build upon and critique the existing philosophical views when taken together they offer a philosophical foundation which, for me, justifies the use of qualitative research with an interpretive epistemology for studying people in the social world. I have also used practice examples to highlight how the philosophies mentioned fit with my practice as a CJSW. At this point it is necessary to turn to and focus on Rennie's new direction, methodical hermeneutics.

2.7.1 Methodical Hermeneutics: A New Direction?

Rennie defines Hermeneutics as the theory and practice of the interpretation of the meaning of texts (Rennie, 1999) and argued that the constant comparative method within grounded theory is hermeneutic in nature (Rennie, 2000). This is a position shared by McLeod who argues that 'The goal of arriving at an interpretation of the phenomenon (a grounded theory) reflects a fundamentally hermeneutic approach' (McLeod, 2001, p75).

2.7.2 Realism or Relativism

To a certain extent, by adding methodical to hermeneutics, I feel that Rennie is attempting to appease those in the positivistic stance by laying down systematic steps to be taken when engaged in hermeneutics. However, this is exactly what appeals to me in Rennie's methodology. Having had most of my research experience in quantitative analysis, I have often felt that qualitative research would be too unfocussed and without the defined steps, that you would most definitely have in quantitative analysis, to adequately account for the analysis arrived at. Rennie further attempts to make qualitative analysis more appealing to those with a positivist stance by attempting to negotiate the ontological issue of realism verses relativism.

The view that realism and relativism are a dichotomy and that only two polar positions exist has been challenged by Hammersley (1992), who postulates a subtle realism where facts exist as truth only until there is evidence to the contrary. Furthermore, Andrews (2012) suggests that realism and relativism are at polar ends of the same continuum. Rennie (2000) argues that the tension between relativism and realism have not been sufficiently tackled in the methodologies proposed by Glaser (1992) or Strauss (1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). However, Rennie acknowledges that they attempt to reconcile the tensions because they suggest that the grounded theory produced is 'relative to the perspective(s) of the person(s) producing it' (2000, p.481), though if the theory generated is grounded in the data this was satisfactory. Rennie (2012) drawing on Phenomenology of Heidegger as mentioned above and, although 'bracketing' proposed by Husserl is not possible, Heidegger's proposal of being reflexive within the process supports the researcher in suppressing their preconceptions enables an accommodation of realism and relativism (Rennie 2000; 2006; 2012). That said, not all biases or preconceptions are accessible to self-reflection. Rennie acknowledges that both Glaser and Strauss have encouraged the researcher to be 'naïve about the phenomenon, to be descriptive at the onset of the analysis and later becoming more conceptual' (2006, p.484). Rennie argues that with correct procedures the grounded reality of social phenomena will be revealed but that 'returns from the grounding will vary depending on the interests of the particular analyst' (2006, p.484). It would appear to me that the tension between realism and relativism will inevitably be interlinked and one cannot discuss one without the other. For me, even if taking the positivist notion that the only acceptable research is that which can be observed, there are perspectives on what is observed. For example, an exercise used in my work with domestic violence perpetrators, to highlight differing perspectives, is a group of people sitting in a circle around one person in the middle of that circle. Each person will observe

that person's face slightly differently. Someone in the group positioned at the side of the individual will only see one eye and one ear and therefore his/her viewpoint is different from those viewing the front of the face. Essentially though, they are looking at the same person from a different viewpoint. It is also the case that participants will account for the missing detail with what they have learned from their previous experiences, for example that most people have two eyes and two ears. Given the preceding discussion it is my position that there is no one absolute truth when discussing social phenomena. For me there are varying perspectives on the phenomena which requires reflexivity in order that one's own biases and presupposition do not unduly influence one's interpretation. Given that reflexivity is important in reconciling realism and relativism the next section will briefly discuss reflexivity and Rennie's view of this.

2.7.3 Being Reflexive

Reflexivity is not a simple task to define (D'Cruz, Gillingham, & Melendez, 2007) though the second definition they propose seems to resonate with me not only in my job as a social worker but also as a student researcher. D'Cruz et al., (2007) propose that reflexivity is an analytical consideration of practice which necessitates the examination of the development of knowledge and how that knowledge may be influenced by power. Rodwell (1998) suggests that reflexivity is a way that social researchers can recognise, formulate and analyse their own tacit knowledge. Reflexivity is not only a process by which we look inward, questioning the way in which we make sense of the world (White, in Shaw & Gould, 2001), but it is also a way of viewing 'outward, to the social and cultural artefacts and forms of thought which saturate out practices' (White, in Shaw & Gould, 2001, p.102). Although, Norris notes: 'Researchers are fallible. They make mistakes and get things wrong. There is no paradigm solution to the elimination of error and bias' (1997, p.173). Nevertheless, reflexivity is an important aspect of

qualitative research and a means of minimising researcher bias and allowing the reader to access the stance of the researcher (Rennie, 1998; 2000; 2012). Walby (2010) notes that participants' reflexivity is important and is influential in the direction of the research interview and therefore the data produced.

Rennie's focus on reflexivity is, for me, significant and suggests that he is attempting to uncover the essence of things, much like Husserl's *eidōs* (Smith et al., 2009, p.12). Although Rennie talks of reflexivity from a psychotherapy perspective, this resonates with my role as a social worker and as a student researcher. Rennie (1998) observes that both therapist and client reflexivity are on a par with each other, placing emphasis on the therapist being transparent within the therapeutic relationship but cautions that this must not deflect attention away from the client. Both reflexivity and transparency are concepts that, for me, are necessary in my work and are necessary in building a working relationship with clients. My stance as a researcher is noted in chapter 1 and an extract of my reflective diary is furnished in Appendix B.

This brings me finally to the matter of Embodied Categorizing, a method that Rennie developed for analysing qualitative data. Rennie proposed that this method was consistent with methodical hermeneutics and grounded theory.

2.7.4 Embodied Categorizing

In discussing methodical hermeneutics, Rennie argues that his method of analysing the data, which he calls Embodied Categorizing, makes his methodology epistemologically sound. He observes that neither the original version of grounded theory, or the later revisions by Glaser (1992) Strauss (Strauss & Corbin, 1994 in Denzin & Lincoln) or the social constructivist version of Charmaz (2006) encompasses the researcher's experience of analysing and categorising the data. By way of explaining his model Rennie looks to Lakoff and Johnson's (1999)

explanation of 'experiential cognitive structuring of experience' and Gendlin's reasoning of the 'felt sense in the creating of meaning, an experiential phenomenological approach' (in Rennie, 2006, p.487). Rennie (2000) claims that the constant comparative method within grounded theory is hermeneutic in nature in so far as each part of the data is analysed against the whole and the whole is analysed against each part. Rennie argues that it is an 'improvement to apply method to hermeneutics' (2006, p.482), whereas philosophical hermeneutics has refused to apply method to the analysis (Gadamer, 2004). Rennie explains that the researcher's analysis is the researcher's interpretation of the experience the researcher has of the participant's interpretation of their experience. The participant may not be able or willing to accurately verbalise their experience but by entering into a dialogue the meaning of the experience can be 'revealed'.

Furthermore, Rennie states that Ricoeur (1981) promotes the idea that in arriving at a more in depth understanding, an embodied understanding, it is the hidden meaning of texts that require to be interpreted which Ricoeur refers to as 'depth hermeneutics or a hermeneutic of suspicion' (Rennie, 2000, p.484). As mentioned earlier Rennie's proposed method of data analysis is what he calls 'Embodied Categorizing' (Rennie & Fergus, 2006) and to support this proposal, he draws on Lakoff and Johnson's (1999) model of experiential cognition, which questions the notion of objective reality and detachment when all abstract thoughts are derived from embodied image schemata. There are some limitations of the Lakoff and Johnson model and therefore Rennie and Fergus (2006) also draw from Gendlin's 'felt sense' (2003, p53).

Johnson (1987) proposed that the way in which we move about and interact with our environment creates image schemata which originate from perceptual and sensorimotor experiences. Following on from this

Lakoff and Johnson demonstrate, in their model of experiential cognition (1999), the way in which individuals structure concepts is directly linked to the nature of the physical bodies they have. Rennie and Fergus (2006), provides some examples of these cognitive schemata:

‘...persons experience their bodies as containers which hold their organs and various substances. Also, persons have an embodied sense of: their spatial orientation (vertical, horizontal, in-between); their position in space relative to other entities (in front of, behind, beside, above or below); the connections between the various parts of themselves and between themselves and other entities in the world (joined, separated, absorbed); the impact of the world on them and their impact on the world (resistance, force, movement), and so on’ (p.485).

Lakoff and Johnston’s model gives us an indication of how we come to construct representations of our experience through perception and sensorimotor activity of our bodies. To make sense of our environments we create schemata (or categories) that are more easily understood using metaphoric language for example. However, Rennie and Fergus point out that although Lakoff and Johnson’s model is useful in demonstrating the ‘universality of categorizing and in explaining how categories work’ (2006, p.486) the model does not address how mood, feelings or affect impacts on the way we categorize. Given this limitation it is at this point that Rennie turns to Gendlin’s ‘felt sense’ (2003, p53).

Gendlin’s offerings of experiential phenomenology focuses on the role of feelings in shaping our thoughts and experiences (1997; 2003). Relating this to the process of categorizing, immersing oneself in the text (Moustakas, 1990; Shapiro, 1985; Wertz, 1983; West, 2001) we have an embodied felt sense of the relationship between various strands of meaning. Focussing our attention toward that felt sense evokes

images, memories and associations with which we can 'try on for size' much in the same way a poet searches for the exact line to follow on from the preceding line in a poem. Gendlin suggests that when the poet comes up with the correct line, there is a sense of fit. Rennie contends that as researchers our process is much the same that when we are categorizing we get embodied feelings and when we attend to or focus on that felt sense we get a sense of the suitability of each category. If the category does not fit we look to a new possibility and so on. In this way 'this given felt meaning acts as arbiter of the symbols we use' (Gendlin, 1962, p.113) Rennie suggests that the fit does not need to apply to the whole but rather it is adequate that it applies to one part of it. However, engaging in the hermeneutic circle may lead to a further felt sense which should be tried for size. Essentially Rennie and Fergus (2006) contend that Embodied Categorizing in the grounded theory method is a method for drawing on subjectivity to effectively interpret data. Initially the researcher is as open as possible, being sensitive to the peculiarities of meaning. While analysing the text the meaning of the text will be felt in the researcher's body that is then accompanied by associations, words/phrases images, memories which the researcher 'tries on for fit'. It is possible that the participant has already eloquently articulated the meaning but equally the researcher may create an articulation to convey the meaning. Whether or not the researcher creates the articulation or not it is examined for its felt sense of fit. If the articulation fits well there is a sense of calmness and equilibrium. Throughout the process of Embodied Categorizing there is a tension between comfort and discomfort. Rennie and Fergus (2006) argue that both realism and relativism are involved in the activity of articulation but also in the structure of the articulation. Although Rennie and Fergus acknowledge the role the Researcher has in constructing meaning and that this should be done while listening to one's 'felt sense' to arrive at a valid interpretation they do not take in to account the fallibility of humans. The researcher may arrive at an

interpretation through not adequately listening to the felt sense. I feel that this may be resolved by sending the analysis to participants and asking for comments regarding the sense of fit between the analysis and their experience which will add to the validity and the reliability of the research.

2.8 Methods

2.8.1 Initial Considerations

Prior to the submission of my ethics application to the university I was required to make several decisions regarding the type of sampling I was going to utilise for the research; the number of participants I would require; and how I was going to conduct the research. As the research intended to capture the essence of the impact that working with violent offenders had on CJSWs, I decided that a purposive sample would yield the most appropriate data. Creswell (2009) notes that in qualitative research investigators will best comprehend the research problem/question when the participants are selected purposefully. Furthermore, Davies, et al., (2011) state that 'Purposive samples are not intended to be generalisable to the population as a whole. Instead they are used to focus on specific groups or categories and select units based on predefined characteristics' (p.72). In addition, Rubin and Rubin's model of responsive interviewing necessitates 'finding people who have had particular experiences or are members of a specific group whose rules, traditions and values are of interest' (2005, p.37). I decided therefore that I should interview CJSWs who have had at least two years' experience working in criminal justice with violent offenders.

The quantity of participant required to make qualitative research valid appears to be dependent upon the methodology and methods used (Guest, et al., 2006). However, in personal communication Dr Rennie (6th March 2013 by email, Appendix C) suggested around ten participants would suffice depending on 'coherence of the returns'. This

seems to be supported both Dukes (1984) and Riemen (1986, in Creswell, 1998, p.122) who also argue that ten participants would be a sufficient sample to generate enough data to depict a collective meaning of the participants' experiences. Guest, et al., advise that 'most research enterprises, however, in which the aim is to understand common perceptions and experiences among a group of relatively homogeneous individuals, twelve interviews should suffice' (2006, p.79). McLeod, however, advocates between eight and twenty participants, suggesting that more than twenty participants would be 'unnecessarily repetitive' (2001, p.72) and produce surplus data and fewer than eight would 'result in a case study approach' (2001, p.72). In accordance with these recommendations I proposed interviewing between twelve and seventeen participants.

In keeping with the methodical hermeneutic methodology (Rennie & Fergus, 2006) I decided that individual semi-structured interviews, allowing participants to discuss what they felt were the relevant issues within the context, would best meet the aims of the research. Open-ended questions were used to enable fuller answers (Kvale, 2009) (Appendix D). Once these decisions were made I submitted my application to the University of Portsmouth Ethics Committee.

2.8.2 Research Process and Data Collection

Following favourable ethical opinion from the University of Portsmouth Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (reference number 14/15:06, Appendix E) I applied to Social Work Scotland for support for my research. This was not strictly necessary as Social Work Scotland do not have powers to 'order' local authorities to participate. However, Ethical Approval application forms from local authorities asked if support had been sought from Social Work Scotland, whether support would be sought and if not why not. Thus, support was requested (Appendix F) and obtained from Social Work Scotland (Appendix G). Another reason for this was that Scotland

does not have one unified process for approving research in social care, which contrasts with England, who have one Social Care Research Ethics Committee (Scottish Government, 2014). Scotland have 32 local authorities each with their own process for accepting research and allowing access to participants. Social Work Scotland supported my research and following this I submitted ethical approval applications to nine local authorities which was determined largely on accessibility in terms of application process. These local authorities had their research application process noted on their website and had a downloadable ethical approval application pack (Appendix H). I also wrote to a couple of Team Managers, in other local authorities, asking if they could provide me with the names of those that I could contact about my research however I did not receive a reply from those individuals. Furthermore, I wrote to a social worker, whose profile appeared on a social network site (Linked-in), that person agreed to participate demonstrating they had the necessary credentials to participate in the research. Ethical approval was granted by the nine local authorities (Appendix I) who indicated which Team Manager would be responsible for emailing my research to their staff. I emailed the appropriate Team Managers with my preliminary email (Appendix J) which included the Participant Information Sheet (Appendix K) and the Participant Consent Form (Appendix L). Two team managers invited me to attend their team meetings where I could present the research to their teams. It is interesting, but perhaps, not surprising that presenting at the team meetings yielded more participants than sending out an email on its own. In total nineteen participants responded. This presented a dilemma as I had originally proposed to interview between twelve and seventeen participants however I decided that I would pilot the questions on two participants and thereby conduct nineteen interviews in total.

I wrote to each participant, attaching the Participant Information Sheet, inviting them to participate (Appendix M) and agreed a time and place to conduct the interview. Initially I had considered that I should conduct the interviews out-with office hours and out-with the workplace to protect anonymity. Furthermore, if participants had been upset following the interview, it could perhaps be difficult to return to their duties. However, one local authority did not agree to this fearing that I perhaps may be in danger, if staff revealed something which they had not intended, and another local authority made an interview room available for use. Three interviews were conducted in a quiet room in my own home, which is set up as a counselling room. The other sixteen interviews were conducted in local authority offices. The interviews lasted approximately one hour with three interviews lasting more than an hour and one of those lasting almost two hours. At the beginning of each interview participants were asked to complete the Participant Consent Form (Appendix L) and Monitoring Form (Appendix N).

The interviews were recorded, using a digital Dictaphone, and each recording transcribed. Each participant's transcript was returned to them, for confirmation of accuracy, approval to include their data in the analysis and for a pseudonym. Receiving only five confirmation emails, I sent a second and final email. In total I received eighteen emails confirming I could use their data and each provided a pseudonym (see Table 2.1). The transcripts were read to identify meaning units (words, sentences or several sentences which convey meaning within the text). The meaning units were then reduced and placed in a spreadsheet which was devised for data management. Sub-categories were identified which were then placed into categories. The main categories were derived from the categories.

2.8.3 Participants

Interview No	Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Disability	Years Qualified	Years CJSW
1	Madeline	54	Female	WS	No	15	13
2	Jack	45	Male	WS	No	3	2
3	Louise	30	Female	WS	No	5	5
4	Chris Kearns	34	Male	WS	No	4	4
6	Tom	53	Male	WS	No	29	9
7	Sally	37	Female	WS	No	8	8
8	Ellie	27	Female	WS	No	4	3
9	Murun	45	Female	WS	No	15	11
10	Catherine	56	Female	WS	No	7	7
11	Molly	58	Female	WS	No	25	23
12	Beth	34	Female	WS	No	2	2
13	Anne	62	Female	WS	No	33	33
14	Adrian	49	Male	WS	No	26	15
15	Jemima	40	Female	WO	No	3	3
16	Jane	47	Female	WE	No	20	20
17	Bert	41	Male	WE	No	6	6
18	Theresa	55	Female	WS	No	10	10
19	Katie	45	Female	WS	No	17	17

Table 2.1: Participant Information Table

*The shading in the table is provided for ease of reading not to highlight specific participants. Ethnicity: WS= White Scottish, WE= White English, WO= White Other

As stated previously, although nineteen volunteers agreed to participate in the research and were interviewed, I have used only the data for eighteen as one participant did not respond to emails asking for permission to use the data in the write up. Of the eighteen participants, five were male (=28%) and thirteen were female (=72%), please see Table 1 Participants' Profile. According to the Scottish Social Services Council report on 2016 Workforce Data the percentage of staff by gender working in Fieldwork Service (Offenders) was 65% female and 35% male

(SSSC, 2016a). Although the participants of this research do not appear to match the gender divide within the SSSC data set, the SSSC number represents the total number of staff working with offenders and not limited to qualified social workers. However, Freedom of Information Requests (FOI) (Appendix O) to five Central Scotland local authorities produced a figure of 30% male and 70% female CJSWs (Appendix P) which would indicate that the participants of this research are a representative sample of CJSWs in Central Scotland. That said the current research is qualitative and therefore the aim is not necessarily to generalise the findings to all CJSWs.

It is noted that three participants were team managers but as those team managers also worked on cases they were deemed suitable participants. All participants were, at the time of interview, working in local authority CJSW teams and were working with violent offenders. One participant was working exclusively in a groupwork team. In terms of amount of time qualified, this ranged from just over 2 years to over 30 years with a mean of 12.8 years. In terms of working in CJSW there was a similar age range from just over 2 years to over 30 years, however the average amount of years that participants worked in CJSW is 10.6. As can be seen from Table 1 eleven out of the eighteen participants have worked only in criminal justice since qualification with the remaining seven having worked in other areas of social work before embarking on their work with offenders. All participants classed themselves as white with all but three participants describing themselves as Scottish. Two participants refer to their ethnicity as white English with the remaining participant referring to herself as white other. All participants have English as their first language. None of the participants considered themselves to have a disability.

[2.8.4 Ethical Considerations](#)

The British Society of Criminology Statement of Ethics states that the Code is 'intended to promote and support good practice'. This document

also advises that the Code should not be read in isolation and should be read along with ‘any other Professional Ethical Guidelines or Codes of Practice to which they are subject’. To that end, the Codes of Practice and Ethical Guidelines that I am subject to are the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice (SSSC, 2016b), University of Portsmouth Ethical Framework and the British Society of Criminology. While not all ethical frameworks are identical I have found that, when conducting research on ‘live’ participants, there are some common themes i.e. wellbeing, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity. The purpose of the ethics section is to report how I have addressed each of these issues.

2.8.4.a Participants’ Wellbeing

Participants should not be adversely affected by their participation in research. The research design is exploratory in nature and designed in such a way that the researcher ‘deals’ with what the participant brings. The interview questions are open ended with few prompts to provoke some discussion however, I was mindful of the need to be sensitive around some issues. The information sheet informed the participants that if they were upset the interview would be terminated and that a list of organisations in their local area which could offer them support would be provided. While all participants disclosed some upsetting incidents, no interviews required to be terminated. Toward the end of each interview I asked participants questions on the process of the research and the interview. Although this was beneficial, as I wanted to gain some feedback for my own professional development, it was also a strategy to ensure that participants were not ‘left’ with troubling thoughts. Furthermore, following each interview I asked the participant about their wellbeing. No participant advised of any adverse effects from the interview.

2.8.4.b Informed Consent

Participants were fully informed of the nature of the research, why the research was being conducted, how the research was being conducted and how I would store their data and for how long. Access to participants was through the local authority and initially I had no direct access to most participants. Participants were therefore able to decide to participate without feeling obliged or coerced into taking part. However, once they decided to participate they were to contact me directly and my university email address was provided. This was to ensure they did not feel coerced into participating by their line manager. Nonetheless, four participants were contacted directly via email. I intimated that they were free to choose to participate or not and that not participating would have no adverse effect on them.

2.8.4.c Anonymity

Although part of the aim of this project was to give CJSWs a voice, I felt that participants were more likely to be open and honest if they were afforded a degree of anonymity. Attempting to give the participants a 'recognisable' voice, each participant was asked to provide a pseudonym. All references to their locality and their place of work have been omitted or changed to protect their anonymity and/or the anonymity of their clients (explained in Appendix K). To maintain participants' anonymity from their employers, I had also invited participants to take part in the research out with their work hours and their workplace, however one local authority insisted that interviews with participants were held within the local authority offices for my 'protection'. All interviews, except the first three, were held within local authority offices and in the participants' usual working hours. Prior to the start of each interview participants confirmed they were happy with the venue. The remaining three participants agreed a time and venue which was mutually agreeable to us both.

2.8.4.d Confidentiality

Any data given to me during the interview has not been passed to a third party and I have kept electronic files on a password protected computer in an encrypted file. If I required to take the computer out of my house for any reason I would keep the computer with me at all times in line with the information given to participants. (Appendix K).

2.8.5 Insider/Outsider Research

In undertaking this research, I realise that I am both an insider and outsider researcher (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). I am an insider as the research concerns CJSW practitioners. However, I am also an outsider as the research drew most participants (11) from out-with the local authority I am currently employed and organisations may have different management structures and organisational cultures which could influence the experiences of their staff. Furthermore, both prison and community CJSWs were participants and I currently work as a community CJSW and therefore would be considered an outsider for the prison CJSWs. Additionally, three participants were team managers and therefore, as a practitioner, I would be considered an outsider. For me the importance is not whether I am an insider or an outsider but that I am aware of my own assumptions and biases in order that they do not unduly influence the data gathering or analysis.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter outlined Rennie's methodical hermeneutics as the methodological approach to grounded theory. The discussion of the ontological, epistemological and philosophical assumptions of the methodology demonstrates the validity of the methodology. The reliability of the research is established by utilising grounded theory methods and by following the process of the research and analysis suggested by Rennie and Fergus (2006). The following chapter presents the findings of the research.

Chapter 3 Findings

3.1 Introduction: The Emergence of the Interpretation

As stated in the previous chapter, (section 2.7.4), the data has been analysed in accordance with Embodied Categorizing (Rennie 1994; 1998; 2000; and Rennie & Fergus, 2006). This analysis generated 2,092 meaning units which were then coded, resulting in the emergence of four Main Categories:

‘Potential Contaminants to Self’; ‘Safety and Wellbeing’; ‘Developing Professionally’; and ‘Perception of Professional Worth’.

Each of the main categories contain categories and sub-categories which are characteristics of the main categories. For example, a characteristic of *‘Potential Contaminants to Self’* is *‘Immediate Impact’* which is a category, and a characteristic sub-category of Immediate Impact is *‘Fear’*. Analysis and interpretation of the meaning units, sub-categories, categories and main categories led to the emergence of the Core Category:

‘Developing Professional Resilience’



Figure 3.1: Visual Representation of Developing Professional Resilience

Figure 3.1 is a representation of the four main categories and their association with the Core Category. As can be seen all the main

categories are linked to each other and to the Core Category. Furthermore, although the findings are represented in the above hierarchical model, the four main categories do not flow in a linear fashion but are interwoven and interconnected, and all contribute to participants' *development of professional resilience*.

Prior to explaining the findings further, it is important to note that it would be impossible to explain every aspect of the findings in a thesis of only 50,000 words and therefore I have had to be selective about how I disseminate the findings. Findings in methodical hermeneutics are represented as the researcher's interpretation of the participants' interpretation of their experience of the phenomena.

Additionally, the selected quotes are representative of the participants' interpretation of their experiences. Each quote has the participants' chosen pseudonym and the meaning unit number from their individual transcript, for example Madeline.83 represents the 83rd meaning unit in the transcript of Madeline. Furthermore, the quotes include several dots, before, during and after the text. The dots at the beginning and end of each quote indicate that the quote is a meaning unit situated within the narrative of the participant. Essentially there is, potentially, more than one meaning unit in each utterance of the participants. The dots within the body of a quote represent the double words or the 'uhms' and 'emms' and pauses that occur frequently in natural speech which have been removed due to word constraints.

Moreover, it is important to note that although the four Main Categories and their Categories contain meaning units from all 18 participants, not all participants are represented in all sub-categories. Throughout this chapter, quantifiers are used to indicate the strength of the sub-categories. Table 3.1 expresses the quantifier used and the corresponding number of participants.

Quantifier Used	Number of Participants
A few	Between 3 and 5
Several	Between 6 and 8
Many	Between 9 and 11
Most/ Consensus	Between 12 and 14
Almost all	Between 15 and 17
All	18

Table 3.1: Number of Participants by Quantifier Used

It was clear from the beginning that all participants were uncomfortable with the term ‘violent offender’ as they viewed it as labelling. Furthermore, it implies that the client has no capacity to change, and is the sum of their offending behaviour. The dislike was as true for the term ‘offender’ as it was for the term ‘violent’. The use of terminology is discussed in the introduction. In addition, all participants said they were mindful that every meeting with a client who came through the criminal justice door could potentially lead to a volatile/violent experience, since criminal justice clients are predominantly involuntary, having a ‘service’ imposed on them by the Courts which potentially leads to CJSWs ‘telling clients what to do’ or restricting/monitoring clients’ behaviour. In being mindful, participants appeared to be treating all clients as having the potential to cause harm which had the effect of guarding participants against complacency. Nevertheless, all participants discussed the impact of working with clients who had committed violent acts or had become violent or aggressive during the participant’s meeting with them. Several participants spoke of striving to avoid contaminating their family lives with issues carried from work to home. The notion of contamination was a striking one and it appeared to me that the impact of their direct work with clients had the potential to contaminate their being. This was translated into potential contaminants to self.

All participants spoke of their current practice as differing from their practice as a novice social worker, when they would perhaps have been anxious over matters that they, now having gained experience, knowledge and skills, would classify as minor. Through the process of experiential learning most participants not only approached their tasks differently, but also felt differently. Nonetheless, they agreed that even with the experience, knowledge, and skills the job could still be emotionally demanding and that they required to be aware of, and take steps to ensure that the hidden contaminants were contained.

All participants seemed strong in their belief that they had to take responsibility for their own safety and wellbeing and, while doing their job, would not take unnecessary risks. They appeared to be cognisant of the potential consequences, psychologically and physically, both at work and home, and actively took steps to ensure their safety and wellbeing. This included seeking to offload by finding 'safe' colleagues in the direct aftermath of a challenging incident occurring. It was apparent that colleagues, while listening and giving the participants space to explore their own feelings, in some instances aided the participants' reflection process by asking appropriate questions. Furthermore, colleagues provided examples, from their own practice, of how they had successfully overcome similar difficulties in the past. This input from colleagues, alongside experiential learning, formal learning and professional development enabled the participants to develop professionally. During the interviews all participants indicated that they enjoyed, and some 'loved', their work. They saw their job as sometimes difficult but almost always complex. It was precisely this complexity that added to the enjoyment of their task. Furthermore, the feeling that they were protecting the public was strong and that they wanted to do a 'good job' because if they did not the consequences could be catastrophic.

In their interaction with the client, all participants reported that their involvement would lead to several stages of thoughts, feelings and actions, such as perhaps fear and anger, but also a need to protect the self, be it their professional self or their personal self. These feelings, and/or thoughts, would lead them to find ways of maintaining their psychological and physical health. This was accomplished through learning, experience, interacting with peers, seeking and finding support, advice and guidance from them, as well as through clinical and case management supervision. This path of learning and experiencing lead to increased professional efficacy and therefore positive job satisfaction increasing feelings of professional self-worth.

3.2 Resilience Embodied within the Narratives

The Core Category ‘Developing Professional Resilience’ embedded in the narratives of the participants arose as a powerful theme from the data through my interpretation of the participants’ interpretation of their experiences. Below are a few examples of references to ‘resilience’ within the data which are marked in bold for clarity.

In relation to the complex and stressful nature of his job, Chris (39 & 60) realises his internal resources have developed over time ‘*...you kind of grow, I’ve probably got a lot thicker skin in five years*’, (**developing over time**), and relates learning and adapting to his situation ‘*...I’ve learned to kind of manage it much better...*’ (**toughness, endurance**). The development of resilience overtime is indicated in comment by Jane.⁴⁸ ‘*...you build up a sense of strength...*’ (**change/developing over time, strength**).

Another participant, Madeline, discusses how being realistic enables her to be comfortable, self-assured and at ease with her clients’ choices. ‘*...I don’t need to.... save them.... if he chooses to use alcoholand*

harms himself then that will have been his choice.....this isn't a situation where I can do anything about.... I'm really comfortable with that....' (Madeline.71), (**resoluteness, robustness**).

Anne.39, for instance, discussed how using meditation provided recuperative power to reassure her and was helpful towards recovering from the damaging effects of her work '*....I'm a great believer in mindfulnessmeditation,I practice that myselfI find the philosophy, the concepts very reassuring being the present.... I tend to deal with.... how we do, what we do....'*, (**rebound**).

Other examples will show how the participant was able to reframe a situation by diffusing a situation showing a sense of self-efficacy, for instance '*....he wants to vent, shout and swear and he will sometimes try to pick a fight but I can defuse it with humour....'* (Sally.72), (**strength, toughness**), as well as being able **to adapt** to a situation and **recover** swiftly, as expressed in the following phrase: '*....you feel sad and feel frustratedunfortunately in this job sometimes you just have to accept that, you do what you can and you can't , you can't do anymore....'* (Katie.19).

Bert, recovering from what he feared was a mistake, recognises his weaknesses, but also reflects on what he has learned from this experience and is more prepared to say 'no', and in doing so protect himself: '*....so am I fallible.... of course I'm fallibleI can cope with all of this stuff and there's definitely a thing now about reaching our teetering point between being a new worker and.... saying....'* give me all of this so I can experience it'.... to a more experienced worker saying, *actually in order to do my job properly I need to put some boundaries up here and recognise the complexity of the work that I'm doing because if I don't do that I'm gonna become overloaded and I will make mistakes sothere's the thing about maturityas a practitioner is to start to*

recognise all of that....' (Bert.70), (**individuals sense of self-efficacy, bouncing back**).

The experience of working with their clients and the knowledge of their clients' backgrounds has also made most participants reflect on their own lives which they perceive as a protective factor, such as Adrian who in contemplating and comparing his own life situation with those he supported would feel strengthened and more **robust** '*...and I suppose in some ways when you see that side of life it makes you realise you know, the things that you do have and the positives in life....'*. A sentiment also expressed by Catherine: '*...I think you've got to try constantly and remember you are working with a small percentage of the population....'* (Catherine.22), (**strong, hardiness**).

The following sections will further explain the main categories, using examples from the data.

3.3 Main Category 1: Potential Contaminants to the Self

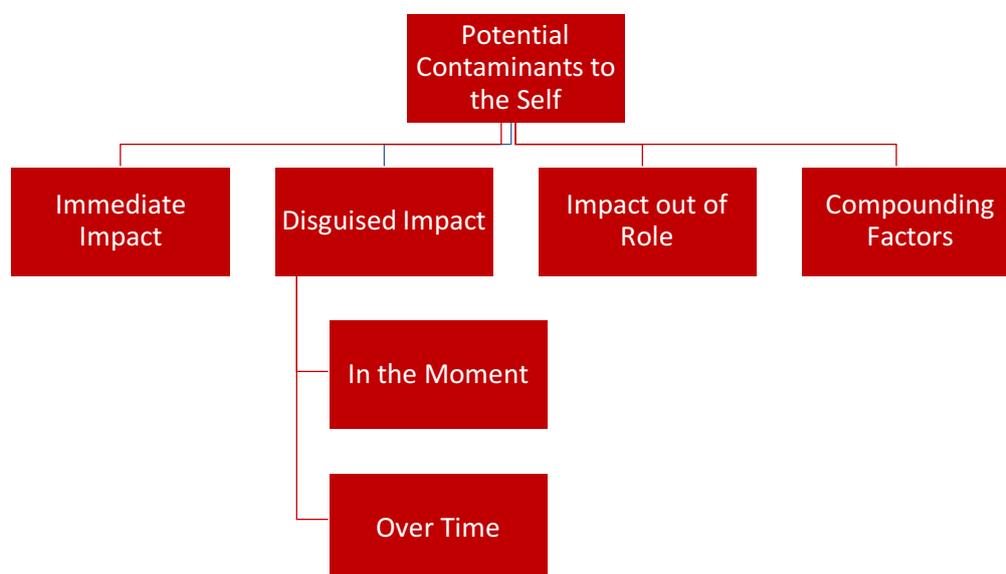


Figure 3.2: Visual Representation of Main Category I

3.3.1 Immediate Impact

During the initial and subsequent contacts with their clients participants may experience a variety of feelings ranging from fear, anxiety, intimidation and frustration to feeling threatened, sadness, disappointment, but also confusion, revulsion, shock and anger.

All participants acknowledged a definite impact of working with clients who had violent convictions or could present as violent and/or aggressive: *'...it definitely does have an impact on your personal life....'* (Louise.19), to which Madeline (55) added *'...I mean, even although it's violence towards him (the client), it has some kind of effect on you....'*

All participants described the immediate impact of their encounter with a client who, during supervision, displayed aggressive/violent behaviour towards the participant or were recounting violent acts perpetrated on others or to self: *'...it's quite intimidating....'* (Chris.125). In specific work settings Louise.72 sometimes felt intimidated: *'...working in a prison environment I feel intimidated at times, in the*

mainstream halls with violent offenders... walking about the sex offender hall...'. Others spoke of being frightened or scared while working in a community setting '...a little bit of both, fear and repulsion, cause he was...a very big man....' (Jemima.36).

Furthermore, all participants disclosed not only feeling fearful but also anxious and a few questioned their abilities to appropriately resolve difficulties when embarking on home visits: *'...fear of the unknown of what's gonna happenam I able to calm the situation downto get back to a level where that feels alrightam I gonna exit the situation in the way I want to'* (Beth.22).

However feeling a variety of emotions was not limited to home visits: *'...worried about what is going to happen next, how can I handle this situation so that things don't get worsehave him calm down a bit.... because you don't want him going away really angry....'* (Katie.13).

If it was suspected they would encounter aggression or violence from a client, prior to the meeting, several participants disclosed they could experience stronger feelings of fear and anxiety, *'...that whole fight or flight cause it was the adrenalin.... but also on leaving the room a sense of relief and there would be just that whole sort of sense of, not collapsing....'* (Jane.32).

Not only could direct contact with the client trigger lingering concerns or anxiety for their own safety, there were also times when several participants were troubled by their client's potential for causing harm to others, or to be harmed themselves: *'...it's just alarm bells ringing in my head about this person....'* (Jemima.22).

Although, participants did not directly talk of compassion toward their clients it was certainly evident that they would often feel empathy and

sympathy for their clients best expressed by Katie and Catherine: *'...she has been verbally aggressive to me on a few occasionsshe's beenneglected by her family,not had good opportunities and the council as a corporate parent is rubbish.... she doesn't get what a parent would give their child.... and cause you know that there are needs that are not met...., it's hard.... you do feel sad....'* (Katie.19), and *'...I felt sorry for him, I thought it was a shameI mean I think probably because he's close to my kid's age and I think that does affect you.... I think because he hasn't ever been in trouble before either and you've gone straight in there at solemn procedure and you think.... they seem to have had quite close family network.... seems to be a loving family....'* (Catherine.35). In this mix of emotions, it is evident that the participants were attempting to connect with their clients on a deep and engaging level.

Both Ellie and Molly voiced their occasional frustration with clients: *'...I think you can get really frustrated with them sometimes....'* (Ellie.91), affirmed by Molly.71 who stated pensively: *'...the frustration is just too much when someone is just doing the same things over again.... and there's nothing that you can do and you think,Ok.... I'm washing my hands here, but that's rare....'* This is a feeling all participants disclosed they periodically felt in relation to their clients.

Reading graphic descriptions of acts of violence, for example Trial Judge Reports, is also part of the CJSW's task. This also appears to have an impact on the practitioner: *'...you're reading stuff you.... don't ever want to have to read.... and it's contaminating and.... it can mess with your equilibrium....'* Sally.57 reported. Murun.102 recalled a Trial Judges Report which referred to *'...the house being red with bloodit was very horrific....'* In addition Katie.89 relayed that upon reading some Trial Judge Reports she felt *'...scared that something like that*

happened... and possibly, worried about the potential for something like that happening again....’.

Furthermore, practitioners are required to analyse the offence which necessitates asking the client to recount their offence which could leave them with lingering thoughts: *‘...hearing someone talk about that and knowing what someone’s done.... I wouldn’t say pre-occupies me but it did occupy my thoughts for quite a while after that....’* (Adrian.29).

3.3.2 Disguised Impact

From the outset of the interviews, all participants reported features of their work with violent clients they did not necessarily discuss as an impact of working with violent offenders. These emerged as feelings of self-doubt, heightened awareness, task avoidance, but also downplaying what they heard or felt and indeed humour. However, it became apparent that these too were consequences of their work with clients presenting violent behaviour. The term Disguised Impact is used to denote that these consequences are not necessarily viewed by the participants as being an impact of dealing with an aggressive client, during the moments they are being aggressive/violent, but may occur once the session has been concluded, or in the subsequent few hours or, may well develop over time.

3.3.2.a In the Moment

There are times when dealing with people who have committed violent offences that almost all participants experience self-doubt *‘...I suppose you question yourself..., should I have done this, should I have done that, did I do this right, did I do that right....’* (Ellie.50), or as Tom.97 related: *‘...did I miss something, should I have done something differently....’*. Following a client committing a further violent offence several practitioners would often question whether they had to accept some responsibility for the client committing the offence, *‘...my God, have I played a part in this and what have I got wrong with this and was*

this my fault....' (Bert.22). One participant, following a home visit where the person had become angry at a report that had been written, felt inexperienced and stupid, *'...well.... I'ma bit obviously naive and stupid.... I went in with a report....'* (Katie.100).

In their work with violent offenders there have been times when almost all participants have delayed doing some work or telling their client something because they have been concerned with the ramifications *'...if I know that person and they and they're actually not ready to do any work, I'm not going to push that issue because it's not going to work.... and it's just going to aggravate the whole situation'* (Ellie.107). Having become aware of the potential for violent reactions through time and experience many participants said they would refrain from asking specific questions: *'...I've worked with very, very angry people.... you know that if you ask them the next question the table is going to get coupedso, you don't ask them that question....'* (Tom.128). Although Tom laughed, when speaking this sentence, and this appeared to make light of the actual thought, it felt that this was a means of self-preservation in difficult and threatening circumstances.

3.3.2.b Over Time

Difficult encounters with (violent) clients could lead to different reactions for the practitioner, which extends, as noted in section 3.3.1, from an immediate response, to a reaction that happens in the hours following the encounter or something which develops in the weeks following the incident. The effects that develop over time may not be the result of one incident but could be the culmination of their continuing experiences over the duration of their career. Intrusive thoughts developed in the hours following the incident and continued sometimes over a few weeks.

All participants observed that over time they had become more sceptical, they began to normalise violence or became accustomed to

violence. There were times when several participants noticed that in some situations they did not react the way they would expect and that their tolerance to and of violence had changed. Most participants were also aware that working in such an environment could lead to a skewed picture of human nature. One participant also commented that she experienced a loss of self.

Almost all participants spoke of the difference between their view of violence from when they had first started in criminal justice to their current view of violence '*...whereas when I first started I might have been really frightenedor apprehensiveI'm not as apprehensive as I would have been...then....*' (Katie.85). Another participant did not realise this until he observed it in his student '*...I remember my student when she first camewas shocked by the most, to meinnocuous kind of crime that this guy had committed and she said she was almost paralysed and I was like, right OK,cause to me it was arelatively minor assault in the streetit wasn't really in her experience....*' (Adrian.72).

Adrian.70 recalled another incident which made him reflect on becoming inured or desensitised to violence '*...this guy murdered one woman and raped two women.... now, that's a very horrendously shocking crime, and because I'm doing this job andyou hear a bit more of what actually happened it's maybe about the normalisation of violence andit isn't as shocking anymore sometimes....*'. Adrian was not alone in his thoughts as Therea.104 shared: '*... we learn to read a lot of things and like two minutes later you can be joking about something completely not related to what you have read, but you can switch off to that very quickly and I know we need to, but we get very, accustomed to some of the horrific stuff that we read....*'. Although accepting that her tolerance for violence had gone up one participant had an idea why that would be '*...I think that's [tolerance levels going up] an interesting thing,*

I think that comes back to the isolation of working by yourself sometimes.... cause I think sometimes you do miss things when working by yourself....' (Beth.52). However, one participant reported that rather than her tolerance going up it has come down but this was more to do with her having children '...having children has changed my tolerancefar more than my job.... before I had children I had a much higher tolerance for misery and violence on the telly and then I had children and....can't hack it....' (Sally.110).**

Katie.55 described the culmination of her work with violent clients and the responsibility she felt to keep herself and others safe as '*...I lost myself altogether you know things that I like that I enjoy....'.* This loss of self, though extreme in this case, is somewhat similar to an experience of Bert.32 '*...being unable to sleep and also byme being not available intellectually because I was away into my thoughts, my own head, not particularly aware of my surroundings, my wife was unable to have a conversation with me because I was so occupied by everything that I was thinking....'.* Most participants described having had some instances when they had thoughts about a client while at home, however like Louise.101 they were able to deal with it in a short space of time '*...there are times where,that doespops into your head and you think about it.... but you have tokind of put them aside....'.*

3.3.3 Impact Out of Role

In addition to the immediate emotional impact and the longer-term consequences that occur over time, all participants spoke of how their work with clients influenced aspects of their private and family life. Several participants discussed the financial cost of their work, which is not about the usual travel to and from work, but about the clothes they chose to wear. Furthermore, they considered the effect their work had on their behaviour, attitudes, mood, personal relationships and family life.

Beth.54a articulated her need to take care of how she dressed: *'...those work clothes are chosen on purpose because they are not particularly sexualised.... you're being careful about how you're putting yourself over to the people that you work withlikethe lengths of the skirts and dresseseven to the point of hair styles....'* All participants discussed the impact their work has had on their behaviour in their private lives, *'...you do alter your behaviourbased on things that you know, you've read or you've experiencedsomebody getting attacked in a car while they had stopped, I always drive with the doors locked now....'* (Louise.95). Theresa.29 added *'...work did make me change some of my patterns of behaviour.... in terms of where I went and when I went there....'* Beth.51 spoke of how she became almost compelled to watch certain television programmes *'...I never used to be able to watch Crimewatch.... now I almost feel obliged to watch it....'*

Several Participants contemplated how their work with clients affected their sleep patterns *'...I can't deny there are nights when I don't sleep....'* (Murun.113), and *'...last week it manifested in three days of not sleeping....'* (Bert.20). Whereas a few participants would have a disrupted sleep *'...where I'm waking up at night.... in a cold sweat....'* (Molly.34), a few others experienced disturbing thoughts infiltrating their sleep: *'...have had dreams and things like that before, if a nasty incident has happened....'* (Chris.61).

Most Participants reflected on how the impact on them seeped through on their family or friends, *'...affected probably at times how my mood was.... with my family....'* (Jack.24). Jack also tells us that as he gains experience he perceives the impact on his family to have diminished *'...now I'm getting more experiencedithasn'thad such a damaging effect.... but probably initially the impact of that is not a very happy contented husband and father....'* (Jack.98).

Several participants spoke of their raised anxiety because of their knowledge of offences that have been committed and that this anxiety leads them to be worried for their friends and family. One participant advised that she told her husband about her concerns, *'...I worry about you because I know that that can happen, it's happened to innocent people.... you could just be in the wrong place at the wrong time.... he said to me well I think you're maybe needing to change.... the job you're in if.... you're gonna think I'm gonna get attacked every time I'm going out....'* (Louise.32). Yet another participant spoke of her ability to separate her work life from her family life though conceded that there would have been times in the past where her family life would have been affected but now she tends to speak to friends *'...there's not a case of taking that home and offloading that onto my husband.... I've got my supports.... I've got my individuals for what I would call my tea and sympathy (laughs)....'* (Anne.12).

3.3.4 Compounding Factors

CJSWs do not deal with violent offenders in isolation, there are several other elements to their role and task. One of the main points raised by almost all participants, as having an impact on their ability to 'manage' the effects of working with violent offenders, was their workload, *'...yeah, but not because I'm worried about working with violent offenders.... just because you're worried about all the work you've got to do....'* (Ellie.110). Bert.52 also spoke of the impact on him of having a high caseload on his ability to manage his cases *'...I have felt recently that my cases have been out of control and then I've made a mistake and I'm angry about it and I'm asking myself why are my cases out of control and what am I not doing correctly....'* Furthermore, Katie explains that the high workload had an impact on her but there were also other factors which made things difficult for her *'...everything just got on top of me, I tried to do everything and I couldn't cope.... and terrified of missing something, it's such a big responsibility and.... I just got over-*

burdened for a while, and I think it just takes a few things at home to be going, off the wall....' (Katie.29).

Many Participants spoke also of sleep disturbance because they were thinking of work either they have forgotten to do or have to do when they get to work in the morning '*...just lie there and think about things that need done at work, that I need to do, things like, I haven't got round to....'* (Catherine.27), and '*...I have wakened up, not been able to get back to sleep because I'm thinking oh I didn't do this and I need to do that so you end up at three, four o'clock in the morning.... your mind just....'* (Theresa.78).

Another issue which impacts on practitioners is the lack of resources or knowledge to support people to change, '*...it can be quite disappointing cause.... I have a firm belief.... the vast majority of people do want to change, they don't have the skills.... or the understanding about themselves to be able to do that.... and I always find it quite disappointing....'* (Anne.31). Louise added '*...services are geared more towards working with sex offenders,it seems to be deemed that they pose more of a risk to the public and more resources are geared towards them.... so, definitely that has an impact on your work....'* (Louise.7) This sentiment was supported by most participants: '*...sex offenderswould get more resources than a really high risk violent offender,where in actual factthe risk that the violent offender poses is greater than that of the sex offenders but yet.... practice is geared.... more resources, more time spent.... with a sex offender....'* (Anne.13).

Many Participants questioned the risk assessments and did not think there were a lot of interventions for those who have been convicted of violent offences as opposed to domestic violence or sexual offences '*...I think that that's a bit of a gap, I think we have sexual offenders, we have LSCMI, SAO7, I could argue whether they are the most effectiveand it*

gives you something and it's something to focus your work on, SAO7, in domestic cases you've got SARA... SARA's OK but it's a framework.... but I don't think we have, we've got LSCMI for, so you have a violent offender who's not a domestic offender then we have LSCMI but I don't know how effective that is in terms of risk management for violenceI don't think we have a lot of intervention for violence.... it places him at higher risk of reoffending....' (Adrian.89).

3.4 Main Category II: Safety and Wellbeing



Figure 3.3: Visual Representation of Main Category II

3.4.1 Introduction

The previous Main Category has given an account of how participants felt their work with violent clients had impacted on them. Some of the impacts were immediately identifiable and others took longer to emerge. Despite these difficulties none of the participants disclosed that they were currently suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or burnout. One participant spoke of how she thought that she had been suffering from compassion fatigue however after completing a web based assessment she discovered that she did not meet the criteria for compassion fatigue. A few participants revealed that they have taken time off work to protect their health and wellbeing. Nevertheless, with these exceptions, the participants had not disclosed any periods of illness directly related to their work and all participants were in work at the time of the interviews. It was clear that all participants enjoyed their job, despite the difficulties they encountered and the complexity of the task they performed. It was evident that all participants were aware of the potential negative impact of their work and actively took steps to take care of themselves at their workplace and at home.

However, there were also times when their strategies did not fit neatly into either home or work, providing 'space' that traversed both home and work.

Much of the work carried out by CJSWs is based on a developing practitioner-client relationship. It is therefore not surprising that certain strategies have been developed which provides participants with emotional protection, for instance desensitisation and distancing. While some of these are evident when practitioners are in sessions with clients, there are others that develop over a longer period of time. Some of these may not be under the control of the participant and have also been categorised as a direct impact of their work with violent clients. Nevertheless, they are also protective in that they can shield the practitioner from the negative impact of this work.

Additionally, all participants of this research are employed within local authorities in Scotland. These local authorities have a duty of care to their employees and in accordance with this they develop policies, procedures and guidance notes which are, among other things, aimed at supporting the practitioner in their work. Moreover, all participants have line managers who have their own interpretation on how the processes, procedures and guidance notes should be implemented. The line managers provide support and guidance through formal and informal supervision. All participants spoke of their experiences of supervision most of which was viewed as helpful, however, a few participants discussed their dissatisfaction of supervision and the impact thereof. All participants referred to their reliance of the support and guidance they received from their colleagues and disclosed support available out-with the immediacy of their own organisations. Given the nature of this external support it was further classified as formal and informal.

3.4.2 Taking Care of Self

From the outset, all participants discussed the many ways they were consciously taking responsibility for their own safety and wellbeing both physically and emotionally. Having analysed the data, it was apparent there were three areas participants were considered to be taking care of self. These three areas have been sub-categorised as 'In Work', 'At Home' and 'In Between'. The next three sections will relate these sub-categories supported by examples from the data.

3.4.2.a In Work

All Participants discussed employing various strategies when protecting their own safety and wellbeing at work. It was apparent that all participants understood that they would be working with violent offenders and, being aware of this, were able to take steps to prepare themselves *'...I suppose that's the nature of criminal justicethere is an expectation that's what you're going into.... I don't think anybody.... well I would hope nobody would come into criminal justice and not think they wouldn't be working with violent people....'* (Louise.87).

One strategy highlighted by almost all participants as a way of keeping themselves safe was to explore the IT system or the client's physical file in order that they could ascertain if there was any evidence that the client would pose a risk to the practitioner during the interview. As Jack (38/39) recalls *'...you would certainly always check to seebut maybe more particularly for someone who's got violence in their history.... I'd check their most recent misconduct reports.... to see if there's been.... threatening and abusive behaviour aimed at staff....'*. This checklist is not a written checklist but rather one he has created for himself and retained in his memory. Prioritising his own safety Chris (103) added *'...it would be foolish to take somebody into an interview room if you know they're steaming....'*. If, during the interview the client becomes aggressive or violent participants were clear that they either leave the

room or ask the client to leave the room, *'...he bawled in my face on several occasions.... and I get up and I walk away....'* (Sally.35). Other participants took similar action when dealing with aggressive clients *'...I was quite frightenedthathe could hit meandI terminated it....'* (Louise.78).

However, as the client leaves the interview room and the incident is somewhat unprocessed, almost all participants discussed seeking solace with their colleagues *'...how I dealt with it...., (speaking to) one or two of my colleagues who had also dealt with him,so maybe having other people who you can just sound off to.....'* (Tom.95). Ellie (56), added *'... I think if we didn't talk about it, it would just eat up and build up inside and you wouldn't know what to do with that....'*

Line managers were also seen as important sources of support, *'...I think what I've always been fortunate with though isa very good manager.... had agenuine concern and a care for his staff....'* (Jane.73). A sentiment shared by many other participants: *'...my line manager...., you're able to explorewhateverhappened,choices you madehow you were gonna approach thatsituation....'* (Beth.39a). There was a consensus that participants' line managers had an open-door policy whereby participants did not need to wait for formal supervision to discuss situations that arose and that line managers were accessible. Unfortunately, not all participants had this experience of their line managers as Madeline's experience of asking her line manager for support was disappointing *'...so I got all about her being off sick, andthat was really kind of how it was left....'* (Madeline.109) or of supervision, *'...the supervision within that setting wasn't effective, it wasn't comfortable....'* (Louise.55).

All participants had encountered clients being verbally abusive towards them and appeared to acknowledge that although not acceptable, this

was inevitable and had found ways of reconciling this *'...you do get the people.... ranting andraving andgoing onand you get inured to that.... but the fact is that a lot of people just bluster.... you can tell the difference between someone blustering and someone who's actually trying to intimidate you....'* (Molly.81). Nevertheless, there are times when participants have had to take the matter further, Louise.77 remarked: *'....ifyou think that they're being serious, if they're making threats then you take that further....'*, whereas Sally.37 contacted the police due to a client's abusive behaviour, *'....if someone isbawling and shouting in your face you tell them to go away and you phone the police.... I have done that....'*

In addition, Chris.23 asserts that if clients are behaving aggressively he will not intervene but will get out of the situation and have the police called, *'....when they start rowing and fighting and stuffyou don't get paid danger moneyyour dealing withunverified stuff...., is that person carrying a weapon, are they carrying a used needle...., are they likely to go through with a threat...., so I think the best thing to do is sometimes walk away.... and call the police....'*

Almost all participants considered that they were generally safe working in their office environment, but many felt more vulnerable while on home visits, a requirement of the National Outcomes and Standards for Social Work Services in the Criminal Justice System. Taking responsibility for their own safety several participants said they would not do a home visit when they did not feel safe. *'....if I don't feel safe.... I'm not going....'* (Theresa.43).

3.4.2.b At Home

All participants were aware that their work with violent offenders could be demanding, stressful and traumatic, and noted that at home they endeavoured to prevent their work from 'contaminating' their home life. All participants disclosed that they made lifestyle choices aimed at

reducing the impact of their jobs. One strategy a few participants employed was avoiding watching television programmes which were perceived to be adverse or violent '*...watching telly I tend to avoid the misery and the negative.... I get enough of that at work and.... I want to be happyI tend to minimisewatching the news....*' (Sally.111), or avoiding other media output: '*...trying not to surround yourself and not reading newspapers constantly, I've given up on the.... newspapers now....*' (Chris.92).

Most participants spoke of taking care of their emotional wellbeing by engaging in relaxing activities to manage their stress. This includes jogging, dog walking and various other hobbies, '*...it's about the support packageyou put in place for yourself.... it depends how you're managing your stress, if you've got hobbies orgoing to the gym....*' (Chris.53/54). Sally.60 talked of how 'sacred' she felt her hobby was and viewed this as essential for her wellbeing, '*...I go to art class once a week and that is my 'sacred'that's my time.... I do art because art is an intense process.... there are no words so your work just evaporatesso once a week I decontaminate.... that is sacred to methat's part of how I cope with work. I have a look-forward-to point that is mine, that is not work, that is not owned by anybody but me....*'. Equally focussing on relaxation but geared towards the philosophical and psychological was Anne's.39 contribution: '*...I'm a great believer in.... mindfulness meditation, I practice that myselfandI find the philosophy, the concepts very reassuring....*'.

Adrian though didn't necessarily feel that he had to do anything other than go home to his family and experience family life, '*...I suppose it's getting back into your own life again and doing thingsthat give you meaning to life.... that are good in life.... it could be family, it could be going out with the dog see a film,see a playthen you think life*

is wider than this, you know.... getting a wee bit of distance from it....' (Adrian.58).

Protecting her own safety and wellbeing Beth disclosed very little to her clients: *'... I'm very aware that I don't want people to know what sort of car I drivewhere I live, I don't really want people to know very much about anything.... about me....'* (Beth.21). Similarly, Theresa did not wish to take her car to a home visit for fear of it being recognised *'...I made him take his [colleague] car because I didn't want my car to be known....'* (Theresa.55).

Taking responsibility for her own safety while not at work Theresa.72 has altered her running route to avoid potentially meeting a client and for them to know more about her than she feels comfortable with, *'...I go out running in the morning...., I know I've got somebody who finishes work at 6 o'clock in the morning at [a local supermarket], so I make sure I don't run past that way....'*

3.4.2.c The Crossover

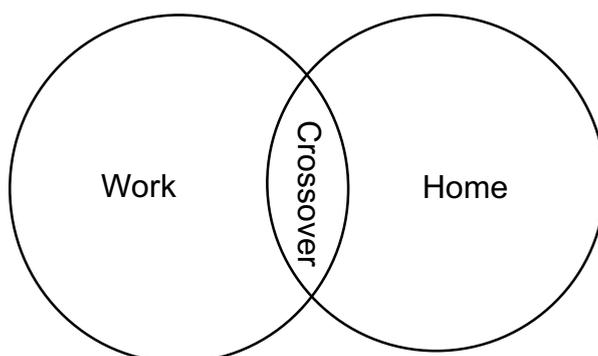


Figure 3.4: Visual Representation of Work, Home and Crossover

Although not entirely obvious from the outset, and while all participants discussed striving to keep work and home separate, there were times that there was a crossover between work and home in which they would actively try to achieve that distance between their work and home life : *'...you have to try.... to leave your job at the door and not take that*

home....' (Jane.16), echoed by Jemima who states *'...I am quite goodat separating work and my own personal life.... you do your jobyou go home and you put 100% into your personal life.... I always make sure I do....'* (Jemima.29). For a few this separation is something which requires conscious effort, *'...I live now in [withheld] and work in [withheld] and I have to work not to contaminate this is my home town and I love, my home town but you're far more aware of the negatives in life.... so.... you have to make a conscious effort to separate that out....'*

The timing of the separation appears to differ from participant to participant. Several participants noted that as they were shutting their computer down for the day they would 'switch off' whereas others discussed work on the journey home: *'...I don't live locally I think that has a massive impact ..so being able to get in the car and drive home. I car-share that's also really helpful.... cause we can talk about stuff in the car....'* (Ellie.58). Beth.40 also recalls that she and her husband discuss their respective days on the road home from work: *'...we've got a pretty strict policy of what we'll take into the house,if we're in the middle of having a conversationwe'll sit in the car and have a conversation in the drive way because we're not going into the house until we are finished having that conversation....'*

A few female participants spoke of having a separate wardrobe for work *'...having a different wardrobe and having different clothes.... there was something about taking off your work, you know....'* (Beth.54b), and *'...and I'm very disciplined I have a work wardrobe, I have casual wardrobe and nothing crosses.... I don't want to ever cross them boundaries.... and for me that's, that's about I'm here at my work and this is what I do at work but then I have a life outside of this.... andI want to have a life that differs....'* (Ellie.77/78).

3.4.3 Emotional Protection

At first glance Emotional Protection could be perceived as being similar to Taking Care of Self and although there is a crossover between the two categories, the distinction being made is that in the first category participants made a conscious effort to take care of themselves whereas this category emerged from participants, almost incidentally, speaking of experiences and actions which, appeared to occur almost on an unconscious level or where the primary focus of the strategy was not entirely on safety or wellbeing. Some of these strategies occurred in the moment, either when dealing with a client, upon reading traumatic material or shortly thereafter. Others developed over a period of time and with experience, perhaps without the participant being consciously aware of its development.

3.4.3.a Immediate Protective Factors

When discussing the difficult situations, they have sometimes found themselves in, all participants would often laugh or make a joke. They spoke of the need to find humour in their work that appeared to dissipate their emotional reaction to the situation. In addition, most participants spoke of disguising their true feelings, be it fear or disgust etc., in order that they could adequately manage a situation. Furthermore, almost all participants viewed certain emotions as normal and necessary and consequently did not worry if they felt apprehensive, scared or intimidated. All participants appeared to see beyond the client's behaviour. Regarding them as individuals with needs made them less acutely fearful of their clients, though more aware of their behaviour. The last sub-category in this section is entitled 'Perspective'. Many participants reflected on their work with their clients and realised that because they worked every day with the negative side of life it could become enveloping and took steps to remind themselves that this was only a small part of their own lives.

3.4.3.a.i Humour

When all participants recalled some of the most difficult situations they had encountered or some of the most traumatic material they had read they tended to smile or laugh when they recounted the story to me. This did not appear to be nervous laughter but rather a means of lightening the mood of the interview, *'...working with violence in.... highly charged atmospheres.... or dealing with difficult stuff can.... leave you with.... strange attitudes to thingssounds awful but.... as a jobwhere your stories would just become more and more bizarre, and you start to worry about people....'* (Tom.104). One participant knew exactly why she laughed when telling me of a traumatic event *'...it's just a valve isn't it, I mean I'm talking about it now, I'm letting it out with laughter but if I didn't let it out with laughter, where's that gonna go, my blood pressure would be through the roof....'* (Murun.172). When talking about her reaction to a difficult situation Ellie explains, *'...I think you make a joke out of it as well a wee bit.... yeah, I think you have to use humour, I think you use humour to talk to your colleagues about it....'* (Ellie.49). Sally.89 thought *'...Criminal Justice workers on the whole have a fairly dark sense of humourit's essential. I think you have to be able to laugh aboutI mean there's a fine line.... but it's a coping mechanism.... '*. This appears to be supported by Bert.75, *'...there's a thing there about this dark humour about loss and human suffering where almost, if you're surrounded by it all the time you find the humour within a lot of very terrible things....'* *'...Humour is huge and I think we are so crude to say the least....'* Murun.125 added.

3.4.3.a.ii Masking Own Feelings

Almost all participants recalled times when they believed it was in their own best interests to conceal their own feelings when dealing with clients. In other words, they felt they should not show what they truly felt, be it disgust, shock, repulsion, or fear due to the potential ramifications. Some reported that that they had to portray calmness

which was contrary to how they were feeling, '*....you might be quaking in your bootsyou might look a bituptight but you're notpresenting anything other thanthis is me and I'm being quite professional....*' (Jane.70). Although several participants spoke of it as being professional, it also appeared that in so doing they would be more able to manage the situation '*....if you're intimidated you hope you're able to put.... over Laissez-faire attitude.... I would then be able to get them to sit down and start talking and in the process I would settle, they would settle and the situation would then be more manageable because I would have managed my own anxiety....*' (Molly.20) This appears to be a similar sentiment of Ellie '*....I think you have to keep calm, whenyour heart's going like this (fast punching her chest) and your brains going oh my God what is going to happen to me, but you have to stay calm becauseif you blow up its not gonna happen....*' (Ellie.44).

3.4.3.a.iii Not Pathologising Emotions

Criminal justice social work, much like other areas of social work depends, among other things, on the relationship you have with your client. As the practitioner and client develop this relationship hopefully an emotional connection forms. This can sometimes prove difficult and can lead the practitioner (and the client) to experience difficult emotions, as detailed under Main Category 1 (4.1.1). However, many practitioners discussed these feelings as necessary to their work with violent offenders, '*....I think it's part of the job, I think you've got to feel that andif you get to the stage where you're not feeling all of that you really shouldn't be working in this job....*' (Catherine.95). This was supported by Tom.118, '*....I suppose I.... just sort my thoughts.... and I'll thinkit's okay to feel like that.... at least I feel like that.... if I didn't feel like that,that would be even more scary.* It appeared to me that in recognising, and accepting an emotional response was not only inevitable, but necessary, participants did not think there was anything wrong with themselves for feeling the emotions. This appeared to be protective and was categorised as not pathologising emotion, '*....I mean,*

....there's an element of worry there but it's not at a worrying level....'
(Louise.40).

3.4.3.a.iv It's a Behaviour, It's Not the Person

All participants appeared to hold positive regard for their clients and saw them as individuals whose behaviour was sometimes problematic and brought them into contact with criminal justice services. All participants appeared committed to supporting the individual to make lifestyle changes and believed that they, the client, had the capacity to do so. In taking this stance, participants could work with the majority of their clients without fear. Viewing their clients as people, and not monsters, a popular image supported by the media, enabled participants to work more freely with their clients. Jane.21a spoke of the person being more than just his convictions '*....you see beyond the crime to the fact that the individual is more than a sum of his convictions....'*. Separating the behaviour '*....helps me because again, it's about.... keeping a focus on what we're talking about is a behaviour, it's not the whole person....'* (Anne.32). Jemima.12 noted the difference between herself and lay people '*....maybe if you asked somebody in the pub like and they'd be like they should be locked up forever but then I saw him as a person and his family and everything so.... it was really seeing behind the offence....'*

3.4.3.a.v Perspective

Almost all participants reflected that in sessions with clients, they were often listening to clients' accounts of their chaotic lives, crime, trauma, poor living conditions, financial difficulties and associated issues and were aware that this had the potential to 'wear them down'. However, it seemed that these participants were able to take a different perspective on this, which appeared to protect them: '*....you'll be talking about murders as if it's just every day stuff and it's not, it's a small percentage.... of the job that I do and I think you've got to try constantly and remember you are working with a small percentage of the*

population....' (Catherine.22). Catherine's statement is supported by both Madeline.191: *'only a minimal percentage of the population'*, and Tom.112: *'we're dealing witha small percentage'*.

3.4.4 Processes, Procedures and Guidance

All local authorities create their own processes, procedures and guidance memorandums (PPG), which are designed to support the organisation to achieve its aims, objectives and to perform its task to an acceptable level. This section is concerned with what participants tell us about the ways in which management and employees take care of their own and others' safety which may be in terms of formal PPGs the organisation issues, as well as in a less formal form through managers or indeed the worker and their colleagues. The category Processes, Procedures and Guidance has therefore been presented in the following sub-categories, 'Organisational', 'Managerial' and 'Self & Peers'.

3.4.4.a Organisational

All participants reported various systems their respective organisations had put in place to ensure the health and safety of their employees. One participant who works in a prison advised *'...you're provided with an alarm, a safety alarm....'* (Jack.56). The participant explained that this alarm is picked up prior to the start of their work and he is required to keep it on his person at all times during his working day. Personal alarms are not routinely issued or carried by social workers working within community criminal justice teams, though before an interview with a client the social worker is expected to pick up a room alarm prior to entering the room with a client, Beth.64 explained: *'...well there's your basicsalarms for rooms....'*. Once the meeting with the client is over the alarm is returned in order that it is available for the next worker to use. Adrian's.92 office features a CCTV system which was considered a great advantage: *'...here we do have CCTV and we have eh, alarm system so I think that's a huge bonus....'*. Adrian referred to a time when

there were no CCTVs or alarms and, when a colleague was severely assaulted out-with the office, new policies and procedures were put in place to protect the workers. One manager who was interviewed informed ‘...*the safety in this office is really high because we’ve got CCTV, we will see people here and we have got the lone worker system....*’ (Molly.116). The lone worker policy entails a staff risk assessment form, in which the social worker assesses the risk the client poses to them prior to arranging any home visit. When embarking on the home visit phone technology is utilised to log the address, the time the worker is to be at the home visit with a duration in minutes or an expected time of departure. When the home visit is over the social worker calls to confirm they are safe. If the social worker does not call certain procedures are put in place. Workers are expected to use the lone working arrangements when meeting a client out-with the office. One participant though advises:

‘...there is a Guardian thing on your phonewhich, to be honestI’ve never had itI’m kind of old fashioned, I think,I come from a time when we didn’t have mobile phonesand from a time when you could smoke at your desk and I know that that’s not right.... in principle I think yes we should all have these.... but I’m just guilty of not doing it.... I mean if I was asked tobe doing home visits with somebody.... who had a reputation for violence.... I’d be putting my own measures into place you know and I wouldn’t be relying onthe fact that you’ve got the Guardian perhaps covers.... our employers quite nicely cause they say to you or they could say that well we did this and that....’ (Tom.33 & 34). Ellie.16 added: *‘...there’s people that I don’t go out and see on my own and I will notbecause I know they are violent....’*

3.4.4.b Managerial

As mentioned in Chapter 2.8.3, three team managers, who met the criteria and wanted to participate in the research, were interviewed. In the preceding section Molly discussed the safety measures in her office

and that she also has a responsibility for checking that the lone worker policy is being appropriately used by her staff. In addition, all three team managers advised that if a social worker had any concerns they could come and speak to the line managers: *'...it means it's ok to talk about anything... my door is always open...'* (Murun.157).

Two of the three managers spoke of attempting to introduce counselling for those supervising high risk clients *'...I'm happy for people, if they want to do counselling with him,it's completely confidential...'* (Murun.123). Adrian.107 stated that his organisation provides counselling for those working in the Sex Offender or Domestic Violence groupwork teams and the counselling is mandatory. However, this is not provided for working with solely violent offenders; *'... counselling or group supervision, something like that, would be really useful because we're all burrowing away in our wee bits doing stuff and sometimes, even sitting in group supervision saying that guy really scared me cause he's not changing or whatever it is.... then I think that would be helpful...'*. Molly advised that she had been frustrated because she saw the need for all staff working with violent high-risk offenders to be afforded the opportunity for counselling but when she introduced it she found that staff did not use the service.

Molly.42 further spoke of the impact of a shared responsibility and the hope that this would lessen the burden for her staff *'...I would want any member of staff to feel that this is none of their responsibility that this is a departmental responsibility and that we would be there to support them and any decision that is taken is taken jointly...'* .

Most participants spoke of having supportive first-line managers, *'...a lot of that is due to a good working relationship with my own managerI would go to him with anything.... I feel comfortable with raising all that kind of stuff or asking for a second worker or asking for him to come*

with me or....' (Chris.81,82). Having been verbally abused by a client, Louise also spoke of receiving support from her manager following the incident *'....I was quite frightened at that point that.... he could hit meI terminated it, spoke to my manager who gave me support andinstructed that there was to be no home visits, no solo visits, he would be co-worked and he would be breached for his behaviour.... I felt really supported and protected....'* (Louise.78).

3.4.4.c Self and Peers

The third distinct path of looking for and finding support and guidance was identified as being received from colleagues as a first port of call, followed by line management supervision.

3.4.4.c.i Colleagues

The importance of having sound advice and guidance from colleagues to minimise the effects of difficult or traumatic encounters with clients was reported by all participants: *'....I'm totally willing foradvice or whatever and support from other people....'* (Ellie.93a). It appeared that colleagues aided the worker's reflection on the matter: *'....through talking about it and exploring that with different people, colleagues and my line manager at the time, you're able to explorewhatever had happened,choices you made about how you were gonna approach that certain situation....'* (Beth.39b). The thought of having the possibility of turning to colleagues provided a secure base for the worker and even positively affected team spirit: *'....knowing that there is one or two of my colleagues that I could say anything to and they would look after me and I would do the same for them....'* (Sally.122).

3.4.4.c.ii Supervision

Most participants had a positive view of supervision and this was largely due to the relationship participants had with their manager. Nevertheless, not all participants had a positive experience. Madeline.66 spoke in supervision of perhaps suffering from compassion

fatigue, and in an attempt to speak about this feeling, was met with what she felt was dismissive: ‘...she [supervisor] rather helpfully [said sarcastically] just left a wee card on my desk to say about Employee Counselling without actually.... hearing me....’. Madeline left me in no doubt that she viewed this encounter as less than helpful and left her feeling frustrated that she had not been heard. Jack was dissatisfied with the apparent lack of supervision he received: ‘...I’ve not had a supervision forI would say since.... September October last year....’ (Jack.82), which equated to a time frame of five months.

3.4.5 External Support

In addition to assistance within the workplace, as previously mentioned under Process, Procedures and Guidance, most participants also spoke of additional supports available to them should they need to access these. These support systems appeared to be drawn from outside the organisation for which the participants worked and therefore were classed as External Supports. This category was further divided into ‘Formal’, which was support provided by other organisations or professionals, and ‘Informal’, which was largely drawn from family and friends and was not provided in any structured way.

3.4.5.a Formal

This sub-category does not contain voluminous codes, nonetheless it appeared significant to several participants and has been included in the analysis. A few participants advised that when they needed support they would speak to their general practitioner ‘...my doctor actually was really good....’ (Katie.55). Yet another participant asserted to access counselling: ‘...I go to external counselling sometimes.... so go to that quarterly....’ (Beth.16). Though Murun.119 accessed external counselling she reports, ‘...not helpful at all, speaking to somebody who didn’t know my job....’.

3.4.5.b Informal

Most, though not all, participants advised that they could talk to friends and family if they had a bad day at work and felt that they could offer support and advice '*...I sometimes talk to some of my friends....*' (Beth.40a), and Catherine.16 related: '*...there are people that I would speak to, even at home, I would speak to my family,my husband....*'. These participants who spoke about talking to their friends and/or family also pointed out that they made sure they adhered to the terms of confidentiality by omitting names and pertinent facts about the client '*...I took it home and discussed it with my... wifein a confidential way....*' (Jack.80).

There were also instances when participants felt that they were unable to talk to their family/friends about the work they do although generally felt they could talk about their work '*...you know there are some days I go home and my husband says 'bad day?'he says do you want to talk about it? No.... don't want to talk about it....my brain is filled withreally hideous stuff sometimes.*' (Sally.57). Additionally, a few participants actively avoided talking about their work with their spouses, '*...I don't discuss things with him cause he doesn't like to know.... there's notthatshared understanding, I can't go and speak to himI know his interpretation's.... similar to my mother's....*' (Murun.62).

3.5 Main Category III: Developing Professionally



Figure 3.5: Visual Representation of Main Category III

3.5.1 Developing Professionally

The difference in their practice from when participants had started their career in criminal justice social work to their current practice was referred to in detail. Although all participants had reached the required two-year eligibility criteria, there were five participants who had less than five years' experience in CJSW with two participants having the minimum two years' experience. Nonetheless, all participants acknowledged that, during these years, their practice and professional persona had changed. Although they had all attended several training courses, which were deemed to be continuing professional development training, these appeared to be more related to knowledge and skills acquisition. Most participants reported that they did not think any training course or text book could adequately prepare someone for sitting in a room with a person being violent, aggressive or abusive and that there was literally no substitute for experience. Furthermore, dealing with these difficult situations enabled participants to develop

professional confidence and authority. This Main Category encapsulates the journey that practitioners take from inexperience to experienced practitioner and reaching or approaching Professional Maturity. There was also a recognition that practitioners bring with them a wealth of knowledge and skills from previous experiences, adding their own characteristics and personalities, which further influence how they develop as practitioners. Social workers subscribe to a set of professional values and although no participant explicitly spoke of their value base this was implicit throughout their interviews. The following sections will explain Developing Professionally in more detail.

3.5.2 Toward Professional Maturity

All participants recalled a journey from their inexperienced professional self, which progressed toward a more mature professional self. While enhancing the professional self, almost all participants spoke of relying heavily on colleagues and supervision for guidance. The expectations that the organisation placed upon the practitioner supported their professional development. Gaining confidence was a major step toward this professional maturity, enabling the practitioner to deal with situations with professional authority. The following sections provide examples supporting the above.

3.5.2.a The Inexperienced Practitioner

As stated earlier, all participants, without exception, said they learned their job by doing and although they have all obtained a professional social work qualification these courses had limited criminal justice teaching ranging from nothing or a one, two-hour seminar to a module on criminal justice, ‘...*criminal justice was a bit thin on the ground because everything went to kinda Children & Families....*’ (Chris.97). However several participants had practice placements in the area of criminal justice ‘...*I did a placement with eh,I did a placement.... in criminal justice....*’ (Anne.51). Jemima, talks of the value of having a

criminal justice placement which prepared her for her future role as a CJSW, *'...a lot of the learning was through placements, ...one term in university and then placements.... obviously we had to do modules about lawbut most of it was.... practical training.... so that really helped.... to see what was going on there and what my.... role was....'* (Jemima.43a). When speaking of training for working with violent or aggressive people, Chris added *'...eh, I'm trying to think, was there any component of that course that was directly geared towards personal safety and work with violent offenders, there wasn't.... it was a bit thin on the ground....'* (Chris.96).

Many participants advised that as an inexperienced practitioner they relied on colleagues for advice and guidance and although this is mostly positive it could add to practitioners' apprehensiveness, *'...when you areinexperienced as I was you're.... going in there with an expectation that this person isn't going to particularly be cooperative and,it wasn't helped by the fact that I was forewarned [by colleagues] before I went inyou're almost anticipating problems before they actually arise....'* (Jane.26).

Several practitioners also spoke of gaining confidence which could be gained with relatively little experience, *'...I've only been qualified not that long butyou do get more confident.I think that's just through experience though, I think it's experience of working with them.... [violent offenders]....'* (Ellie.34a). Becoming accustomed to working with people who can present as aggressive or violent Chris.39 added pensively *'...you kind of grow, I've probably got a lot thicker skin in.... five years....'*

3.5.2.b The Developing Practitioner

There was consensus among participants that experience is perhaps the most valuable training, which is best articulated by Jane, *'...I think with the best will in the world there is no training course you can go on*

that will actually teach you how to sit in a room with a violent offender and not feel intimidated,it is something you acquire over time because you develop skills, you develop strategies and techniques for dealing with individuals and you actually become accustomed to working with people....' (Jane.21b). Louise.114 adds '*...somewhere along the line you learn about body language, about.... de-escalation and that but I don't know where that's came from....'*. Sally.117 explains how she learned to work with violent offenders, '*...by osmosis just by doing and being around and.... some of my instincts.... some of what colleagues do.... some of by reflecting on what went wrong the last time....'* .

All participants spoke of the difference between their inexperienced professional self and their more experienced professional self, through the development of skills and techniques and learning from colleagues. Louise.85 enlightens: '*...the techniques that I have learned is through other staff and adapting material.... and using it from different.... training and programmes like Caledonian and MFMC....'*

Adrian acknowledges the many contributions from different areas to his current work with violent offenders '*...from supervision, from training, on job training and just from experience I suppose....'* (Adrian.87).

3.5.2.c Enhancing the Professional Self

Practitioners continued to develop their skills and knowledge through supervision, support and guidance from their colleagues, carrying a shared responsibility, but also through the expectations put upon them by their organisations.

3.5.2.c.i Colleagues

Most participants discussed avenues to professional development that were not necessarily linked to 'formal' learning such as training courses or reading articles. One of the main contributory factors to their enhanced professional self was their colleagues, as Jack.121 remarked:

'...I suppose you're just reliant on your experienced colleaguesthat's where you get your.... information from.... that's how you learnmore valuable than probably a sort of generic day's training could have produced....' This is a sentiment shared by Tom.93 who adds, *'...you've maybe tried something and it doesn't workyou're always learning andI'm totally willing for advice and support from other people [colleagues]....'*

Sally.117 describes a gradual process how she assimilates experience, and latent and overt knowledge, about working with violent offenders which is multifaceted: *'....by osmosis.... by doing and being around and.... some of my instincts.... some of by what colleagues do.... some of by reflecting on what went wrong the last time.... a little bit of training....'*

3.5.2.c.ii Supervision

In addition to the advice and guidance from more experienced peers, most participants agreed that supervision was an area where they were supported to develop and enhance their professional self, there were a few participants who did not always get this quality of supervision. Louise.106 for instance felt *'....my experiencein supervision was that, there are things that you'll find difficult but you have to manage it, get on with it basically.... that was kind of the expectation....(pheew)you should be able to deal with that.... and if you can't.... there's the door....'*

3.5.2.c.iii Organisational Expectations

Organisational expectations were viewed as developing the professional self in the sense that there were guidelines within the Organisation that placed expectations on social workers to work within those expectations. There is an 'unwritten rule' that social workers in criminal justice do not get complicated cases until they have at least two years' experience. Once this period is over the worker would be given relatively complicated cases on an incremental basis. This allows the practitioner to develop their skills in a 'protected' and structured manner: *'....I'm*

now at the stage where there's an expectation that I should be gleaning from be it an initial interview with somebody in this office or in a prison, or after doing an LSCMI risk assessment or reading the system, the case notes or reading the file that I would have a starter.... to refer that person on to MAPPA or.... initiating procedures, so probably be questions asked if we were six, seven months down the line and somebody was in the community and then something really violent happened and a re-offence happened and I hadn't brought police, social work,addictions and all that kind of stuff round the table....' (Chris.11).

3.5.2.d Professional Maturity

All Participants disclosed that with experience of working with clients they became, not only more knowledgeable about the requirements of the job, but they grew more confident, comfortable and competent in their role. This role goes beyond simply possessing the knowledge and skills to work with a client. It also entails attending meetings either departmental or multi-agency, for example Risk Management meetings, which are deemed essential to promote public protection. A portrayal of competence, confidence and professional authority by the practitioner is vital if those around the table are to entrust this valuable role to them.

Most participants asserted that, as they gained experience, they also acquired confidence and competence as Tom.55 affirms, *'...I think you do get more confident as.... you grow into the role....'* Ellie.34b recalls initially feeling intimidated at times, though also discussed a growth in confidence which has made her more competent to challenge: *'...I've got more confident as the time has gone on.... I've only been qualified not that long but.... you do feel like you're able to challenge them [clients] more....'*

Professional authority does not appear to be an attribute which the practitioner obtains the minute they have qualified but rather it

develops through experiential learning as Jane.³³ comments '*...that's the sort of thing where you started to learn about the fact that you can go in and, and have some authority....*'. Adrian, as the community based social worker who would be supervising the client, reflected on a multi-disciplinary meeting held in the prison in the presence of his client. The timing of the client's progression to conditions of greater freedom was discussed. Adrian.³⁸ advised that he felt disregarded, as he had not been previously consulted on this matter. Adrian did not believe the individual was ready for this move, and was able to exert his professional authority in the meeting about his view: '*...as thecommunity based social worker I had to come in and say, no there won't be special escorted leave's to [community team office] cause I've never heard of that and we've not talked about it yet and I don't think the timescale for [progression] is, as clear as that....*'.

3.5.3 Use of Self

Social workers are people first and the participants of this research are no exception. They are all practitioners who bring with them personal histories, experiences, personality traits and abilities unique to them. They also have their own preferences and dislikes. All participants have experienced previous employment prior to becoming a social worker and have gained skills and knowledge pertaining to these roles. Therefore, when they commenced their career in criminal justice social work they were not 'blank slates'.

3.5.3.a What the Practitioner Brings

As stated above, all practitioners interviewed had previous employment experience, and many were employed in a social work or social care setting. When discussing how she learned to work with violent offenders as a social worker, Madeline.¹⁸⁴ remembered training on de-escalation techniques which she received as a social care worker '*...and they came over and they trained us...., it was great.... and the skills I learned then are the skills I still use now and I still reflect on them....*'. Madeline was

obviously able to transfer the skills gained from that training to her current work with violent offenders. This transfer of knowledge/skill was also echoed by a participant who had previously worked as a police officer '*....I suppose.... working with people who offend.... wasn't kind of new to me....*' (Jemima.43b).

Most Participants were also aware of how their personality fits with the task of criminal justice: '*....I like to be disciplined.... I like structure.... that's why I like Criminal Justice because it's structured....*' (Ellie.84). Anne's enquiring mind steered her in the direction of working with people: '*....I've just got a.... curious mind and it was curiosity andhow does somebody get to the stage where they're doing that....*' (Anne.8).

Molly explained, insightfully, why she believed she was able to listen to violence either perpetrated or experienced by her clients and it not affect her: '*....I've always felt that I'm a quite a shallow person.... that basicallyit doesn't bother me....*' (Molly.57). However, personalities can also make matters seem worse and one participant spoke of a recent incident which he felt he had 'dropped the ball' and although he sought supervision he was not able to take what his supervisor said as affirming that he did his job properly causing him some sleepless nights: '*....probably I've got a personality that might be prone to negative introspection.... I do tend to have bouts of that....*' (Bert.28). This appeared to be more than just a reflection or a stage to learn from a mistake. Bert was pre-occupied with this incident for weeks even though his manager advised him he had not made a mistake. In this way his personality type made him dwell on this unnecessarily and had an impact on his family.

3.5.3.b Tacit Knowledge

When asked about how she learned to deal with clients who were aggressive or violent Jane.59 related: '*....a lotwas instinctive in that if somebody is railing against you, you're not gonna yell back.... a person*

shouting in your face, you're going to try and get them to calm down by speaking slowly, quietly, having eye contact....' Jane advised that she had not been on a training course to learn how to de-escalate situations though she had quite clearly learned how to do so. This appears to be affirmed by Molly '*....you do cut your teeth.... finding people who bluster and blaw andyou do learn to de-escalate on your own.... I think you can't be taught that....'*

Several participants disclosed that, during their work with clients who could present as violent, they could experience a gut reaction: '*....you've got that gut feeling that somebody's gonna go out and cause serious harm or kill somebody....'* (Louise.60). However, it was further noted that the idea of gut instincts is problematic '*....I know we're not supposed to work on our guts....'* (Ellie.69). This sentiment by Ellie is somewhat echoed by '*....yeah, you do get a gut reaction about somebody.... I ignored it and thought, no you have to be professional here....'* (Murun.30). Ellie and Murun seem to believe that in some way gut reactions are not 'professional', that there is no theoretical basis to the gut reactions and the modern social worker builds their practice around theories. However, Murun goes on to say '*don't ignore that feeling.... the hairs on the back of your neck stand up for a reason, don't ignore it....'* (Murun.30).

This seems to point toward tacit knowledge whereby participants' experiences have been assimilated and patterns become evident, which practitioners are not necessarily able to verbalise: '*....there wasabsolutely no reason for my doubt.... but gut instinct....'* (Catherine.49). When asked to reflect on what provoked the gut instinct, Catherine.50 initially stated she didn't know but then was able to elaborate, '*....it was.... downstairs in a close.... the flats were built on a hill and you went down to his door.... the side panel of the door was painted black and no other houses looking into his housebecause I*

knew the area having worked in the area before and I didn't go in.... I thought, mmm, I don't like the look of that at all.... my hackles rose and I thought no, I'm not going in there....'.

3.5.4 Social Work Values

There was no specific reference in the interview schedule relating to participants' value base, nevertheless, there was implicit evidence that they were committed to the social work ethical framework and values, an intrinsic element of developing professionally.

The Scottish Social Service Council require that all social workers, no matter in which field of social work they are employed, adhere to the Code of Practice. This Code of Practice has been formulated around the values and principles of social work, for example respect, confidentiality, taking responsibility for professional development. As previously stated, the word limit of the thesis necessitates a selective approach to the findings. Three areas where participants have implied their commitment to social work values are, treating the person as an individual, promoting views and wishes of individuals and confidentiality.

From the outset, all participants spoke of treating their clients as individuals. This was evident in their reluctance to 'label' their clients as 'violent offenders', which was exemplified by Adrian.⁷: *'...I supposein the stricter sense it's someone that's committed an offence with violencebut violent offender seems to have a lot more attached to it....'*. Louise.⁹ though is very specific about what the term is *'....it seems to be.... a generalisation and we're stereotyping....'* .

In answer to the question regarding a distinct category of violent offenders Madeline.⁴¹ replied, *'....they're not a discreet group of people because the person I'm sitting in front of who's committed something really, really, bad has also been a victim....'*. However, it was clear that

all participants were 'seeing' the person, '*...first and foremostthey are human beings....*' (Catherine.10a). All Participants viewed the violence as a behaviour which did not define that person '*...it's about.... keeping a focuswhat we're talking about is a behaviour, it's not the whole person....*' (Anne.32), and '*...I don't look at that person and say right you're a murderer. You look at a person and say you're a person....*' (Ellie.26).

Going beyond the behaviour of clients, all participants also spoke of their developing relationships with their clients and again their adherence to their values was evident '*...if I ever got to a point where I couldn't look at.... whoever I was working with and I couldn't find at least one.... nice and decent quality about them then I wasn't going to be doing this job anymore....*' (Beth.48).

Perhaps less evident in criminal justice, than it is in other areas of social work, is the need to promote the views and wishes of clients which Theresa.83 passionately describes : '*...I think that has been a really positive thing for me to be able toadvocate for people that maybe you see on telly for such and suchor something in the paper or people talk about these folk that are in jail.... and I think to be able to advocate on behalf of people and to say to be honest we don't know what happened in their background where as a lot of times we do, I think that's been really good, I suppose I have always been that kind of person I would never have come into this job with attitude.... I mean you come in here because you know that's where your values and your attitudes lie oryou wouldn't be doing the job....*'.

Another value all participants consistently discussed was confidentiality. Although most of the discussions about confidentiality were around participants' own health and wellbeing they appeared concerned to maintain the confidentiality of their clients. Some

participants did speak about their work at home though there were limits to this, '*...obviously there's confidentiality so I don't ever talk about the specifics...*' (Sally.123) and '*...not breaking any confidentiality and stuff like that but you, talk about some stuff that goes on....*' (Beth.40b). A few participants chose not to discuss their work at home at all '*...I've always left it at work.... rather than.... take it home, particularly.... in terms of confidentiality....*' (Louise.54).

3.6 Main Category IV: Perception of Professional Worth

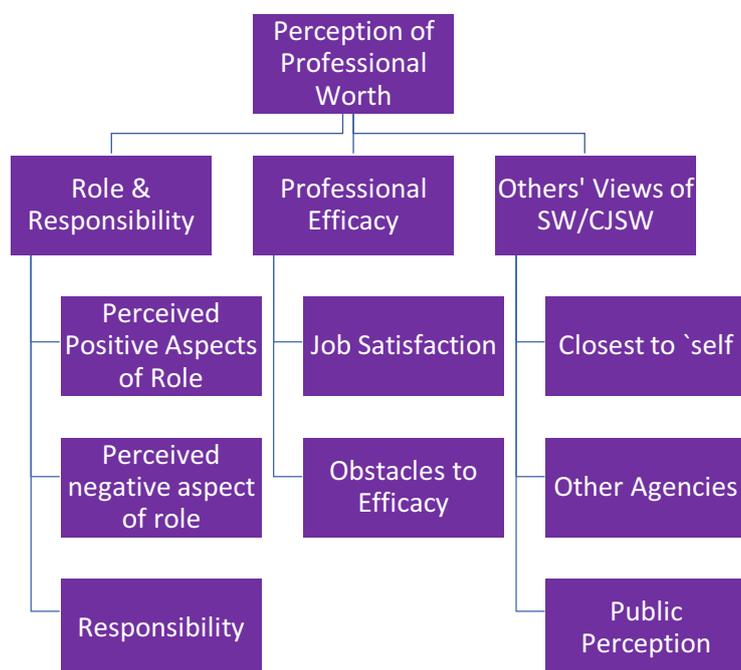


Figure 3.6: Visual Representation of Main Category IV

3.6.1 Perception of Professional Worth

This final main category evolved from participants discussing how much they enjoyed their job and how worthwhile they felt their role was within society. They articulated issues that made their job more, or less, efficacious. One important feature of their perception of the value of their role was how others view their profession and their role within that despite the difficulties they encountered. It seemed that this was due to their commitment to Public Protection which contributed, for them, to the view that their job was a valuable endeavour not only for their clients but also for their family and society. Some of the difficulties that the participants encountered were issues that made them question whether they could achieve the aims they set out to achieve.

3.6.2 Role and Responsibility

It was apparent that all participants felt they had a valuable role to play within society and the complexity and challenge of this role added to

this enjoyment. Almost all participants spoke of developing relationships with their clients in order that they could affect change and in so doing they were contributing to protecting the public from further acts of harm perpetrated by their clients.

3.6.2.a Perceived Positive Aspect of Role

Although most participants did not explicitly state that they perceived their role as positive this was implicit within the way they told their stories. There were sentiments of benevolence in their words and the way they spoke of their job and the people they worked with appeared to be genuine. The following three sub-sections will provide examples of this statement.

3.6.2.a.i Public Protection

Despite the difficult nature of criminal justice social work, it was evident from all participants that they were enthused by their work and wanted to do it well. This is best encapsulated by Sally.92: *'...I quite like itI like Criminal Justice,and I like the challenge.... I get a buzz....'*, and Bert.93: *'...I love my job.... despite all of that, I am very fortunate to have a job that I get up for every day and come in for and want to do....'*

All Participants felt the primary aim of their role was *'...protecting the public and making sure [clients] don't reoffend again or help them to.... not reoffend....'* (Ellie.93b), though there were differences of opinion about their responsibility within that role *'...I, always see my jobas trying to make sure it doesn't happen again....'* (Tom.121), whereas another participant stated *'...I'm responsible to try and minimise that behaviour, and to report it, but if they go out and commit a violent offence, that's not on me....'* (Sally.51).

To protect the public, the ability to detect indicators of violence was viewed as essential. On speaking of her anger that someone should not have performed their task to the standard required Catherine.38 added

'...it bothers me that somebody who should've been doing their job to protect the public, women in particular and vulnerable women, cause this man picks vulnerable women, somebody should have done their job somewhere to stop this and this has been going on.... for years....' Clearly, Catherine perceives her role and that of her colleagues as preventing or reducing the potential for future violence.

3.6.2.a.ii The Relational Practitioner

A fundamental aspect of assessing risk of violence was understood to be the relationship participants have with their clients, supporting them to overcome obstacles which contribute to their risk of future violent offending and having hope that clients could have better lives: *'...I think it's an important piece of work, I think a lot of our clients are excluded from the world and while I'm working with them to try and get them to have a better quality of life, whatever that means and if they have a better quality of life they're less likely to harm other people and that's my approach to the public protection thing, so it's still important it's just the way I perceive how you go about doing that....'* (Bert.79).

3.6.2.a.iii The Challenge

Almost all participants spoke of their understanding, before going into criminal justice social work, that they would absolutely work with individuals who presented as violent: *'...I suppose that's the nature of criminal justice, it's, your clientele so.... there is an expectation that's what you're going into.... I don't think anybody comes into criminal justice, well I would hope nobody would come into criminal justice and not think they wouldn't be working with violent people....'* (Louise.87). Being aware of the potential danger of working with violent people appeared to be a protective factor. Nevertheless, the consensus was that *'...it's rareto be greeted with hostilitybut you're very aware thatthese guys haveformed a view of social workers'* (Jack.42). One participant who viewed his role as investigative stated *'...everything I know social work I learned from Colombo (laughing)....'*

that's what I believe (laughing)....' (Tom.147). This sentiment was also expressed by several other participants '*....I like working with the high risk complicatedI like having to do that complicated thought process, I don't like the straight forward,I liketrying to work it out,trying to find the key to it andmaking the difference when we do....'* (Sally.99), and Ellie.23 was happy to report that the job was testing, '*...emm it's challenging (laughing)....'*'.

3.6.2.b Perceived Negative Aspect of Role

Although almost all participants felt they were able to get colleagues' perspectives following a difficult session there was an acknowledgement that as a CJSW, more often than not, you work with a client on an individual basis and the difficulty that brings is articulated by Beth who states '*....the isolation of working by yourself sometimes.... you do miss things when we're working by our-self....'* (Beth.52). There was also a feeling by a few participants who work in the community that they had been excluded from decisions that occurred in the prison which would ultimately impact on how they would work with a client in the future '*...just not feeling the throughcare's really working at the moment and feeling a bit of an outsiderpressing the nose against the window'* (Adrian.42).

3.6.2.c Responsibility

Further to the role of being a CJSWer, several participants expressed that they had a responsibility to the Organisation in dealing with violent offenders '*....the experience of working with.... using a protocol.... using procedures.... that's kinda made thoroughly clear from the outset....'* (Chris.10).

Participants also intimated that their own organisation had expectations on them to make sure that they adhered to health and safety protocols '*....the expectation isyou do the job and you report*

your concerns.... and you manage your own safety and other people's....'
(Louise.94).

3.6.3 Professional Efficacy

As stated previously all participants recounted how much they took pleasure in their job. The satisfaction of their job was due to several factors, not least because the role was complex, required skill and was supporting people to achieve change which, if successful, would contribute to a safer society. Similarly, they all spoke of difficulties they felt, hampered them in achieving their desired outcome which was interpreted as 'Obstacles to Efficacy'. This encapsulates the participants' thoughts and feelings towards their experience and interpretation of their difficulties with their job. Both, their satisfaction in and with the job and the difficulties, problems and hindrances of the job are further explained in the following two sub categories.

3.6.3.a Job Satisfaction

Although not explicitly stated by all participants it was evident that all participants derived a great deal of job satisfaction which was highlighted by Jane.67 who reported '*...oh God aye.... more days than not get up and really look forward to going to work.... it has it's challenges.... it's the variety.... the connections....'* Another participant recalled her elation when her work would show positive outcome: '*....it's been absolutely.... brilliant to seefor instance.... young lads.... in their late teens.... where they.... committed very serious offences and when you work with them and you see progress and.... development, you see maturity.... a whole lot of changes in them, their attitudes and their beliefs....'* (Anne.10). On other occasions, it was explained, success may not be immediately obvious '*...there are a few that you just never see again or you might see them twice, three times and then all of a sudden you think.... I haven't seen him for years....'* (Catherine.76).

A further contributory factor to their job satisfaction is that none of the participants reported being assaulted during the course of their work as a CJSWer. Most, however, stated they had encountered intimidating and/or aggressive behaviour. When asked why they thought there were not more incidents of assault against CJSWer the consensus was that in such cases the client would be send back to Court as Tom.106 acknowledged: *'...if they shout and bawl and swear at us or threaten us.... then we could send them back to Courtthey know that....'* A further contributing factor to the overall positive feeling at work was given a clear explanation by Bert.87: *'...I think we're very lucky that generally our colleagues are supportive, they're interested in what we're here to say, they're available, they're in the location that we're in'*

3.6.3.b Obstacles to Efficacy

Almost all participants were dissatisfied with the amount of information they received regarding the offence when compiling a Criminal Justice Social Work Report. One of the aims of this type of report is to provide the Court with an analysis of the offence for which the person has been convicted. Several participants advised that they were almost completely reliant on the client's own account of the incident which, they felt, reduced the efficacy of the report. This is adequately represented by Jemima.17 who worked previously as a Probation Officer. She notes the difference in the level of information and what this means for her practice: *'...I found it really strange.... you did a court interview based on what the.... accused is telling youbasically it'sone-sided, you can't be as analytical.... whereas previously you'd get the police statement,you go into the interview and say, I've got all the police reports you tell me your point of view and you can actually challenge them if they're saying 'I did nothing',three witnesses saying you did this.... I felt the report went to a deeper level, far more analytical, far more balanced, and more challenging, more realistic, this is the offence, this is what happened and this is what they're saying.... I*

thought that was a lot better than just coming and they've told me that....'.

Jemima's view was shared by Tom who also thought that not having adequate information made supervision with his clients less effective, *'...I find it extremely frustrating.... the one thing I could change in this job would be to have more information, victim statements etcetera to use as part of the.... work....'* (Tom.69).

The following statement depicts Adrian's frustration on the differences in working within the criminal justice system in Scotland and their English counterpart, and how much more effective his supervision of clients would be if more in-depth information about the client was made available: *'...sometimes we get a very sanitised view of what happened, one situation where I've had all the information I was able to have a much clearerperspective on the exact level of violence and what had happened and the impact on the victim, that's from an English court whereas here we don't get that.... it was better for me as a worker in terms of my professional task because I was able then.... to give a more accurate assessment.... both of the person's risk but also in terms of intervention, what we were gonna do to address this because if you've just had a complaint from Scotland I think it would be pretty kind of bland....'* (Adrian.14).

Although all participants seemed to have a positive sense of professional worth, there were times when several participants felt that some of the work they did was not always seen as being efficacious *'...we are toiling away.... doing all these millions of other things, but somehow the people that are.... doing the performance indicators,and the auditors are not comfortable if they can't say 50 hours of offence focused work has been done with this person'* (Madeline.170).

Many participants felt their success with supporting people to change was hampered *'...by not having enough resources, to meet people's needs...'* (Catherine.10b) which has led one participant to a feeling of *'...powerless, frightened,you do all you can, with what you've got but fear of something happening.... them going out a reoffending...'* (Jemima.15). There was a feeling that violent offenders generally received less resources compared to those who commit sexual offences which some viewed as potentially placing *'...him at higher risk of reoffending...'* (Louise.14). A sentiment further expressed by Tom.100 who informed: *'....I sometimes see things as just being resource lead and not means lead....'*

3.6.4 Other's Views of Role/Profession

During the analysis stage, it became apparent that most participants placed a great deal of importance on the perception other people had of their role and efficacy. Almost all participants were concerned about the views of family and friends, conceptualised as 'Closest to Self'. As social work contributes to a larger, multi-disciplinary criminal justice system, the models and values that underpin these agencies appeared to conflict at times with CJSW. Furthermore, individual professionals working within these agencies have also expressed their opinion of CJSW. In addition, public perception and media representation of their work was also important and impacted heavily on the participants' feelings and thoughts of professional self-worth. The subcategories 'Closest to Self', 'Other Agencies' and 'Public Perception' are presented below.

3.6.4.a Closest to Self

Throughout the interviews, all participants spoke of their reliance on their family and friends for support. This was not always a straightforward process as friends and family could be worried about the participant's safety because of their work with people who could be seen as 'dangerous', *'....I talk a little bit about my work but my husband*

worries, is over protective and I don't like that so.... I tell him a bit, but I tend to protect him from it so that he's not panicking about me....' (Sally.123).

There sometimes appeared to be a difference in value base for example '....I was seeing the people, he was seeing the prisoners....' (Murun.59). Murun further explained that her partner '....doesn't understand.... and he doesn't want to understand why I do what I do cos he.... can't comprehend why on earth anybody would want to do that....' (Murun.61).

Occasionally discussing their work at home could perhaps cause tension as Katie.117 describes: '....I try not to talk about any of the stuff at work anymore.... it can cause a lot of argumentsyou feel you may have to justify your joband I would rather not get into any of that when I'm out of work....'.

Beth spoke of her father, and while she is a professional and has knowledge of what her work is about, he took his view from that which is in the public domain, '....I think he (dad) probably worries about me more because of some of the work that we do.... and some of that is about that divide ofnot seeing it in the same way that we do so there's the kind of societal shift on that ofthings being sensationalised....' (Beth.56).

3.6.4.b Other Agencies

Work in a secondary setting brings its own difficulties and one participant described how she felt she was viewed when working in a prison a number of years ago and how she felt she may have perhaps inadvertently supported that view with her naivety when she mistook a lit cigarette for a firefly, '....we were the silly women, the silly social workers.... (Murun.56).

A large proportion of the CJSW task is preparing various types of reports and most participants recounted their anxiety that they were not always seen in the best light, *'...you know, because that's what the Sheriff is looking at.... he's looking at my report going he punched him once and then he is looking at a photograph.... of the person's injuries....'* (Tom.63).

All participants discussed how not having all the information about crimes that have been committed could potentially lead to a weakening of the view of their professionalism which is discussed under Obstacles to Efficacy (3.6.3.b) in the preceding category.

3.6.4.c Public Perception

All participants recounted the sometimes negative view that the public have of CJSW which is *'...not always seen in a particularly positive light....'* (Jack.41).

Most participants felt that the public do not understand the role of CJSW which is very often misrepresented as the 'soft option': *'...I will fight with my hairdresser who says that everyone should go to jail.... I will say well, who is that serving.... and have the argument about the fact ..that we want to rehabilitate people and.... the way we treat our.... offenders is a reflection on our society and that needs to be.... tolerant and.... I would be (viewed as) wishy-washy liberal when it comes to that....'* (Molly.90).

Although the following quote is perhaps a little long it exemplifies the general tenet of the participants, with Beth.69 making the point that as an insider she understands her role very well but struggles with the fact that the media represents her work in a different way than is intended: *'...I think the only other things that I tussle with has been that often the picture that we have on the inside as professionals is not often the same picture that the public has, so sometimes when you're maybe writing*

court reports for violent or sexual offences and you're putting suggestions in about how the court might deal with that, when Joe Public read that then that seems to not really be just or fit the bill...., but maybe that's about a lack of public understanding too of what we're trying to achieve.... like.... prison would be the.... ultimate.... and the only option whereas what we probably know as community disposal in some ways are gonna open up more opportunities to do work that's protecting the public.... so we might know that but I think sometimes the media interest around it and the lack of public understanding maybe feels.... sometimes.... that we're misunderstood.... and maybe we are kinda seen to be boosting the offenders.... backing them up a little bit.... a little bit of a soft touch....'

3.7 Concluding Remarks

The preceding chapter has discussed the findings of the research. The four main categories: Potential Contaminants to Self; Safety & Wellbeing; Developing Professionally; and Perception of Professional Worth were derived from and grounded in the data, examples of which are embedded within the text. The core category, Developing Professional Resilience arose from the main categories and although not explicitly discussed by participants, it can be seen by the participants' responses that it is embedded in their narratives.

Chapter 4 Literature Review

4.1 Introduction

In April 2015, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes produced statistics indicating the number of attacks resulting in ‘serious bodily injury’ in Scotland exceeded that of other countries and in 2013 assaults reached almost 1,200 for every 100,000 people. In May 2017, the BBC reported an increase in violent offending with the incidence of murder increasing by 31 per cent. Not all reported violent crime will be prosecuted or culminate in a conviction and not all convictions will lead to a disposal requiring supervision in the community. Nevertheless, a large majority of those convicted of violent offences will require some form of community supervision and intervention which, in Scotland, is the statutory duty of CJSW departments. Thus, CJSWs are an essential and integral part of the Criminal Justice System in Scotland (McAra, 2008); their role being to supervise individuals made subject to a Community Payback Order; those released on licence from a custodial sentence; and to prepare reports for various stakeholders, including Courts and Parole Boards. Scotland’s CJSWs work with those convicted of all offences including violent offences.

It seems reasonable to hypothesise that research has been undertaken to explore the impact of working with violent offenders on CJSWs has been undertaken given that they are vital to the criminal justice system. However, a literature search returned no exact matches regarding this issue. The terms were expanded to include: other practitioners (for example, probation officers; non-criminal justice social workers; therapists; mental health workers; solicitors) different offence types; (for example sex offence, domestic violence; and drug offences); and clients accessing non-criminal justice services (e.g. mental health; children and families, victim support). This returned an increase in research on the impact of working with clients on practitioners. Much of the

literature pertained to working with victims rather than the perpetrators of violence. Of the research that discussed the impact of work with perpetrators on practitioners, most focussed on the impact of working with sex offenders (e.g. Bengis, 1997; Hatcher & Noakes, 2010; Kadambi & Truscott, 2003; Moulden & Firestone, 2007; Steed & Bicknell, 2001; Shelby, Stoddart, & Taylor, 2001; Way et al., 2004). The impact of working with domestic violence perpetrators has received less attention (Ilfie & Steed, 2000; Morran, 2008). Research on the impact of violence on childcare protection workers (e.g. Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2009; Dagan, Ben-Porat, & Itzhaky, 2016; Ferguson, 2005) was also included in the literature review as was the impact of aggression towards healthcare professionals (e.g. Eker, Özder, Tokaç, Topçu, & Tabu, 2012). Most of the literature focussed on the negative aspects of this work including the impact of violence and/or aggression, burnout, vicarious trauma; and compassion fatigue (e.g. Hatcher & Noakes, 2010; Kadambi & Truscott, 2003; Whitehead, 1985).

Most CJSWs in Scotland do not work solely with violent offenders, their caseload encompasses individuals who may have committed a wide variety of offences. The priority for each are the same, to minimise the likelihood of further episodes of offending and thereby reducing the risk of harm to the public. In so doing, it is the CJSW's role to analyse the offence and are therefore often exposed to graphic details of violent offences. There is evidence that those hearing or reading traumatic events may also be affected (e.g. Ilfie & Steed, 2000; Vrklevski & Franklin, 2008). The point being that there are similarities in the nature of work between working with sex offenders, domestic violence offenders and violent offenders. All require a degree of reading and/or hearing graphic material, all expose the worker to people who may pose a threat to the practitioner's safety and all require the worker to balance public protection with the client's rights. Therefore, the literature which

has been gleaned, though not an exact match, is useful to the current research.

The literature search on the impact on practitioners of their work with various types of clients highlight factors such as burnout, secondary trauma stress (STS), vicarious trauma (VT), compassion fatigue (CF) and compassion satisfaction as the major consequences for the practitioner. Furthermore, as explained in the introduction to the Thesis (Chapter 1), part of the rationale for conducting the research is that CJSWs are subject to verbal abuse, aggression and violence by clients, who may not have been convicted of a violent offence prior to their outburst. It would therefore be reasonable to expect that practitioners encountering acts of aggression/violence may react with fear or anxiety.

The following sections will discuss relevant literature that is pertinent to the findings of the current research. The first section (4.2) will discuss the negative consequences of work with clients. Section 4.3 will consider the ways in which the safety and wellbeing of practitioners is maintained. In addition, section 4.4 will discuss how criminal justice social workers develop professionally, from their initial training to continuing professional development. Finally, the last section of the literature review, section 4.5, will review the literature pertaining to how criminal justice social workers' perception of professional worth is established.

4.2 Negative Consequences

As mentioned previously, there is a lack of research conducted into the impact of working with offenders on CJSW, although there is literature pertaining to the impact of working with offenders on probation /parole officers, (e.g. Lewis, Lewis, & Garby, 2013; Severson & Pettus-Davis, 2011; Simmons; Cochran, & Blount, 1997; Whitehead, 1985),

Furthermore, there is an extensive body of literature highlighting the negative impact on social workers from their face-to-face work with clients (e.g. Collings & Murray, 1996; Jones, Fletcher, & Ibbeston, 1991; Wilberforce et al., 2012). Social workers suffer a high rate of stress, and illness resulting from that stress (Grant & Kinman, 2014). One factor contributing to job-related stress is violence and/or threats of violence (Jones & Ibbeston, 1991; Wilberforce et al., 2012). Moreover, evidence suggests that fear and/or experiencing aggressive or abusive clients in the workplace has far reaching negative consequences for the practitioner (Denney, 2010; Merecz, Drabek, & Mościcka, 2009; Inoue, Tsukano, Muraoka, Kaneko, & Okamura, 2006; O'Beirne, Denney, & Gabe, 2004). As stated in section 4.1, part of the CJSW task is to obtain details from clients, not only of the crime the clients have committed, but also of their personal histories. Working with clients who have committed acts of violence entails listening to accounts of trauma that clients have perpetrated on others but there is also evidence that individuals who commit violent offences have also experienced trauma in their own lives (Dierkhising et al., 2013; Fox et al., 2015; Neller et al., 2006). Additionally, evidence also suggest that perpetrators of violence suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (Gray et al., 2003; Rogers et al., 2000).

In an academic trial Krans, Näring, Becker and Holmes (2009), linked hearing verbal accounts of trauma to intrusive images. Krans et, al. read descriptions of a tragic nature to students or former students whose academic course was not specified, finding evidence of symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder that were higher than those who viewed a film of the tragic event. They concluded that practitioners working with individuals who are traumatised are at risk of 'developing images of their patients' trauma narratives' (2009, p.138). The consequences of working with traumatised clients does not appear to be limited to intrusive thoughts but appear to have far reaching consequences for practitioners (e.g. Figley, 1995; Harrison & Westwood,

2009; Inbar & Ganor, 2003). The following sections will focus on the negative impacts such as burnout, vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue as these appear to be the most frequently referred to consequences of working with violent and/or traumatised people.

4.2.1 Violence and Aggression from Clients

There does not appear to be any recent public information on the incidence of murder or serious assaults on CJSWs in Scotland or probation officers within the rest of the UK. Nevertheless, Denney and O'Beirne (2003), reporting incidence of violence on probation officers, concluded that it was not unusual for probation officers to encounter violence (be it verbal or physical) while carrying out their duties.

During the 1980s and 1990s there were several reported deaths of social workers (none of whom were CJSWs) and social care staff while they attempted to carry out their duties, (for example; Isabel Schwartz in 1985, Francis Betteridge in 1986, Audrey Johnson in 1988, Kate Sullivan in 1992, Jonathan Newby in 1993, and Jenny Morrison in 1998). More recently, Jenny Foote, was murdered on July 27th, 2015 by a client because she asked him to turn the TV down so that she could talk to him. There have been several reported deaths of social workers in the United States, and in January 2016, 22-year-old Swedish graduate social worker, Alexandra Mezher, was killed in what was reported to be a 'frenzied attack' (Selina Sykes 2016 May 24th The Express, UK). The incidence of violence against social workers and social care staff is well documented (Balloch, Fisher, & McLean, 1999; Brockman & McLean, 2000). Denney and O'Beirne (2003), point out that social workers are comparable to probation officers in that they often work with violent people and attempt to enforce measures stipulated by law and may, in some instances, go against the wishes of their clients. Consequently, they are regularly subjected to violence and threats. In 2011, the *Community Care* magazine survey reported that,

during the previous six months, almost two thirds of the respondents (children's social care workers) had experienced threatening, intimidating and hostile behaviour from parents (Atkins, 2013).

There has been growing interest on the impact of aggression or violence in the workplace since the 1980s (Merecz, Drabek, & Mościcka, 2009). The immediate consequences of an aggressive/violent act include fear, anger, helplessness, depression, feelings of guilt and decreased self-esteem (Hoel, Sparks, & Cooper, 2001; Merecz et al., 2009). Moreover, if exposure to acts of aggression/violence are frequent and prolonged, these emotional reactions can develop into 'chronic mental health impairment, such as mood and anxiety disorders, addictions, or suicidal attempts' (Merecz et al., 2009, p.244). Smith (2005), who wrote extensively about fear in *Health and Social Care*, indicates that fear can have a profound effect not only on practitioners' health and wellbeing but also on their ability to carry-out their job. This was supported by Merecz et. al (2009) who researched the impact of co-workers and clients' abusive acts on practitioners and found that the experience of workplace aggression is associated with increase in burnout symptomology.

Violent offenders can be difficult to work with due to their perceived 'dangerousness' and furthermore they are often manipulative, dishonest, intimidating, reluctant to engage, minimising, denying offence (risk of burnout) though these can also be characteristics of criminal justice and social work clients in general. Additionally, part of the CJSW's role is to analyse the offence, obtaining graphic details of the harm caused by the client from the client (risk of Vicarious Trauma), ascertaining the motivation behind the offence with the aim of supporting the client to reduce their future likelihood of causing serious harm. Thus, CJSWS need to develop relationships with clients, invest emotional energy in their relationships, viewing their clients as

individuals with complex needs (risk of Compassion Fatigue). The following sections, 4.2.2, 4.2.3. and 4.2.4., will focus on the three specific and potential consequences of working with violent offenders.

4.2.2 Burnout

Although there does not appear to be a universal definition of burnout (Edwards et al., 2000), it has been defined as ‘a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion caused by long-term involvement in emotionally demanding situations’ (Pines & Aronson, 1998, p.9). A broad consensus considers exhaustion a major element of burnout, though there is not the same unanimity regarding the other components (Evans & Fisher, 1993; Lee & Ashford, 1996; Shirom, 2005). For example, while some have indicated that disconnection from work and clients is a core characteristic of burnout (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner & Schaufeli, 2001) others have argued that forming detached relationships with clients may be a specific reaction to human service workers (Evans & Fisher, 1993). Nevertheless, Stamm, argues that burnout develops over time and relates to difficulties in work performance and feelings of hopelessness with practitioners feeling that their endeavours are not efficacious (2005). Figley, states that:

‘Burnout can be described as resulting from working with difficult clients and is the consequence of frustration, powerlessness and inability to achieve work goals. It is characterised by some psychophysiological arousal symptoms including sleep disturbance, headaches, irritability, and aggression, yet also physical and mental exhaustion’ (2002, p.19).

Empirical research indicates that, in helping professions, burnout is widespread (Maslach & Jackson, 1984). Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter maintain that a mismatch of six work related factors contribute to burnout; ‘workload; control; reward; community; fairness; and values’ (2001, p.414-415).

Existing literature indicates that social work is a highly stressful profession in which role conflict between client advocacy and meeting agency needs are contributing factors (Lloyd, King, & Chenoweth, 2002). Furthermore, burnout and stress have long been identified as risks for social workers. (Acker, 1999; Egan, 1993; Gilbar, 1998; Sze & Ivker, 1986; Um & Harrison, 1998). Most research regarding social worker burnout pertains to those working within children and family or mental health areas of social work (Acker, 1999; Anderson, 2000; Edwards, Burnard, Coyle, Fothergill, & Hannigan, 2000).

Literature pertaining to the incidence of burnout and stress among CJSWs is scarce. However, research has been conducted on burnout within probation officer populations (e.g. Gayman & Bradley, 2013; Lewis, Lewis, & Garby, 2013; Salyers, Hood, Schwartz, Alexander, & Aalsma, 2015; White, Aalsma, Holloway, Adams, & Salyers, 2015; Whitehead, 1989). These studies have investigated different aspects related to burnout such as: the correlation between burnout and organisational contexts; correlation between client specific details and burnout; and the experience of burnout. Nevertheless, the research would suggest that probation officers suffer from burnout. There is also growing evidence that therapists working with sex offenders are at risk of developing burnout (Kadambi & Truscott, 2003; Shelby, Stoddart, & Taylor, 2001). Those working with sex offenders are required to listen, process and analyse graphic accounts of sexual offending by clients with the focus of reducing the risk of further sexual offending (Bengis, 1997; Ellerby, 1997). These practitioners are therefore subjected to explicit descriptions of their clients' offences (Hatcher & Noakes, 2010). Moreover, these practitioners are required to work with clients' cognitive distortions such as justification, denial and minimisation, who also present as resistant, hostile, deceptive, intimidating, manipulative and/or needy (Ellerby, 1997). Similar issues are encountered by CJSWs when working with violent offenders and thus are

comparable to practitioners working with sex offenders. Both quantitative and qualitative research has found increased levels of burnout among sex offender treatment providers (see Ellerby, 1997; Farrenkopf, 1992; Kadambi & Truscott, 2003; Shelby, Stoddart, & Taylor, 2001). However, a mixed methods study by Hatcher and Noakes (2010) found that their participants, sex offender treatment providers, were at low risk of burnout.

4.2.3 Vicarious Traumatization

Morran (2008) states there has been little previous consideration of the effects of working with individuals who have traumatised others, except from the recent attention given to the consequences for practitioners when working with those who commit sex offences (for example Baird & Jenkins, 2003; Hatcher & Noakes, 2010). However, there have been numerous studies investigating the effects of working directly with traumatised clients. McCann and Pearlman introduced the concept vicarious traumatization in 1990 (McCann & Pearlman, 1990a) after finding evidence of trauma in therapists who worked with or studied individuals who had been traumatised. Later Pearlman and Saakvitne defined vicarious trauma as ‘transformation in the inner experience of the therapist that comes about resulting from empathic engagement with the client’s trauma material’ (1995a, p.31). Conversely, Figley, (1995b) argues that empathic involvement with individuals presenting with emotional suffering and pain leads to compassion fatigue (discussed in section 4.2.3). Other theorists argue that high levels of empathy are linked to vicarious traumatization. Listening, hearing or reading details of trauma may lead to intense emotional reactions in the highly empathic practitioner according to Moulden and Firestone (2007), who therefore link the concept of empathy to vicarious traumatization. Practitioners affected by vicarious traumatization suffer symptoms similar in nature to post traumatic stress responses e.g. dissociation, numbing, nightmares, obsessive thoughts or flashbacks (Beaton & Murphy, 1995) though these symptoms may be

less severe than those who were traumatised (Beaton & Murphy, 1995). In addition, individuals' significant assumptions about their world, themselves and other people can also be disturbed (McCann & Pearlman, 1990b; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995a; 1995b). The effects of vicarious traumatisation include poor decision-making, feelings of professional and social isolation, substance misuse and a negative impact on relationships and feelings, (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995a; 1995b; Rothschild, 2006). Figley argues that vicarious traumatisation is an anticipated and permanent consequence of working with traumatised clients (1995b). Unlike burnout (section 4.2.1) which develops over time, vicarious traumatisation appears 'with a rapid onset of symptoms that occur suddenly and are pervasive' (Jordan, 2010, p.227). Rosenbloom, Pratt and Pearlman (1995) contend that vicarious traumatisation affects therapist's trust, intimacy, safety concerns, or intrusive imagery whereas burnout does not. Both vicarious traumatisation and burnout can result in reduced respect and concern for client (Raquepaw & Miller, 1989; Canfield, 2005) and are both believed to be associated with poor peer social support (Boscarino, Figley & Adams, 2004). Supporting Raquepaw & Miller (1989) and Canfield (2005), Dean and Barnett's (2011) qualitative study researching the personal impact on therapists delivering one-to-one treatment programmes for high risk sexual offenders, found that participants doubted their professional competence and experienced alterations in their opinion of themselves and others. Furthermore, quantitative research reported that individuals who had previously suffered trauma experienced greater distress than those who had not (Crabtree, 2002). Hacker and Noakes, conducting a mixed methods study on treatment providers working with sex offenders reported no proof of vicarious traumatisation in their quantitative analysis of the data. Notably, however, their qualitative analysis revealed participants disclosed some symptoms associated with vicarious traumatisation, e.g. 'shifts of cognitive schema' (2010, p.160).

4.2.4 Compassion Fatigue

Researching the nature of burnout in nurses, Joinson (1992) introduced the term 'compassion fatigue' to describe a form of burnout that is exclusively applied to those working in care-giving professions (Figley, 2002). Joinson stated that those especially susceptible to developing compassion fatigue include 'nurses, ministers, counsellors, and others in the caregiving professions' (1992, p.116). Elaborating on compassion fatigue, Figley argued that it is an anticipated reaction to working with individuals who have experienced, or are currently experiencing emotional distress and involves feelings of 'helplessness and confusion and a sense of isolation from supporters' that can occur rapidly and without warning (1995a, p.12).

In comparing symptoms of compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma, Figley notes that the similarities include visible signs, such as 'intrusive and avoidant symptoms that parallel the experience of the direct trauma survivor, in conjunction with feelings of emotional depletion, helplessness and isolation' (1995a; 1995b in Kadambi & Ennis, 2004 p6). Additionally, Kadambi and Ennis suggest that compassion fatigue arises out of being empathic with clients who suffer emotionally, and therefore 'the notion that exposure to descriptions of traumatic events and human cruelty is a necessary condition for the experience of stress symptoms' (2006, p.6) does not entirely fit. Hence, it can be argued that compassion fatigue applies to a broad range of practitioners, and not only specifically to trauma specialists. Whereas Moulden and Firestone (2007), link empathy to vicarious traumatisation, Figley believes empathy is the central component of compassion fatigue (1995b). Empathy is a fundamental component of social work practice and essential in all caring relationships (Grant & Kinman, 2014; Trevethick, 2011). Shulman continues 'genuine empathy involves stepping into the client's shoes' and summoning an affective response that comes as close as possible to the experience of the other' (2012, p.173). Moreover,

an empathic response entails expressing respect, trust, interest and warmth (Kadushin & Kadushin, 1997).

Rossi et. al. (2012) undertook a quantitative survey in four community-based mental health services, assessing the levels of burnout, compassion fatigue and compassion satisfaction of 260 mental health workers. Questionnaires focussed on emotional, cognitive and physical consequences of providing care and effects on professional quality of life, general health and socio-demographics. The findings suggest that psychiatrists and social workers had the highest compassion fatigue scores. Rossi et. al., concluded that ‘the medical responsibility for the care of patients could be a driver to experience negative feelings, whereas for social workers it could be the effect of the higher caseload in a mental health system that gives great emphasis to social support’. (2012, p.5). Additionally, they found that those who experienced psychological distress during the previous year were more susceptible to, and scored higher in, compassion fatigue measures. The findings of Rossi et. al. (2012) appear to support earlier findings by Craig and Sprang (2010), Sabo (2006), and Collins and Long (2003), who investigated the effects of working with trauma on trauma treatment therapists, healthcare nurses, and healthcare workers respectively, and providing mental health care to those traumatized by the Omagh bombing of August 1998. Sabo (2006) contends that the carer’s personality is a contributing factor to compassion fatigue and, unless the practitioner is aware of their susceptibility, compassion fatigue is inevitable and emotionally damaging.

4.2.5 Concluding Remarks

It can be concluded that CJSWs, being professionals working with clients who may present as difficult, with complex needs and personal histories of trauma, can experience burnout, vicarious traumatisation and compassion fatigue. However, it should be remembered that much of the extant literature utilises specific participants without control

groups and with no apparent uniformity between methods or terminology. Neither burnout, vicarious traumatisation nor compassion fatigue have unified definitions, causes or symptoms, with the terms often used synonymously, contributing to confusion.

The preceding literature review pertaining to the negative effects of working with clients who have complex needs is not exhaustive but rather reflects a representation of research carried out in this area.

4.3 Taking Care of Self

This section relates to Main Category II, Safety and Wellbeing. The literature accessed for this main category has been gleaned from health care disciplines such as nursing, psychotherapy and social work. Those who do not care for themselves adequately while caring for others may work beyond their limits (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995) and, if they are not aware of the damaging impact on themselves of caring for others, may re-injure clients (Armsworth, 1989). It is therefore essential that efforts are made to prevent the inevitable negative effects of such work ‘contaminating’ the professional and personal lives of practitioners.

4.3.1 Safety

Jim Wilde, *Community Care* article, September 2011, writes that a social worker who had been threatened directly and indirectly by a client and consequently harboured concerns about his personal safety, was told by his manager to toughen up if he wanted to stay in his job. This is not an isolated incident as reported by Atkins that while ‘promoting staff safety is a team issue, some teams have refused to acknowledge the issue, and workers are expected to toughen up and deal with the issue themselves’ (2013, p.39). Atkins (2013) reports that staff may avoid discussing their concerns and fears which could be detrimental to their practice, perhaps rendering them ineffective.

Section 4 of the Scottish Social Services Council's code of practice for Employers of Social Service Workers state:

'As a social service employer, you must have written policies and procedures in place to protect people who use services and carers, and to support social service workers' (SSSC, 2016b, p.11).

The subsections that follow the code make clear the employers' responsibility for their employees' safety. The specific sections that are relevant are as follows:

4.4: Make it clear to social service workers, people who use services and carers that violence, threats or abuse are not acceptable. Have clear policies and procedures for reducing the risk of violence and managing violent incidents;

4.5: Support social service workers who experience trauma or violence in their work;

4.6: Put into action written policies and procedures that promote the wellbeing and equality of workers and respect diversity (SSSC, 2016b p12).

Employers therefore have a duty to reduce the risk of violence, to promote wellbeing and provide support to staff affected by trauma and/or violence at work. Additionally, the Social Service Workers sections of the code indicates that practitioners have a duty to look after their own safety and wellbeing and to inform their employer, and the SSSC, anything which may affect their ability to practice competently and safely. The practitioner must also ask their employer, or appropriate authority, for assistance if they feel they are unable to completely fulfil their role. (SSSC, Sections 3.8, 5.7, 6.3 & 6.4, 2016b). The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (HMSO) requires employers to undertake risk assessments, identifying

potential causes of harm, and determine actions which will either remove or significantly lower the risk of harm in their workplace. Social care employers and employees in the rest of the United Kingdom have similar obligations to provide safe working conditions as directed by their respective codes of practice. Despite this, probation staff have felt that staff safety was low priority for their employers (Denney & O'Beirne, 2003). Denney and O'Beirne reported that probation officers' feelings were revealed in a number of areas in their study, e.g. the Department of Health indicated that, as a rudimentary safety measure, staff should be supplied with a working mobile phone, however phones were not supplied to probation staff, at that juncture (O'Beirne & Denney, 2003). Atkins (2013), further argues that the minimum standards of safety should not be the aim of employers but they should vigorously encourage an atmosphere that places importance on staff safety which would also enhance organisational performance. Atkins (2013) also states that the consequences of aggressive acts can undermine confidence and hinder the practitioner's ability to completely fulfil their role. Additionally, O'Beirne and Denney, (2004) observed that the risk assessments carried out by probation staff could be affected by practitioners' fear of violence from clients.

4.3.2 Wellbeing

Given the impact of working with difficult, dangerous and needy clients such as burnout (Section 4.2.2), Vicarious Trauma (Section 4.2.3) and Compassion Fatigue (Section 4.2.4), organisations should develop policies and procedures to support wellbeing which may contribute to staff retention. In addition, as previously mentioned, employers could fall foul of the law if they do not support staff to reduce negative effects of their work. For example, in 1994 a social services manager won his case against his former employers for failing to protect him from a health endangering workload (Cox, Griffiths, & Randall, 2003). The ruling stated that there was no reason why psychological harm should not be treated the same as physical harm.

However, psychological damage does not appear to be an inevitable consequence of doing work with traumatised clients (Baird & Kracen, 2006; Hatcher & Noakes, 2010; Kadambi & Ennis, 2004; Lazarus, 1999; Moulden & Firestone, 2007). Indeed, Lazarus, (1999) commented that reaction to stressful situations is individually distinctive, some may struggle, some may thrive. Nevertheless, given the potential negative consequences, it should be a real concern for organisations and practitioners. It is therefore imperative that practitioners take an active role in their own wellbeing. As not every practitioner is adversely affected, perhaps those who are affected could learn helpful techniques and strategies from those who are not. However, there is a lack of research to ascertain the coping strategies of practitioners who have difficult, or traumatised clients (Elias & Haj-Yahia, 2016) despite previous research recommending it (Jordan, 2010; Kadambi & Ennis, 2004; Moulden & Firestone, 2007). Coping mechanisms have been studied but only as part of broader questions on burnout, vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue (see for example: Inbar & Ganor, 2003; Killian, 2008; Painter & Woodside, 2016). Findings suggest there is no singular way to avoid or recover from burnout, vicarious traumatisation or compassion fatigue. Nevertheless, several themes that may contribute to practitioners' wellbeing are emerging from the literature including: collegial support; self-care; humour; personal attributes; social support; supervision and organisational support which will be discussed in the following sections.

4.3.2.a Collegial Support

Franz, Zeh, Schablon, Kuhnert, and Nienhaus, (2010) who researched aggression and violence against health care workers in Germany reported that collegial support was important for assisting practitioners to manage the pressures of their work. In their review and meta-analysis, Mor Barak, Nissly and Levin, (2001) found evidence that current child welfare workers indicated significantly greater levels of

peer support not only in helping practitioners complete tasks but also by listening to work related problems.

Furthermore, Agllias (2012) found that social work students managed some of the problematic effects of the information presented due to a supportive peer culture which also helped them feel safe within the classroom. Moreover, it is reported that when practitioners feel able to freely discuss feelings, practitioner tension can be diminished (Slater & Lambie, 2011) which would seem to support Atkins (2013), as reported in section 4.3.1.

Agllias (2012) suggests collegial support is essential in reducing the risk of vicarious trauma by reducing practitioners' isolation, validates practitioners' responses, increases objectivity, normalises the situation and helps to return to previous perspectives and thereby minimise any cognitive changes (Bride, Radey, & Figley, 2007; Trippany, Kress, & Wilcoxon, 2004). Other researchers highlight that collegial support enables practitioners to work through any challenges, or changes to their core beliefs, and/or difficulties experienced resulting from their work with trauma. (Astin, 1997; Harrison & Westwood, 2009; McCann & Pearlman, 1990a). Furthermore, Jordan (2010) acknowledges the importance of colleagues for discussing practice and ethical concerns, receiving and giving empathic collegial support, which can reduce the severity of vicarious trauma.

Hatcher and Noakes', (2010) research on practitioners working with sex offenders, reported that most of their participants utilised collegial support to exchange experiences and debrief. Collegial debriefing was also acknowledged in Marriage and Marriage's (2005) research. Kadambi and Truscott (2003) state that collegial support offers practitioners the opportunity to work through their responses to providing sex offender treatment which may counteract the effects of

stress, vicarious trauma and burnout. However, studying staff who work with those diagnosed with personality disorders, Kurtz and Turner (2007) state that some workers felt unsupported by their colleagues. Furthermore, Hatcher and Noakes (2010) discovered that a minority of their participants did not utilise colleagues for support, some found colleagues, particularly those out with their own team, unhelpful and sometimes colluded with the offender.

4.3.2.b Self-Care

The importance of self-care when working with difficult or traumatised clients has been highlighted by several authors (Agllias, 2012; Ludick & Figley, 2016; Trippany et al., 2004). 'Self-care is defined as the learnt behavior of practices and activities initiated and performed by individuals to maintain health, life, and well-being' (Nelson-McEvers, 1995 in Ludick & Figley, 2016, p.6). Self-care strategies including: continuing associations with others; participating in activities; resting and spirituality, lessen the risk of vicarious trauma and workplace stress (Trippany et al., 2004). Additionally, the greater amount of time participating in self-care activities was associated with lower levels of compassion fatigue (Kulkarni, Bell, Hartman, & Herman-Smith, 2013). Figley (2002b) argues that self-care benefits the wellbeing of practitioners and may offset the negative impact of trauma-work. Self-care is also strongly associated with positive adjustment (Salston & Figley, 2003).

Figley (1995a) suggests that self-care, including talking to others; participating in physical activity; balancing work and home-life and finding an emotional channel, is not only useful in preventing compassion fatigue, but also for recovering from compassion fatigue. Inbar and Ganor (2003) add that participating in hobbies and activities maintains a distance between work and family life. They also advocate self-relaxation techniques as contributing to self-care techniques. Chow and Burrell's (2014) study on nurses' self-care practices, reported that

although nurses discussed the importance of self-care in reducing negative effects of their work, they spent little time performing these activities. Moreover, Newsome, Waldo, and Gruszka (2012) discovered that if self-care strategies are not employed, the negative effects are augmented.

Extant literature also discusses the role of humour in reducing negative effects of working with difficult or traumatised clients (Hatcher & Noakes, 2010; Martin & Lefcourt, 1983). Potter states 'Laugh at your distress. You'll save your sanity, your health, and your perspective' (Potter, 2009, p.190). Furthermore, Espeland (2006) asserts that finding humour in demanding circumstances can help nurses create new understandings of those circumstances and thus prevent burnout. Additionally, Jordan (2010) argues, that humour can minimise the effects of vicarious trauma but it does not prevent it. Creating a balance between work and home is another self-care strategy (Jackson, Holzman, Barnard, & Paradis, 1997; Marriage & Marriage, 2005; Painter & Woodside, 2016).

4.3.2.c Social Support

Emotional and psychological support from friends and family (out with the working environment) can mediate the harmful consequences of job stressors and can prevent staff attrition (Mor Barak et al., 2001). A correlation between poor psychological health, increased absenteeism and a lack of social support was highlighted in Michie and Williams' (2003) literature review. Similarly, Boscarino, Figley, and Adams (2004) reported that reduced social support increased the risk of negative outcomes for mental health professionals exposed to trauma.

Marriage and Marriage (2005) observed that their participants valued support from family and friends together with meaningful non-work activities as much as peer interaction and consultation. Jordan (2010), who incorporated peer support within social support, stresses that, as

social support can defend against vicarious trauma, practitioners should actively pursue participation with others. This is supported by Harrison and Westwood who report that having a sense of connection to others, and social support, acted as a buffer to prevent or reduce the effects of vicarious trauma (2009).

Michalopoulos and Aparicio (2012) state that improved social support was associated with less acute vicarious trauma symptoms though only if the practitioner did previously suffer personal trauma. Sex offender treatment therapists utilised support from friends and family for expressing their feelings which consequently lessened their distress (Elias & Haj-Yahia, 2016). Galek, Flannelly, Greene, and Kudler (2011), whose participants were chaplains, concluded that support from family and friends at difficult times raised practitioners' perception of their ability to manage the stresses of their job. Additionally, the importance of social support had been suggested in a few other areas: psychological adjustment (Eriksson, Vande Kemp, Gorsuch, Hoke, & Foy, 2001); as a protection for therapists (Van-Deusen & Way, 2006); as a buffer, particularly those exposed to higher levels of trauma (Lerias & Byrne, 2003).

4.3.2.d Supervision

A deficiency in supervisory support, erodes the practitioner's skill in dealing with their demanding occupation and increases staff attrition (Mor Barak, Nissly & Levin, 2001). Collins & Long (2003) found their sample, (trauma recovery team Omagh bombings) appreciated supervision both professionally and personally. Furthermore, evidence suggests that symptoms of burnout and vicarious trauma in human service workers can be reduced by providing supervision and debriefing opportunities (Bell, Kulkami, & Dalton, 2003, Collins & Long, 2003; Marriage & Marriage, 2005). This is supported by Hatcher and Noakes (2010) who inform that supervision could offset the negative consequences of their work when staff utilised it to discuss work

difficulties and to debrief. They concluded that the risk of developing compassion fatigue was reduced when practitioners had more supervision. This appears to be an oversimplification in that surely the quality of supervision, not just the quantity, is linked to reduction in the negative effects? Although the information above indicates the potential benefits of supervision to social workers, it has also been demonstrated that supervision can contribute significantly to stress, when it is carried out mainly to protect the supervisor and therefore the organisation (Collings & Murray, 1996). The culture in which supervision takes place will be discussed in the next section.

4.3.2.e Organisational Factors

Bober and Regehr (2006), report that the relationship between burnout or vicarious trauma and individual coping strategies are tenuous, arguing that coping styles are more effective when prevention is not focussed on the individual but on the workplace. Moreover, practitioners may experience an absence of support from the organisation as elevating anxiety (Farrenkopf, 1992).

Collings and Murray argue their findings imply 'a need for managers to be aware of the climate within which supervision takes place' (1996, p.385), highlighting that when supervision emphasises practitioners' worth in the agency, practitioner anxiety may be reduced. Moreover, organisations should ensure that appropriate initial and continuing professional development training is provided for supervisors (Collings & Murray, 1996). Additionally, Armstrong and Griffin (2004) reported difficulties associated with their job was the major predictor among correctional staff and prison-based treatment providers. Furthermore, Hatcher and Noakes state that 'organizational factors, role problems, or the experience of conflict relating to different or ambiguous job demands, were found to be predictive of compassion fatigue' (2010, p.163). Hatcher and Noakes (2010) further state that burnout is correlated with the lack of organisational support and suggest that staff

were more positive about their efficacy if the organisation appreciated them.

Several studies indicate that an organisation can reduce negative effects, (burnout, vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue) on workers when it promotes a culture of: valuing staff; efficacy; self-care; collegial support; providing adequate supervision; ensuring a balanced and limited caseload, and continuing professional development (Bell et al., 2003; Ellerby, 1997; Inbar & Ganor, 2003; Kadambi & Truscott, 2003; Killian, 2008; Ludick & Figley, 2016; Lea Auburn, & Kibblewhite, 1999; Morrison 2007; Scheela, 2001).

Ludick and Figley (2016) argue that employers should screen candidates to ensure that potential employees are making informed decisions about whether they intend to work with traumatised clients. However, this would appear to place emphasis on the individual staff member and could be used by the organisation to avoid their obligation to support staff.

4.3.3 Concluding Remarks

The previous sections have not provided an extensive or detailed account of how practitioners' safety and wellbeing are protected. For example, evidence suggests that practitioners' personal traits and backgrounds contribute to the effectiveness of coping strategies (Adams & Riggs, 2008; Decker, 1993; Hatcher & Noakes, 2010; Jordan, 2010; Kaplan, 2015) However, Collings and Murray (1996) found that background factors such as ethnicity, gender, type of training and type of work, were not significantly associated with stress. Nevertheless, those who were widowed, divorced or separated, older workers, or those in grade three posts, appeared to be particularly susceptible to the negative impact of their work. Kadambi and Truscott (2003), did not find any correlation between the length of service in the discipline, or apparent experience of graphic details of trauma and vicarious trauma

and/or burnout. The impression gained from reading the literature for this review, is that the process of avoiding or recovering from burnout, vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue is uniquely individual.

4.4 Developing Professionally

4.4.1 Practicing Criminal Justice Social Work

Becoming a CJSW entails more than studying at university. CJSWs must acquire formal knowledge, apply this knowledge to difficult situations and develop skills and techniques to work with individuals with complex needs. The initial training is competency-based and, although there are arguments for and against competency based training, a critique of this is out with the scope of this literature review. Following qualification, social workers agree to be ‘accountable for the quality of my work and will take responsibility for maintaining and improving my knowledge and skills’. (S.S.S.C., 2016, p.26). Social workers are required to ‘meet relevant standards of practice and work in a lawful, safe and effective way’ (S.S.S.C., 2016, p.27) and agree to ‘undertake relevant learning to maintain and improve my knowledge and skills and contribute to the learning and development of others’ (S.S.S.C., 2016, p.27). This section of the literature review links directly to main category III, Developing Professionally and therefore initial social work training and continuing professional development will be discussed. However, the initial statement made at the beginning of this paragraph belies the controversy behind, not only the concept of social work as a profession, but also what constitutes or should constitute education in social work. Additionally, social work practice is not an easy concept to define (Thompson, 1997). This is perhaps because social work practice changes with the ideologies of the day, which are politically, culturally, economically, historically and legislatively embedded (Fook, 2012). For instance, historically, social work practice has its roots in Christian philanthropy (Bowpitt, 1998) focussing on improving the lives of the poor, by enhancing the quality of their

environment, with guidance and education. The belief was that the way people acted was influenced by their environment (Young & Ashton, 2001). Most of this labour was considered women's work and was carried out by charities (Dominelli, 1996).

4.4.2 Social Work as a Profession?

Social work has not traditionally been classified as a profession in the same way male-dominated professions such as medicine and law, (Fook, 2011; Payne, 2001; Dominelli, 1996). Nevertheless, efforts to professionalise social work established an agreed ethical and value base from which social workers practice (Walton, 1975). The Scottish Social Services Commission's 'Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers', a set of professional standards which Scottish social workers are required to adhere to, provides the value and ethical framework for practice. Ethics and values are essential in social work as Lymbery (2001) points out, 'Social workers work with some of the most psychologically damaged and socially disadvantaged people' (p.369). The intention here, is not to give a critique of the ethical framework, but highlight some of the tensions between modern social work practice and its ethical framework. As social workers work with troubled individuals in difficult situations, anti-oppressive, anti-discriminatory and empowerment are values social workers require to abide by. Lymbery (2001) contends that involving clients in decisions can empower them to overcome their difficulties through individual and collective action and in so doing, social workers encompass values of empowerment and anti-oppressive practice. Dominelli's (1996) critical feminist stance, argues that, in the managerialist paradigm these values are hard to achieve because, instead of tackling structural oppression, thereby bringing about political, societal and personal change, social workers attempt to reduce discrimination and oppression in service delivery with 'a tinkering at the edges of oppression without changing its

fundamental framework' (Dominelli, 1996, p.171) because the fundamental causes of oppression are not affected.

Section 61 of the Care Standards Act 2000 (HMSO, 2000), protects the title Social Worker and consequently only those who have the appropriate qualification in social work may call themselves a social worker. Furthermore, in 2003, the Member of the Scottish Parliament, Minister for Education and Young People, Cathy Jamieson (herself a social worker), introduced The Framework for Social Work Education in Scotland (Scottish Executive, 2003). Ms Jamieson acknowledged that, due to the role being progressively more complex and demanding, social workers had to be sufficiently proficient, prepared and supported in their role. Consequently, Ms Jamieson introduced an honours degree qualification for social workers (Scottish Executive, 2003). In 2005, the 21st Century Social Work Review, 'Changing Lives', recognised the 'strong drive for change through the creation of an Honours Degree in Social Work' (Scottish Executive, 2006, p.13). Moreover, this Review highlighted the crucial role of employers in supporting staff transition from student to practitioner, and deemed additional focussed support throughout the newly qualified practitioner's first year in practice necessary (Scottish Executive, 2006).

Additionally, the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the Scottish Institute for Excellence in Social Work Education, worked together to 'raise the professionalism of the workforce and improve the competence and quality of social workers' practice' (Scottish Executive 2006, p.13). Dominelli (1996), though, is scathing of competency-based criteria criticising them as 'dogmatic and inflexible' (p.63). Furthermore, she argues that competencies reduce 'complex social interactions' (p.163) into disjointed 'snap-shots' (p.163) and therefore cannot capture the mercurial nature of social interaction. Dominelli (1996) further argues that this fragmentation represents a 'Taylorisation of professional tasks' (p.163), reducing tasks to less intricate components,

enabling those components to be performed by less qualified individuals, for reduced earnings. Moreover, Dominelli criticises concepts of professionalism based on specialised social work knowledge, arguing that this approach to social work is 'control-orientated and paternalistic' (1996, p.159) because it identifies the social worker as the expert in people's problems, providing both the solutions and controls the limited resources to these difficulties. Nonetheless, Thompson (2012), in an article in *The Guardian* newspaper, argues that the change from diploma level to a degree-level qualification, competencies and regulation, is a significant step forward in terms of professionalism, though he cautions that there is still much to do before social work will get the professional recognition it deserves and needs (Thompson, 2012).

4.4.3 Managerialism

Modern day social work is set within a managerialist paradigm that adheres to the notion of corporate management practices (Dominelli, 1996; 1982; Dominelli & Campling, 1990). Furthermore, theories supportive of managerialist objectives, such as task-centred approaches (e.g. systems theory) are utilised in social work practice. Dominelli argues, managerialism requires evaluation and evidence, and greater controls (1996) which Thompson describes as 'focusing on counting rather than what counts' (*The Guardian*, 23 April 2012), thus the social worker's autonomy has been eroded which is a move to de-professionalise social work (Thompson, 2012; Dominelli, 1996). Additionally, Thompson (2012) maintains that managerialism signifies a change from the empowering and problem-solving model of social work practice, necessitating highly skilled practitioners to a service-rationing model, requiring reduced expertise. Nevertheless, White comments that 'discretionary spaces' (2009, in White & Harris, p.130) exist within professional practice where practitioners possess autonomy over their decisions and tasks and thus maintain their professionalism.

4.4.4 Academic and Professional Knowledge

Currently social work education is divided between formal teaching in the university and learning in practice settings. Foundation teaching takes place in the university after which the student engages in a placement, enabling them to demonstrate their ability to apply the knowledge acquired to practice. The movement between the university and the practice placement occurs with greater emphasis on practice toward the end of the training. There is strong emphasis on transferable knowledge and skills, thus what you learn in one setting (e.g. children and families) is deemed applicable in and transferable to other settings (e.g. criminal justice or adult care).

As mentioned previously, updating knowledge and professional development is a requirement for social work registration. In recent years, there also has been a move toward evidence-based practice. However, what constitutes evidence and knowledge requires consideration. Gibbons et al., (1994) propose that two distinct and clearly defined types of knowledge exist, academic knowledge (type 1) and professional knowledge (type 2) with academic knowledge, originating from higher education institutes and is generated by empirical research and discipline specific. Academic knowledge is deemed to be objective, acquired over time through scientific methods, and can be applied to problems outside the academic arena and thus is viewed as legitimate knowledge. Fook (2012) argues that it is not surprising that this mode of knowledge is viewed as legitimate given that it is more than likely, in western societies, to be produced by 'white, middle class, middle aged and male' (p.41). Eraut (1994) contends that some academic knowledge can be abstract and not applicable to practice. Huff (2000) further suggests that production of academic knowledge may be too slow and introspective to meet the needs of ever changing practices. Fook (2012) later argues that generalizable and testable theories are only useful in a small number of settings. Eraut

(1994) states that knowledge developed in practice may evolve and strengthen professional practice. Professional knowledge is viewed as multidisciplinary, more flexible and produced by practitioners in practice settings (Eraut, 1994). Practitioner knowledge is often viewed as tacit and developed from experience and intuition and therefore more subjective than academic knowledge.

Eraut (1994) suggests that both forms of knowledge are important. However, Scott and his colleagues state that this dichotomy of formal and practice knowledge production is too simple and does not account for the different forms of hybrid knowledge that are now being produced. Scott et al., suggests four modes of knowledge (2004). It is not the intention to go into these in detail in this thesis, however Scott names these as: Disciplinary Knowledge; Technical Rationality; Dispositional Knowledge and Critical Knowledge (Scott et al., 2004). Furthermore, Fook (2012) argues, there is little to be gained by creating a distinction between academic and professional knowledge as it only serves to foster elitism.

4.4.5 Moving away from Beginning

Novice social workers are inexperienced and their learning continues following qualification. Furthermore, practice following qualification can be a 'bewildering experience' (He, 2007, p.652). Guerin, Devitt and Redmond, argue that social work graduates are not prepared for the complexities of practice in 'managerially focussed workplace environments' (2010, p.2481). How then do novice social workers become competent practitioners? Learning through experience can be effective, facilitating skills practice and creating new knowledge (Cheung & Delavega, 2014). Askeland reports, adult education benefits from experiential learning and is the link between 'knowing that' and 'knowing how' (2003, p.353).

Practice learning and integrating skills and knowledge is progressive, developed through various practice forms, and investigate methods from many positions such as: student; supervisor; case-manager; professional; service user (Cheung & Delavega, 2014). Transforming from novice practitioner to experienced practitioner requires development of essential skills such as: an ability to deal with complex issues; being aware of constraints and resources; the ability to quickly prioritise; confidence in professional identity; and minimal conscious use of formal theory (Fook, Ryan, & Hawkins, 1997).

4.4.6 Supervision and Reflection

Initially social work supervision was developed to 'describe a theory of social work' and create appropriate practices (Gould & Baldwin, 2004 cited in Hughes, 2010, p.61). Furthermore, supervision is currently used by social workers to develop professionally. Supervision is a means of facilitating reflection (Karvinen-Niinikoski, 2004), which is viewed as essential for developing social work knowledge and practitioner development (Fook, 1996; Karvinen-Niinikoski, 2004). Pauline Hammond, Conference on Supervision in July 1965, suggests two aims of supervision are: to support students to apply theory to practice; and to assist students to become professional social workers. Others argue there are three functions of supervision in social work; administrative, supportive and educational (Kadushin, 1992; Kadushin & Harkness, 2014). However, according to the clinical supervision integrated model by Rich (1993), the aims of supervision are 'service delivery, staff socialisation, professional development, and facilitation' (in Caras & Sandu, 2014, p.77). Beddoe (2010), comments that modern social work supervision is largely concerned with accountability, quality of practice and professional development, and therefore is linked to the regulation of social care professions, engendering greater inspection of professional practice.

Supervision has been described as a crucial component of reflection, itself a fundamental element of social work practice (Fook, 1996) offering social workers a means to discuss, develop and evaluate practice (Kadushin, 1992). Additionally, Sicora believes that supervision is one form of structured reflection that helps practitioners discuss their mistakes and is of 'vital importance in order to have a different attitude toward failure' (2017b, p.49). Reflection, when done in the safety of a supportive supervisory environment, can be a vehicle for developing professionally. Although, there are many models of reflection (Atkins & Murphy, 1993; Gibbs, 1988; Johns, 2000; Rolfe et al., 2001; Schön, 1984) it is not the scope of this section to review them, but to acknowledge that reflection is a vehicle to achieving new learning and developing professional practice, and ultimately providing the best service for clients (Knott & Scragg, 2016). Nevertheless, Hughes (2002) argues that a difficulty for supervisors is that practitioners may wish to present themselves as capable and therefore may distrust their supervisor who also has a role monitoring staff.

As social workers usually work in teams with other practitioners, guidance and advice from peers is another way practitioners develop professionally (Boud & Middleton, 2003). Additionally, it has been argued that official training is less prevalent than discrete discussions with colleagues (Boud, 1999 in Boud & Middleton, 2003). He (2007) further commented that 'professional peers are the most accessible learning resource' (p.651). Colleagues share their stories and experiences, how they dealt with a situation, and discuss what went well or what did not. Moreover, a novice practitioner can understand their role and responsibility, and thus their professional identity, from colleagues. Dedicated and enthusiastic peers, with optimistic views on social work can therefore be suitable role models (He, 2007).

4.4.7 Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses are utilised by practitioners to expand their knowledge and skills and is a requirement of social work registration. In Scotland, social workers are required to produce evidence of 15 days CPD within the previous three years of practice (S.S.S.C., 2016). CPD courses are generally appreciated as they contribute to professional development (Doel, Nelson, & Flynn, 2008). However, some argue that CPD courses are detached from the experience of practice with others stating they have not benefitted from CPD (Doel et al., 2008). Additionally, some inadequacies are acknowledged in post qualifying training (Rixon & Ward, 2012). Nonetheless, He (2007) declared, in an experiential paper, that she benefitted from CPD courses as it enabled her to learn theories, strategies and skills from other participants and she felt that CPD brings the participants together allowing cross-pollination of ideas. This further highlights the importance of peers.

Accessing information from the Internet enables practitioners to obtain a variety of journals and articles, not only from social work but from other related fields. Furthermore, practitioners can use the internet to access resources, share ideas and knowledge, and obtain advice, bringing the social work community closer (Giffords, 1998; He, 2007). However, this is under researched and caution needs to be applied to information and guidance obtained from unverified sources.

4.4.8 Concluding Remarks

This section discussed several areas that contribute to the notion of developing professionally, including: initial training and knowledge; the use of supervision and reflection; collegial guidance; CPD courses and the internet. The discussion above makes clear that developing professionally requires more than attaining formal knowledge. Practicing CJSW requires the development and accumulation of skills

and practice knowledge, which can be achieved overtime. The last part of this literature review focusses on practitioners' perceptions of professional worth.

4.5 Worthwhile Endeavour?

The overwhelming majority of research into the consequences of social workers working with clients has focused on the negative impact (Pooler, Wolfer, & Freeman, 2014) as previously discussed. However, interest in social workers' job satisfaction has recently gained greater attention.

Smith and Shields (2013), investigating job satisfaction on social service workers, acknowledged difficulties of working in this field, including encountering emotionally stressful or traumatic situations. Although Smith and Shields (2013) do not specifically mention social workers it is implied as social workers work in social services. As previously stated, CJSW is much like other areas of social work as it also encounters crisis situations requiring practitioners to work with intense feelings and in difficult situations. Additionally, Smith (2005) states that condemnation by the public and media, following mistakes, presents another challenge for social workers. The potential negative consequences of working with clients was discussed in Section 4.2, particularly burnout, vicarious trauma, and compassion fatigue.

Moreover, CJSWs, working within local authorities in Scotland, have an added difficulty in terms of 'disjuncture' which Fenton used to describe 'ethical stress experienced when one's value beliefs and behaviour are in conflict' (Fenton, 2012, p.941). Historically, CJSW in Scotland was underpinned by the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968. Section 12 states that 'it shall be the duty of every local authority to promote social welfare by making available advice, guidance and assistance' (HMSO, 1968, p.8). Work with offenders, according to this piece of legislation,

should be focussed on supporting individuals' welfare which is congruent with social work values, which enforces a duty to 'uphold and promote human dignity and wellbeing' (BASW, 2012, p.8). Furthermore, improving clients' wellbeing is an aim of the Desistance Theory, which is concerned with how people stop offending (McNeill, 2006). However, modern CJSW in Scotland is set within the 'new penology' (Feeley & Simon, 1992, p.449), which seeks to restrict specific groups through risk assessment and risk management and as a result produces 'ethical stress' in CJSWs (Fenton, 2012; 2014; 2016). Given the difficulties noted, here and in Section 2, how do social workers achieve a positive sense of professional worth? Smith (2005) noted that child welfare workers 'stay in their relatively low-paid, high-demand jobs because they find intrinsic value in their work' (p.154). Initial organizational research argued that motivation to work was solely focused on obtaining a salary (Williamson, 1996; in Smith & Shields, 2013). Barber (1986) states that although salary is a consideration, there are other influences on job satisfaction, such as working environment, autonomy, career opportunities and good supervision. The issue of supervision was also found to be important in Smith and Shield's (2013) research but for a different reason. Smith and Shield's research focused on Herzberg's Motivation to Work theory, and concluded that social service workers are motivated by 'positive supervisory relationships' (2013, p.197). Moreover, Smith and Shield's (2013) found social services workers are more motivated by the varied and creative nature of their work than by their salary.

Pooler, Wolfer and Freeman (2014), researching social worker joy, proposed four areas which contributed to social worker joy: 'Making Connections'; 'Making a Difference'; 'Making Meaning'; and 'Making a Life' (p.215-217). They state that the relationships practitioners developed, not only with clients but also with their colleagues, added to their job satisfaction. Enabling positive change in the lives of clients,

peers and their organisations was also associated with job enjoyment. The third category, Making Meaning relates to the intrinsic worth of their job. The fourth category was indicative of keeping perspective and being realistic about achievements (Pooler et. al., 2016).

Cole, Panchanadeswaran and Daining (2004), in a random sample of 232 licenced social workers in the state of Maryland, suggest that workload, quality of supervision and efficacy were all correlated to job satisfaction. Lower workloads were correlated to higher levels of job satisfaction as was supportive supervision. Additionally, they found that the effects of high workloads were somewhat offset when social workers considered they had been able to support positive change in their clients (Cole et al., 2004).

4.5.1 Why Become a Social Worker?

As one of the aims of social work practice, historically was to improve and enhance the quality of the lives and environments of the poor (Bowpitt, 1998), the notion of making a positive and valuable contribution to people's lives, seems central to the social work task. Wakefield argues that 'the social consensus on the need for a welfare 'safety net', and thus the mandate that makes the social work profession possible, is rooted in our cultures altruistic sensibilities' (Wakefield, 1993, p.408). The white paper Modernising Social Services acknowledged social services 'are an important part of the fabric of a caring society' (Department of Health 1998, para 1.3). Furthermore, the last of the three priorities for CJSW as noted in the 21st Century Social Work, Reducing Re-Offending (Scottish Executive, 2005), are 'promoting social inclusion by rehabilitation and thereby reducing the level of offending' (p.7). McNeill states 'this recognises both the intrinsic worth of promoting the social inclusion of offenders and its instrumentality in reducing offending' (2005, p.7). Nevertheless, Mawby and Worrall (2013) indicate the view of probation officers has changed

from a respected profession to one that is now negatively viewed, as evidenced by adverse media representation.

Warde investigated the motivation of recently graduated, male, African-American and Hispanic social workers, to be social workers, and discovered three factors to motivation: 'personal experience with a social worker; wanting to give something back to the community, and pre-existing altruistic values' (2009, p.140). However, D'Aprix, Dunlop, Abel and Edwards (2004), reported that students' motivation to undertake social work training was not focussed on how they could support disadvantaged individuals improve their lives but rather their training would enable them work as a psychotherapist in private practice (D'Aprix, et al., 2004). However, more recently research has concluded that student probation officers and those already employed in the probation service are committed to supporting clients to make positive changes in their lives (Clare, 2015; Fitzgibbon & Lea, 2014; Knight, 2007; Mawby & Worrall, 2013).

4.5.2 Other's views of Criminal Justice Social Work

Compared with children and families and adult care, CJSW is a relatively small field within social work (Witaker & Arrington, 2008 in Young, 2014). As a result, CJSW is not often in the public eye (Mawby & Worrall, 2013), although, much like the other fields within social work, when 'mistakes' occur the media are keen to highlight those failures (Mawby & Worrall, 2013). Jewkes argued that when 'things go wrong' media attention is excessively negative, making it untrustworthy (Jewkes, 2015), which damages the reputation of the service (Fitzgibbon, 2011), and can demoralise staff (Mawby & Worrall, 2013).

Mawby and Worrall investigated probation staff's perceptions of how the public viewed their role and concluded that probation officers felt that the public did not understand their objectives and that the public's perception was most often based on the belief that 'the probation service

works with the undeserving and is too soft' (2013, p.85). Earlier, Wilson and O'Sullivan argued that the 1970's comedy series *Porridge* was 'probably the major influence on the British public's understanding of prison today' (2004, p.7).

Additionally, Mawby and Worrall, report that probation officers experienced various reactions, from friends and family, about probation work 'from support to surprise and opposition' (2013, p.85). One interviewee reported that her husband and daughter adversely viewed her role, relaying that her husband 'hates probation' (Mawby & Worrall, 2013, p.85). However, they also found that some other probation staff had friends or family who were more supportive and positive about probation work. One of the main feelings expressed by probation staff was that their friends and family did not really understand their role or their responsibility (Mawby & Worrall, 2013).

4.5.3 Other Agencies

Partnership working, to manage and reduce risk, has been mandated in Scotland since the Management of Offenders etc. (Scotland) Act 2005. This placed a duty on Scottish local authorities to establish information sharing protocols which led to the establishment, in April 2007, of Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). MAPPA was introduced to provide processes and procedures for assessing and managing those offenders deemed to pose a risk to public safety. Therefore, all thirty-two local authority CJSW departments and their partner agencies including, but not limited to police, prison, health and housing have MAPPA guidelines. Nash (2008) argues the main aim of bringing agencies together is to learn from each other's specific knowledge and expertise which should enhance and strengthen risk management processes. In Nash's words 'the whole is stronger than its constituent parts *but* its strength *arises from* its constituent parts' (Nash, 2008, p.303). However, bringing together agencies who have different cultures, knowledge and value bases can be problematic

(Mawby & Worrall, 2011; Nash, 2008). For example, Mawby and Worrall (2011) interviewed 60 probation officers, both existing and retired, who described being sometimes overpowered by the police, especially in offender management, where the police feel that the probation service is too indulgent, and don't understand or respect the work of the probation service. This potentially undermines the professional worth of CJSWs. Furthermore, if one agency was stronger or more forceful than the other then the former may overpower the latter. For example, if the Police and Probation services were closely allied, the police perhaps being more forceful, would have undue influence in the workings of probation (Nash, 2008).

4.6 Concluding Remark

The preceding literature review highlights a lack of research into CJSWs' experience of working with their clients. Consequently, there is little known about the impact of working with violent offenders on the professional and personal lives of CJSWs in Scotland, which suggests there is a need for investigation in this area. The following Chapter will discuss the findings of this research in the context of extant literature.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this research is to explore the professional and personal impact of working with violent offenders on criminal justice social workers working in Scotland. This chapter will consider the findings of the current research in the light of pertinent existing literature.

The chapter begins with a consideration of resilience and practitioner resilience before moving through the four main categories in turn. The main categories and categories, although interlinked, will be discussed in linear fashion simply for ease of reading. Only a sample of each main category will be discussed due to word constraints.

5.2.1 Resilience

Luthar, Cicchetti, and Becker (2000) maintain the concept of resilience is not universally understood and has received criticism due to the lack of a clear consistent definition. Nevertheless, as Developing Professional Resilience has emerged as the core category of this research this section will provide an explanation of resilience embedded within the narratives of the participants.

It is interesting to note that the glossary of *Social Work Understandings: The Definitive A to Z of Social Work and Social Care*, by Pierson and Thomas (2010), does not contain a definition of resilience though it mentions the word six times within the book. It is not clear why they have omitted the definition, but perhaps it is because the term resilience is widely applied in social work that the authors felt it unnecessary to provide a definition. However, the *Oxford Dictionary of Social Work & Social Care* (Harris & White, 2013) has a rather lengthy definition that includes the following:

‘...an individual’s capacity to cope with stress and adversity. It is usually understood as a process rather than an individual traitthe development of adaptive strategies, problem-solving skills, and the individual’s sense of self-efficacythese processes are regarded as complex and multi-faceted, and considered unlikely to be characterized by a steady linear progression. Rather, they are more likely to emerge in response to a series of events and short-term sequences that may sometimes appear random and unrelated. Moreover, resilience is not static: it emerges over time and assumes different characteristics and outcomes at different points in time....’

Some have discussed the applicability of the concept of resilience, not only to individuals but also to organisations and communities. For example, Burke and Paton, discussing police officers and their employers, define resilience as ‘the capacity of agencies and officers to draw upon their own individual, collective, and institutional resources and competencies to cope with, adapt to, and develop from the demands, challenges and changes encountered during and after a critical incident, mass emergency, or disaster’ (2008, p.96).

Thus, resilience can be applied to individuals, groups and large organisations and is a multidimensional process which develops and changes over time and is often used synonymous with the ability to cope with adversity.

5.2.2 Practitioner Resilience in Extant Literature

Although the concept of resilience was not directly discussed, quotes from the participants provided in section 3.2 highlight the embedded nature of the core category. It is evident that practitioners start, and continue, to develop their resilience in practice due to their difficult and challenging experiences with clients. The pathway to developing professional resilience is unique and practitioners learn what works for

them and they hone their skills in this area as their practice develops. It is also of note that the participants in this study, without exception, took responsibility for their own wellbeing and took steps to develop effective coping strategies which not only allowed them to function in challenging situations but also to learn from those situations, adapt and apply that learning to new situations. What is also clear, from participants' responses, is that the majority of participants had expected to encounter challenges and negative experiences because of their contact with clients.

Resilience is not a new concept in social work and much attention has been paid to the exploration of resilient behaviours in clients within the realm of children and adolescents (Edward, 2005) with the aim of advising professionals how to promote resilience in these age groups (Elias & Haynes, 2008; Todis, Bullis, Waintrup, Schultz, & D'ambrosio, 2001). However, in relation to social work practitioners, resilience appears to be an under-researched area (Collins, 2007), with even less focus on probation officers. This is perhaps surprising, given that resilience, according to Edward, enables practitioners 'to bounce back from adversity, persevere through difficult times, and return to a state of internal equilibrium or a state of healthy being' (2005, p.142).

Nevertheless, Vogelvang, Clarke, Weiland, Vosters, and Button (2014) researched probation officers in the Netherlands and reported that resilience in Dutch probation officers was not only fostered and reinforced by the practitioner, team and organisational factors but resilience could also be compromised by these same factors. They further reported that practitioners' resilience is not predominantly compromised by clients. This would seem to be supported by the current research, whereby participants enjoyed their work with clients, despite also acknowledging the difficulties therein, but found organisational factors more stressful: '*...despite all of that* [difficulties

and complexity], *I am very fortunate to have a job that I get up for every day and come in for and want to do....*' (Bert.93) and *'more stress related in terms of workload.... [than].... being worried about working with violent offenders.... Just because you're wondering about all the work you've got to do....*' (Ellie.110). Furthermore, as resilience is a construct, its manifestation will be socially, culturally, politically, historically ideologically but also individually located (Tusaie & Dyer, 2004).

In terms of factors which can help promote or develop professional resilience Ashby, Ryan, Gray and James conducted research on occupational therapists practicing in the area of mental health. They concluded that a factor associated positively with resilience was a 'strong professional identity' (2013, p.118). Collins (2007) argues though that although organisational features, such as supervision, are important so too are characteristics of the individual social worker. He places emphasis on 'positive emotions and optimism' (Collins, 2007, p.266). In addition, Dekel, Hantman, Ginzburg, and Solomon (2007), reported that a feeling of positive contribution to clients' lives, professional confidence and effective coping strategies also contributed to professional resilience.

5.2.3 Revisiting the Research Question

As stated in the Introduction Chapter, the research question is:

'What is the professional and personal impact of working with violent offenders on criminal justice social workers, working in Scotland?'

As mentioned in the Findings Chapter, my interpretation of the participants' interpretation of their experience of working with violent offenders, were grouped into four main categories with categories and sub-categories being characteristics of these main categories. The main categories and characteristics do not flow in a linear fashion and are

interrelated and interconnected. For example: if a participant experiences an encounter with an aggressive client, they may never have experienced this previously, they may immediately feel fear, they may draw on their previous knowledge and skills to diffuse the situation, when they leave the session they may consult with colleagues about possible reasons for this and receive guidance about ways forward with the client, they may also read around the subject, further developing their skills and knowledge, and may even attend training in that area. This is similar to Harrison & Westwood's research where they identified nine themes as being protective against practitioners (in their case psychotherapists) developing vicarious traumatization stating, 'These themes are integrally interrelated and constellated in myriad ways. In-deed, we have come to view the researched phenomenon as a fractal, whose intricacy is such that the overall pattern occurs in each part' (2009, p.2007-8). An argument could be made that if they are interconnected and interrelated how can the researcher ascertain distinct sub-categories, categories which then are subsumed by four main categories? This reflects, as Rennie (1999; 2012) proposed, the hermeneutic and interpretive nature of qualitative research in general and this research in particular. Moreover, it is indicative of the complex nature of human experience. Nevertheless, to discuss the findings in relation to extant literature in a coherent manner, each main category will be considered in turn.

5.3 Potential Contaminants to Self

5.3.1.a Awareness and Acceptance of Impact (Feelings)

As noted in the literature section 1, criminal justice social workers, like their probation officer counterparts, are at risk of developing burnout, VT and CF. A striking feature of the current research is participants' awareness of the potential negative and stressful aspects of their work and, although participants discussed symptoms which could contribute to burnout, vicarious trauma or compassion fatigue, most

did not specifically use these terms. Nevertheless, all participants discussed how their contact with clients had, at times, negatively affected them. Most participants spoke of experiencing fear of, frustration with or anger at, a client at some point in their career. Additionally, some, though not all, participants spoke of having sleepless nights, at certain times. Although these can be features of burnout (Maslach and Leiter, 1997), it did not appear that this had diminished the participants' overall engagement with their clients or their view of their work.

Moreover, participants spoke of delaying some aspect of their work if they felt that by continuing to address the issue it would further provoke an already volatile situation (Findings section 4.1.2.a). Farrall, Bannister, Ditton, and Gilchrist (2000) note that fear, especially fear of crime, has become one of the most investigated subjects within criminological research. Furthermore, extant literature suggests fear of crime has become more troubling than crime itself, (Hale 1992; Bennett 1990; Warr 1984) not least because there is a potential for the fear of crime to have a detrimental effect on quality of life (Bannister & Fyfe, 2001; Wilson-Doenges, 2000; Green et al., 2002). The expectation and fear of violence, or being constantly guarded against it, was something which Jack.124 noted was '*...always in the back of your mind.... you've got to have a slight guard....*'. This fear of violence may well have a bearing on an individuals' physical and mental health and job satisfaction (Duffy & McGoldrick, 1990; Hall & Spector, 1991; Leather, Beale, Lawrence, & Dickson, 1997; Stafford, Chandola, & Marmot, 2007). Some have noted an impact on physiology including elevated heart rate, rapid breathing (Warr, 2000), apprehensiveness, xerostomia (dry mouth) (Kovacs, 1990), and an increase in adrenaline which is associated with the 'flight or fight' response (Skogan & Maxfield, 1981). In relation to probation officers, O'Beirne et al., (2004) found that, probation officers experienced an increased fear of violence which is

comparable to other public service occupations. O'Beirne et al., suggest that a fear of violence could lead to 'avoidance of mandatory work, ignoring possible risks, [managers] failing to take sufficient precautions for safety and eroding staff confidence and morale' (2004, p.124). Although the participants of the present study did not report significant mental health difficulties, they did report some physiological symptoms such as '*...your heart races, you have a massive adrenalin rush which probably doesn't make you think clearly because everything starts running at a million miles an hour...*' (Beth.30) and Jane spoke of experiencing a '*...flight or fight...*' (Jane.32) response.

It was not only fear that participants spoke of in relation to their clients. Participants also reported that they felt shock, disgust, repulsion and anger. Giner-Sorolla and Russell, argue that feelings of disgust 'arise when people disapprove of other people's sexual behaviours' (2009, p.46). However, the participants of the current research were particularly discussing violent offending behaviour and therefore it could be argued that disapproving of any harmful behaviour could provoke strong emotions in observers of that behaviour. In the above quote, Beth.30 noted that fear influences thought process and therefore it is perhaps possible that other strong emotions may also shape thought processes. For example, people who are angry tend to be more positive about their future than those who experience fear (Lerner and Keltner, 2000). Lerner and Keltner, reported that 'whereas fearful people expressed pessimistic risk estimates and risk-averse choices, angry people expressed optimistic risk estimates and risk-seeking choices' (2001, p.146). In terms of 'disgust', Wheatley and Haidt (2005), reported that a feeling of disgust had a negative bearing on the views of individuals, albeit the individuals were unaware of this impact. It is important to note here that criminal justice social workers are people first and can experience the full range of human emotions. However, Giner-Sorolla and Russell (2009) contend that those who feel disgusted

can convey their disgust unconsciously and this can have a negative impact on the object of that disgust. Consequently, if a criminal justice social worker felt disgust toward a client this could be transmitted to the client and further entrench some of society's negative views of that person and would undoubtedly compromise the crucial working relationship with that client. Furthermore, conveying this to the client would be at odds with the values of social work practice, especially those that direct towards anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice (Banks, 2006; Thompson, 2006), It is therefore essential that criminal justice social workers reflect, not just on practice but in practice (Schön, 1984), in order that they are aware of their feelings and that they do not unconsciously transfer any negativity to the client.

Although I was surprised that the participants spoke openly and freely of the negative feelings they had of their clients, putting themselves at risk of being viewed negatively, not only by myself but also by the readers of the thesis, I feel this was due to my insider status, as a criminal justice social worker. I believe this allowed participants to feel more at ease than they perhaps may have been if the researcher had been an outsider. Although not without its difficulties, Dwyer and Buckle note the 'insider role status frequently allows researchers more rapid and more complete acceptance by their participants. Therefore, participants are typically more open with researchers so that there may be a greater depth to the data gathered'. (2009, p.58). I was also surprised by the lack of extant literature pertaining to the feelings that criminal justice social workers or probation officers experience of their clients, considering these feelings, as noted above, may influence the working relationships, assessments and case management of those individuals.

5.3.1.b Emotional Literacy

The preceding section discussed how participants were aware of their emotions and the potential negative impact of these. This suggests a

degree of emotional intelligence, which according to Orbach is ‘the capacity to register our emotional responses to the situations we are in and to acknowledge those responses to ourselves so that we recognize the ways in which they influence our thoughts and actions’ (2001, p.2). It is perhaps not surprising that social workers are aware of their feelings and how these may impact on their decisions and actions, as the skill of reflection is an essential tool for social work practice (Fook, 2012). However, the work of Charlotte Knight (2012; 2014) reasons that criminal justice practitioners require emotional literacy to work effectively with offenders. According to Knight, ‘Emotional Literacy as a concept in criminal justice defines the skills that criminal justice practitioners may use in understanding their own emotions and working effectively and appropriately with the emotions of offenders, victims and witnesses’ (2014, p.7). This suggests that criminal justice social workers should be aware of themselves and their clients’ feelings while working with them. Knight suggests this enables the practitioner to better manage situations of discord, in a respectful and considerate manner. In addition, accepting that intense emotional responses are part of their work with clients, enables the practitioner to regulate these emotions, and therefore, the impact this may have on their clients. Although the participants of this study did not directly discuss emotional intelligence or emotional literacy, it is embedded within their narrative especially as detailed in sections 3.4.3.a.ii, Masking Own Feelings, and 3.4.3.a.iii, Not Pathologising Emotions. All participants spoke of having heard and read graphic details of their clients’ violent behaviour, and were aware of their own strong feelings, as mentioned in section 5.3.1.a., and accepted that these were part of their job ‘...does shock you sometimes. I think if it didn’twouldn’t feel right....’ (Ellie.82). Moreover, in recognising their strong feelings participants were able to contain these feelings, preventing projecting these onto their clients.

Additionally, participants were also aware that the lives of their clients often included trauma perpetrated on them. Being compassionate, and working with empathy allows the client to discuss their trauma but also being aware of, and accepting their own emotions allows the practitioner to understand that the trauma is not their own '*...I don't own that pain....*' (Sally.103) but also that there are boundaries '*...I don't need to.... save them....*' (Madalene.75). In treating the client with respect and compassion, despite at times having strong emotions, all participants treated the client as an individual but also that their violent behaviour is just that, a behaviour, it does not define their clients. This was evident from the beginning when participants did not like to refer to their clients as violent offenders (see section 1.5). When it came to instances where the client was perceived to be acting aggressively within a session, participants spoke of recognising where this was coming from in the client and were able to control their own anxiety. For example, Molly describes a situation where she was in an interview room with a client who was blocking the door and being aggressive. Molly knew that she felt intimidated and anxious and her aim was to '*...get them to sit down and start talking and then in the process I would settle, they would settle and the situation would then be more manageable because I would have managed my own anxiety....*' (Molly.15) and '*...you can say okay, can we just sit down and discuss this a little bit more andyou wouldusethat calmness to try andgain some control over the situation again....*' (Molly.27). By being emotionally literate, Molly acknowledged her own emotions but also accepted the client's feelings. Calming her own emotions, she could 'hear' what the client was really saying and feeling. This is an interesting area for CJSW and something which indeed may contribute to professional resilience.

5.3.2 A Link to Burnout, Vicarious Traumatization and Compassion Fatigue

As discussed in the Literature Review Chapter, sections 4.2.2, 4.2.3 & 4.2.4, there is evidence to suggest that criminal justice social workers, much like other human service workers, may suffer from burnout, vicarious traumatization or compassion fatigue when working with violent offenders. It is also acknowledged that there are specific practice issues which may potentially contribute to burnout, vicarious traumatization or compassion fatigue, which relate to the management, assessment and rehabilitation of high-risk offenders, not least because of public, political and media scrutiny if the person commits a further offence (Kemshall, 2008). This scrutiny *'...can be a source of anxiety particularlyI suppose again they're high profileand there would be media attention....'* (Bert.14). Furthermore, Phillips, Westaby, and Fowler report in their study that probation officers who worked almost exclusively with high-risk offenders found it *'relentless'* (2016, p182). Indeed, almost all participants of the current research indicated that they would not wish to work with only one group of clients (i.e. violent offenders), but they enjoyed the variety of working with people who have committed a variety of offences.

5.3.2.a Participants' Experiences of the Characteristics of Burnout

In relation to burnout, Maslach and Leiter (1997), affirm that, although individuals experience and convey burnout in different ways, features of burnout include feelings of being overburdened and overpowered; fear; anger; reduced keenness in their work; depression and frustration. Those affected may also express loss of commitment to their work, feeling a diminished match between themselves and their role and being emotionally worn down. Participants of the current research reported that at times their work was *'...quite stressfuland emotionally demanding....'* (Jane.48), experienced *'...the exhaustion and the tiredness of it [working with violent offenders]....'* (Jack.102) and felt

'...frustratedand annoyed...' (Beth.12). One participant in particular relayed *'...I can be become quite worn down by it...'* (Madeline.56), and therefore most participants at some point appeared to be experiencing some symptoms of burnout. Nevertheless, these symptoms did not appear to be prolonged nor have caused the participants significant long-lasting effects. Moreover, their experiences did not seem to detract from their enjoyment of their job and indeed appeared to make it more enjoyable. It would appear, therefore, that the findings of the current research support that of Hatcher and Noakes, who reported that their participants, treatment providers of sex offenders in Australia, although exhibiting some symptoms of burnout, were at 'low risk of developing burnout' (2010, p.151). It could be argued that because the participants of the current research did not work solely with violent offenders, that this in itself, helped to alleviate the negative consequences of their work with violent offenders. In this way, perhaps the participants were able to use their other work with clients who have committed less serious offences to have a 'breather' from the higher demands of working with violent offenders.

5.3.2.b Participants' Experience of the Characteristics of Vicarious Traumatization

From the literature review chapter, it was ascertained that practitioners working with traumatised populations could experience symptoms similar to those who have experienced the trauma first hand, for example nightmares, intrusive thoughts, numbing (Beaton & Murphy, 1995) which can negatively affect the practitioners' beliefs about themselves, their environment and other people (McCann & Pearlman, 1990b; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995a; 1995b). The experience of these symptoms can lead to poor decision making, feeling isolated, substance misuse and can negatively affect their relationships (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995a; 1995b; 1995c; Rothschild, 2006). It has been noted that symptomology can be ongoing and has been found to be present in practitioners five years following the event (Oliveri & Waterman,

1993). In the current research, participants appeared to suffer some symptoms indicative of vicarious traumatisation. For example: Adrian.68, although he did not use the word 'numbing', describes not being affected by the violence he is hearing, which I interpreted as numbing '*...we hear it so oftenI stabbed a guy or I punched a guy or I did this or did that, and I say.... oh ok right move onto the next thing....*'. Furthermore, many of the participants spoke of thinking about their experiences with their clients while they were not at work which is exemplified by Jack.22 '*...at home and during the weekends and at nightsit was on my mind an awful lot....*'. In relation to substance misuse, Beth.49 reported that '*...at times [I] have gone home and had too many glasses of wine because I'm thinking I need to switch off from this and oh my goodness my head's, you know, going a million miles an hour....*'. All participants spoke of these types of symptoms dissipating with time through discussing situations provoking these symptoms with colleagues, managers or family and friends. They said they did not feel that the symptoms were ongoing or pervasive. In addition, many participants spoke of reminding themselves that they were dealing with a small percentage of the population in order that their own thoughts and beliefs about their world and relationships were not negatively affected by the '*...grimmer side of life....*' (Sally.104). This would seem to support the findings of Hatcher and Noakes (2010) but also other qualitative studies which report mild symptoms of vicarious traumatisation (Ennis & Horne, 2003; Steed & Bicknell, 2001). Although Hatcher and Noakes (2010) report that there is little existing research regarding mediating factors though there is some evidence that access to supervision or peers is important (Ennis & Horne, 2003; Kadambi & Truscott, 2003). The present study would seem to support the findings of Ennis & Horne (2003) and Kadambi & Truscott (2003), as participants would discuss their concerns, informally with their colleagues, family and friends and more formally in supervision. This

way, it enabled participants to ‘....*let it go....*’ (Murun.131) and move forward.

5.3.2.c Participants’ Experience of the Characteristics of Compassion Fatigue

The symptoms of compassion fatigue closely resemble those of vicarious traumatisation. However, as pointed out previously in section 5.2.4, vicarious traumatisation is related to hearing/reading accounts of traumatic events; compassion fatigue results from connecting with the person’s distressing feelings and anguish (Kadambi & Ennis, 2004). Participants in the current research did speak of connecting with their clients, ‘....*trying to understand where somebody’s coming from and you develop a type of relationship because of that, maybe you feel that there’s an emotional connection to that individual or you’ve somehow connected to them on a deep level....*’ (Bert.76). As noted above participants appeared to experience some symptoms of compassion fatigue with one participant in particular, concerned that she was suffering from compassion fatigue. After completing ‘an on-line test’ she discovered she was not suffering from compassion fatigue. However, she felt that she was at risk of developing this condition and therefore applied for and was successful in obtaining another job within criminal justice social work dealing with a different client group. However, again there was no evidence within the descriptions given by the participants that the levels of symptoms they spoke of would merit a diagnosis of compassion fatigue. When discussing their deep connection and feelings for their clients all participants stated they would not wish to feel nothing as exemplified by Tom.119-120 ‘....*no I need to feel something; I need to feel that this.... if I didn’t really feel like that, then that would be even more scary....*’. It was apparent that the participants were aware of, and crucially did not pathologise, their emotions and therefore were able to accept them as being appropriate and necessary responses. This would seem to support McCann and Pearlman (1990) who advise that, accepting feelings, consistent supervision and holding

a variety of cases served to minimise the negative effects of vicarious trauma.

5.3.3 Workload as an Added Stressor

One of the main concerns the participants discussed was not necessarily about their work with violent offenders but their high workloads in terms of the ability see all their clients and to complete all their tasks in a timely manner to meet deadlines and to ensure risk management processes were adhered to. This appeared to be equally linked to their other cases as it was to their clients exhibiting violent behaviours. The only difference being that those high-risk cases were, as mentioned in section 6.3.2., perhaps under more public and media scrutiny than that of the petty offences which could put the criminal justice social worker under added pressure to complete all tasks at the cost of their work encroaching on their family life for example. High workloads and associated demands of completing tasks timeously and lack of resources have been identified as having a negative impact on stress levels (Lloyd, King, & Chenoweth, 2002; Pitts; 2007). Furthermore, the current research would appear to support earlier research on probation and parole officers from the USA by Finn and Kuck (2003) who asserted that the top three pressures were deadlines, excessive cases, and too much paperwork. Finn and Kuck suggest when taken together these three stressors appear to magnify the impact because they 'make it difficult for many officers to find the time to supervise their caseloads properly' (2003, p.2). Slate, Wells, and Johnson argue that this combination of stressors equals a fourth stressor which they called 'expectations to do too much in too little time' (2003, p.535).

It was evident from the beginning of the interviews that all the criminal justice social workers of this research study were aware of the stressors and the potential negative effects of working with violent offenders. This knowledge perhaps enabled them to be mindful of signs and symptoms

of those negative effects and, through reflection and use of supervision, take steps to address this at an early stage. The next section of the discussion will consider the ways in which the participants took responsibility for their own safety and wellbeing and the ways this links with existing literature.

5.4.1 Taking Responsibility for Safety and Wellbeing

As previously stated, in section 4.3.1 of the literature review, the S.S.S.C. code of practice for social service workers specifies that all social workers have a duty to look after their own safety and wellbeing (S.S.S.C., 2016). Additionally, Moulden and Firestone, 2010 assert that care providers are ethically obliged to care for themselves before caring for others. This section will review the ways in which participants of the current research have taken responsibility for their own safety and wellbeing and will discuss this within the context of the extant literature.

5.4.2 Taking Responsibility for Own Safety

None of the participants of the current study disclosed that they had been subjected to actual physical violence while working as criminal justice social workers but they were aware of the potential for this to occur. However, they did not appear to be unduly concerned or stressed about the potential for violence or dealing with dangerous individuals indeed Louise.⁸⁷ indicates '*....I don't think anybody comes into criminal justice andthink they wouldn't be working with violent people....*'. This would appear to be supportive of Pitts (2007) who reported that risk of injury was ranked fourth bottom in a list of 15 stressors.

Several participants referred to a colleague who had been subjected to a 'vicious attack' and stated that this had an impact on their own perception of the risk to themselves and that they would not take any unnecessary risks. Most participants advised that they felt the biggest potential threat to their safety was while conducting home visits which

is a requirement under the National Outcomes and Standards for Social Work Services in the Criminal Justice System, Community Payback Orders Practice Guidance (Scottish Government, 2010). Under this practice guidance home visits are an integral part of Community Payback Order supervision, with the intensity of supervision determining the frequency and types of home visits (planned and unannounced) that should be carried out (Scottish Government, 2010). The purpose of the home visits is to verify and enhance the accuracy and collection of information specific to the ongoing assessment process (Scottish Government, 2010). In addition, this guidance document states 'all staff should adhere to their local authority's safe working practices' (Scottish Government, 2010; p17). When the participants were asked about their safety, they all acknowledged that their own organisation had in force a lone working policy which covered home visits. However, the practice of home visits has not been without criticism and has been widely regarded as 'ineffective, underproductive, and impractical in the context of limited agency resources' (Lindner, 1992; p.44). The notion of limited agency resources would appear as relevant today as it did in 1992 as the United Kingdom and Scotland have been subject to austerity measures for some time. Additionally, in England and Wales, home visits are rarely conducted (Robinson, 2013; Senior, 2013). Nevertheless, in Scotland home visits remain part of the supervision of those subject to a community payback order or a post custody release licence. It is recognised that home visits, by their very nature, can put criminal justice social workers in a position of vulnerability (Breakwell & Rowett, 1988; Nuehring & Houston, 1992; Stanford, 2009; Wasik, Bryant, & Lyons, 1990). For example, Ferguson notes that conducting home visits in 'social work involves walking in an atmosphere of tension and sometimes menace, pervaded by uncertainty, anxiety, fear and adventure' (2010, p.1106). Ferguson further notes that:

'social workers know this feeling well and it is often exacerbated by the fear that it is the recognisable presence of their car and themselves on the estate or in a high-rise block that is causing the uneasy quiet. A common fear is that retribution, if not visited upon them, will be taken out on their car, which is important as a secure base for them to return to and escape from the hostile environment (Smith, 2003)' Ferguson 2010, p.1106).

This was expressed by eloquently by Beth:

'...I can remember him shouting get off my property and I was thinking right I'm now stood on the pavement, right that's finewe had known him as a violent offender in inverted commasin hindsight I probably should never have gone out there by myself,and I can remember thinking, I really want to get in my car and go but at the same time I actually don't want to get in my car because then he's gonna know that about me.... andthat washis thing,he did a lot ofworking out people's, where they stayed who they wereso you really did want to be quite precious about the information that went anywhere....' (Beth.22).

In this scenario, Beth also appeared to feel trapped, as that which could have taken her out of the situation would also give her client details about her that she did not want him to have.

All participants reported they would not take any unnecessary risks with their personal safety and most reported that they adhered to the health and safety policies of their organisations especially where home visits were concerned. However, one participant noted that he did not use the system in place and the reason for this was threefold: he felt that if he was reliant on this system to keep him safe then he would not be conducting the home visit in the first place; he found the technology

cumbersome; and he wondered if this was implemented to protect the organisation more than the employee. There was an awareness that the technology would not protect him from being assaulted but simply would indicate which client and address he visited last. This participant, Tom, described himself as a 'dinosaur' and by his own admission did not like using technology. He agreed that he had been given instructions about the use of the system however as he was not using it every day he found this difficult. It felt that Tom struggled with this aspect of his work and understood the implications of not using the technology, however in not undertaking home visits where he felt he would require the use of the technology, Tom was taking responsibility for his own safety. There is evidence to suggest that Tom is not alone in this dilemma as age has an implication for decisions to use technology (Morris & Venkatesh, 2000). As the workforce is increasing in age, organisations and managers should perhaps seek to understand the implications of introducing new technology to their staff and put in place a plan that makes this as easy as possible for those staff who may struggle with technology especially as, in this instance the technology was introduced to promote the safety of their staff. This may include repeated training sessions, or identifying more technology adept people in the office who can be called upon to assist those grappling with new technology.

5.4.3 Thinking Style

As mentioned in the literature review chapter, those who work with traumatised or dangerous and difficult individuals are at risk of developing burnout, vicarious trauma or compassion fatigue. Harrison and Westwood (2009) observed that the negative consequences of working with sex offenders were mitigated by, acknowledging their feelings, having optimistic outlook, and making use of supervision. This would seem to be in accordance with McCann and Pearlman (1990) as noted above. Although only one participant of the current study explicitly discussed being optimistic, '*...I choose to be an optimist in life.*

I'm not naturally an optimist, I choose to be one....' (Sally.111), it was evident in all participants' consideration of their roles and responsibilities. For example, '...people are amazing and wonderful and really curious beings.... and that's why I do the job that I do....' (Beth.49). Furthermore, closely related to this optimism was feelings of hope about their client's ability to make positive changes in their lives '...I suppose it's that acceptance of, as humanswe all do good and we all do bad and we all make mistakes and we can all change and I have an inherent belief that we all have it in us to change....' (Murun.11). Snyder (2000) indicates that hopeful individuals perhaps expect to achieve their goals and this can foster a problem-focussed strategy.

The way in which they framed their client's behaviour also appeared to contribute to this hope and belief and optimism. All participants spoke of viewing their clients as individuals and not labelling the individual with the behaviour. *'...it's aboutkeeping a focus on what we're talking about is a behaviour, it's not the whole person....' (Anne.32). Viewing the client as human appeared to help participants work with the client and maintain focus on the problematic behaviour and not the client. Marshall, et al., (2005) report that this enables the practitioner to display empathy and compassion which may enhance the client-practitioner relationship. However, the thought of hope or optimism may themselves engender frustration (which is linked to burnout) as people very often do not make the desired/required changes easily. Change, according to Prochaska and DiClemente (1983) is a process that occurs in several stages, pre-contemplative, contemplative, preparation, action and maintenance. The route through this is not linear and individuals may revert to the pre-contemplative state, which could have the effect of leaving the practitioner frustrated by a lack of progress toward wellbeing for the client. Therefore, the practitioner needs to possess a degree of realism, although they hope for change, they are aware this is a process which may take several attempts and*

prolonged time to achieve. Consequently, perhaps patience and pragmatism are attributes that the practitioner requires in order to reduce the negative effects of their work.

5.4.4 Coping Strategies

Coping, as noted in Cherniss (1980) and Lazarus (2006), is the way in which individuals overcome or manage the negative effects of stressful events. They suggest that support from peers, family and friends can assuage the effect of that stress. In addition, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) suggest that coping strategies include ‘thoughts and behaviors used to manage the internal and external demands of situations that are appraised as stressful’ (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004, p.745). As noted in section 6.3 of this Discussion chapter and in section 4.1 in the Findings chapter, the participants experienced some negative consequences of their work with violent offenders but this did not appear to attain the level of burnout, vicarious traumatisation or compassion fatigue. Participants spoke of several strategies they utilised to minimise the impact of their work. This was not something which appeared to happen ‘accidentally’ as participants spoke of taking responsibility for their own wellbeing as Chris.54 notes ‘*...it’s about the support packageyou put in place for yourself....*’. Moulder and Firestone (2010) argue that in order to identify negative consequences and take steps to overcome these, it is imperative practitioners use self-reflection.

Researchers have classified the coping strategies utilised by their participants in a variety of ways, for example Shinn, Rosario, Mørch and Chestnut 1984 perceive coping strategies belong to three groups, individual approach; team approach and organisational approach; Sexton (1999) categorised coping strategies by Organisational and Individual; Inbar and Ganor (2003) ordered coping strategies into Individual, Professional, Cognitive Behavioural, and Social Organisational and Leicht (2003) categorised coping strategies into

Emotional Focussed and Problem Focussed. However it would appear that no matter how the strategies are conceptualised by the researchers, there are commonalities contained within the groupings. The next three sections will discuss three such areas of commonality.

5.4.4.a Seeking Supervision

As discussed in section 5.3.2.iv, there is evidence to suggest that supervision can alleviate symptoms of burnout, vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue (Bell et al., 2003, Collins & Long, 2003; Hatcher and Noakes, 2010; Marriage & Marriage, 2005). However, several studies have identified insufficient supervision as causing stress for probation officers (Brown, 1986; Finn & Kuck, 2003; Pitts, 2007; Simmons, Cochran, & Blount, 1997; Slate, Wells, & Johnson, 2003; Whitehead, 1989). The findings of the current study would appear to lend support to the findings that supervision has a mediating effect on burnout, vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue. In addition, a few participants spoke of receiving poor quality supervision and this had caused them additional stress. It would appear then that both positions are not mutually exclusive and indeed in this way supervision can be viewed as a crucial component of wellbeing in probation officers as Bert.17 & 65 reported '*....I had to seek supervision for that...*' '*....had I not received good supervision, I'd still be in a right state, I think....*'. In this way it was also clear that participants, when the need arose, sought supervision which alleviated their distress.

It is of note that the earlier literature was focussed on ascertaining the negative effects of doing their job, such as burnout, vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue and therefore would be concentrating on factors which contribute to the stress rather than that which alleviates the stress. Consequently, the absence of coping strategies in the earlier literature may simply reflect the failure to consider this aspect.

5.4.4.b Seeking Support from Colleagues

It would appear that peer support, as a means of coping, has received less attention in the literature than that of formal supervision from line managers, nevertheless, informal support from colleagues has also been highlighted as mediating the negative effects of work on probation officers (Brown, 1986). The participants of the current study indicated that they heavily relied on their peers in the aftermath of a negative event, for 'offloading'; professional development; constructive feedback and a feeling of common purpose. This seems to largely support Cherniss's (1980 in Brown, 1986) premise that discussion with peers can assist staff in five ways:

- 1) discussing work problems can help reduce 'emotional tension and helps the worker acquire better perspective and understanding,';
 - 2) 'colleagues are an invaluable source of technical information and practical advice,';
 - 3) 'colleagues provide feedback in order to evaluate the worker's own work';
 - 4) colleagues can group together 'in conflicts with the organization or community groups,';
 - 5) colleagues can be an 'important source of stimulation'.
- (Brown, 1986, p.6).

Although the participants did not mention number 4 above this was perhaps because the researcher did not explore this aspect, rather than it not being a point for consideration.

One of the main support mechanisms that participants discussed was humour and that sometimes this could appear inappropriate, under certain circumstances. However, as colleagues undertaking the same work they felt there was common understanding. This was noted in a

study by Crawley of the camaraderie in prison officers and their use of 'sick humour' in their 'day-to-day banter' with their colleagues which was deemed to reduce stress levels (2004, p.419)

Research also indicates that not all practitioners reported positive collaborations with colleagues, (Charniss, 1986; Kurtz & Turner, 2007; Thacker & Noakes, 2010). All participants in the current research valued the support and input of their colleagues, particularly when they were beginning social workers, although they also relied on collegial support throughout their career. Some expressed the need to find the right member of staff to discuss their issues. This included finding someone who had enough experience to provide adequate guidance, someone who was still positive about their job, someone whom they could be honest about their feelings confidentially and that they could also use humour without fear of being reported for using that humour. However, perhaps the most important factor was they felt their colleagues were accessible not emotionally but physically. As Ruch (2007) points out, the helpful and learning component of supervision is being eroded and teams are the setting in which most social work practice takes place. Therefore, the onus for support and learning will fall on colleagues more as this is eroded from supervision. It therefore is perhaps incumbent upon organisations to ensure that a wealth of experienced practitioners are available in order that less experienced practitioners can find positive support. Furthermore, in times of austerity, local authorities are moving more toward alternative working arrangements, which includes home working and hot-desking. However, this may deny practitioners the opportunity of support and learning from colleagues and alternative ways of approaching their tasks. This according to the practitioners of this research, is important throughout their career though perhaps more so at the beginning, not least because some participants felt they had been 'stuck' with a client and colleagues were able to provide alternative ways of approaching the

task. This was invaluable to the participants and enabled them to grow as practitioners.

5.4.4.c Seeking Distance

Hatcher and Noakes (2010), note that their sample of sex offender treatment providers, found it important not to have their work encroach on their home life and one of the techniques they chose to separate these two domains was not discussing work at home. This was something that all participants of the current research discussed. Moreover, the majority of participants spoke of this separating work from home required a degree of conscious effort so that their work did not contaminate their private family life. In the current research the participants all had their own rules about how they go about doing this, some had a different dress code for work than at home, some stopped on the driveway to finish a conversation before entering their home, some switched off from work when they switched off their computer. Although they all had different ways of achieving this they were all consciously trying to create the boundary, but all were also aware that at times they had difficulty achieving this divide. Some spoke of this like a skill that develops with experience *'...I'm managing to separate that a bit better, but it's a conscious effort to do soin my home life I am not sitting watching programmes about social work.... home is home I don't take my work home....'* (Sally.65, 114 & 116). Again, this has an implication for local authorities who are moving toward alternative working practices as maintaining the work/home boundary would be infinitely more difficult if one was working from home.

Much of the extant literature, both qualitative and quantitative, indicates that practitioners use a variety of self-care techniques such as engaging in hobbies, exercise and enjoying family life Bober and Regehr (2006); Leicht (2003); McCann and Pearlman (1990); Moulden and Firestone (2007); Scheela (2001). Again, the current research would appear to support these findings. Nevertheless, McCabe (1986) found

that some practitioners were negatively affected by their work despite using positive coping strategies (in Brown, 1987). The next section will discuss how Main Category III, Developing Professionally, in the current study compares to the extant literature.

5.5 Professional Development

This section sees a shift from the negative impact of working with violent offenders and the steps practitioners take to protect and enhance their wellbeing and safety to the impact on their development as practitioners, which, as stated in section 5.4.5 is a continual process that occurs as the practitioner is exposed to more and more complex situations.

5.5.1 Developing as a Practitioner

As mentioned in section 4.4.5, it has been reported that social workers are ill prepared for practice in ‘managerially focussed workplace environments’ (Guerin, et.al, 2010, p.2481). Furthermore, probation officers make decisions by combining various avenues of information that can extensively differ in consistency, trustworthiness and authenticity and therefore these decisions are made in ambiguous circumstances (e.g., Kahneman, Slovic, & Tversky, 1982; Nisbett & Ross, 1980). The findings of the current research project would appear to support this position somewhat. Participants noted that when they first began to practice criminal justice social work, they felt ill-prepared ‘...how did I feel completely lost, completely and utterly out my depth to be perfectly honest with you. Totally out my depth...’ (Theresa.98) but also that professional growth and confidence comes with experience ‘...I think you’re so blinded when you startyou’re away in cuckoo land at that stage, cos you’reso green you’re no even thinking about things like that butdown the line you notice that...’(Chris.101). All participants noted the fallibility and lack of information they received while attempting to gather information from a range of sources with the intention of having as accurate an account of the client and his/her

circumstances as possible. Although this gathering of information appeared to be difficult, at times, for practitioners (due to lack of information from Courts, police, individuals, victims) they appeared to be committed to this and indeed felt that as they gained experience they became ‘...bit more inquisitive about that and I actually wanted –to know why would somebody do that...’ (Madeline.32) some commented that they felt like investigators and rather than be put-off by this it appeared that they felt this was a challenge that they enjoyed ‘...I like working with the high risk complicated the messy. I like trying to work it out, I like having to do that complicated thought process...’ (Sally.99). This would appear to contradict Grant (2017) who, in his mixed methods survey of newly qualified criminal justice social workers in Scotland, reported that the majority of those surveyed felt their training was adequate or better, indeed only ‘12.6% felt that their preparation was poor’ (p.38). It is of note though that the research conducted by Grant was part of a larger study in which Grant isolated the responses of the thirty-two criminal justice social workers who responded all of whom had been practicing criminal justice social work between 6 and 12 months. Grant (2017) cautions against generalising his figures as the 32 participants equates to only 15% of the total criminal justice social worker population. It is also true, from insider knowledge, that when social workers embark on their career, be it children and families or criminal justice, there is a period of around two years where the practitioner is allocated, less complex cases and it is expected that with experience they develop and take on more complex and demanding cases. This may have skewed Grant’s (2017) research as the emphasis on newly qualified social workers is not to have them overpowered by their cases and for them to feel competent in what they are doing. It may also be the case, as stated above, that practitioners are ‘...so green you’re not even thinking about things like that butdown the line you notice that...’ (Chris.101). There is also the case that at the beginning of practice, you don’t know what you don’t know and things are missed

which is why as Sally reports ‘...*I was able, to cut my teeth on the easier stuff....*’. In the current research some participants disclosed that they received a criminal justice practice placement, yet they still felt that there was no substitute for learning from experiencing. This is perhaps not surprising given that students’ workloads are protected and are usually made up of the less complex cases, though the learning will be transferrable.

5.5.2 Mistakes and Reflection: The Key to Professional Maturity? (Mistakes will be Made)

All social workers, be they children and families, adult care or criminal justice, practice in mercurial conditions and are often required to make decisions, sometimes very quickly, about novel situations for which there are no previous solutions or answers to guide their practice (Sicora, 2010). It is therefore unsurprising that social workers make mistakes in their practice. As Sicora articulates ‘in every human field error is a powerful source of learning, it is inevitable and no-one can be fully successful in the quest for a mistake-free life in their professional activity’ (2017, p.80). This would appear to be supported by the sentiments of the participants of the current study who spoke of learning from their mistakes ‘...*you learned as you go I think.... learned from making mistakes....*’ (Ellie.65). Ash also notes that mistakes and failures in social work are unavoidable, and can occur, not only at the individual level but also at the systemic level. When there is a failure in the system the rhetoric is of ‘opportunities missed and critical incidents’. Nevertheless, the regulatory bodies, media and public attention are sometimes focussed, perhaps disproportionately, on the individual practitioner (2011, p.100) with severe ramifications for the practitioner concerned often prior to the conclusion of the ‘official report’ and regulatory bodies. It is true that there have been several high-profile failures and there have been investigations of the causes of those failures. Thankfully though most mistakes made by practitioners do not lead to tragedy. It is important to note here that a mistake,

according to the Cambridge Dictionary 'is an action, decision or judgement that produces and unwanted or unintentional result'(Cambridge Dictionary online). Mistakes in social work practice can occur at any part of the process. For example, the social work practitioner may not give adequate weight to some part of information, which may lead to an inaccurate risk assessment, they may inadvertently give out confidential information to someone not entitled to know that information (Reamer, 2008). These errors are not committed solely within one field of social work but occur across the whole range of social work services (Reamer, 2008) which would include criminal justice. It was interesting that the participants of the current research did not hide the fact that they had made mistakes but spoke about this openly which is a position that Reamer (2008) claims to be the ideal and ethical thing to do. Reamer (2008) further points to several reasons why practitioners may feel disinclined to disclose their mistakes. Karman (2001) reports that making a mistake may lead the practitioner to feel shame and therefore may struggle to discuss this. Furthermore, their admission of making a mistake may be used by the organisation or registration body to terminate the person's employment contract or professional registration. One participant spoke of the anxieties he feels when he thinks he has made a mistake '*...occasionally have periods of high anxiety that I've made mistakes or that things have happened in terms of an individual's behaviour and then you start thinking, Jesus what if this had happened or what if that had happened and have I done what I should've done, could I have done anything differently in order to prevent that...*' (Bert.10). In this circumstance though Bert did not appear overly concerned of the ramifications for himself but rather for the consequences for others. Others though did speak of feeling anxious about making a mistake with high-profile cases and perhaps the media attention that may follow. Nevertheless, participants discussed the change that can come about through making mistakes '*...it was probably never gonna be*

alright.... so and it was OK and there was probably things that, if I was gonna do all of that again I would've gone back and done it differently but there's lots of things that you can do that's the benefit of hindsight and it's the benefit of making mistakes....' (Beth.39c). Beth, also therefore identified that the benefit in making mistakes was to learn from them. Dewey states 'we do not learn from experience [...] we learn from reflecting on experience' (1933, p.78).

Reflection in social work is not a new concept and is viewed as an essential component of understanding and awareness, constantly feeds action and deeper focussed thought towards becoming a more competent professional (Sicora, 2017). Much has been written on reflective practice from the early writings of Dewey (1910), Schön (1984) and Habermas, (1971; 1984) to the present-day thinkers such as Fook, 2002; Jasper, 2003; Moon, 1999; and Van Mannen, 1990, though there is no universally accepted exact definition (Hickson, 2011). As a result, a number of models and frameworks, from a variety of philosophical and theoretical positions have been developed to aid the reflective process (e.g. Fook & Gardiner, 2007; Gibbs, 1988; Johns, 1995; Kolb 1984; Lawrence-Wilkes, 2014; Mezirow, 2014; Rolfe, Freshwater, & Jasper, 2001; Schön, 1984). As mentioned in section 5.4.6, it is out with the scope of this thesis to provide a critique of these models of reflection, or indeed to give an in-depth account of each author's thoughts on reflection. It is though important to have a working definition of what reflection is. Jasper notes reflective practice 'is seen as one of the ways that professionals learn from an experience in order to understand and develop their practice' (2003, p.3). Reflection can occur at a basic or deeper level, individually, in a group, or within an organisation. However, the quality or depth of reflection, and therefore learning, depends not only on the questions that constitute the foundation of that reflection (Sicora, 2017b) but also on the focus of that reflection. For example Sicora notes reflection on mistakes is more

fruitful because the unexpected failure of action, or a series of actions, creates uneasiness in its author (2017a, p.43) and this is something which Bert noted in himself '*...and at times that does make me feel uncomfortable....*' (Bert.11). However, it is also important that reflection should not only occur when mistakes are made but as part of everyday practice (Price & Harrington, 2010). Nevertheless, mistakes will be made and reflection is the process by which practitioners look inward on those mistakes to come to a new understanding and thereby improve their practice. It is therefore important that organisations and teams adopt a culture of understanding which does not look to name, blame or shame individual practitioners. That which encourages openness and honesty about mistakes made will produce the best learning for practitioners and outcomes for clients. A culture which seeks to blame practitioners will foster fear and anxiety and will perhaps lead social workers to gloss over mistakes and not reflect to the depth required. It is noted in section 5.3.1 that fear itself can impact on the thought processes of practitioners. This may lead practitioners to make defensive decisions rather than defensible decisions. The impact of this, would perhaps be a more restrictive intervention with the client than is necessary and thus be more controlling than required and furthermore could be considered oppressive. Moreover, it is noted from my own experience as a criminal justice social worker, and observing colleagues, rarely is time set aside specifically for reflection, except perhaps in supervision, though this can be dependent on such things as the quality of supervision, the ethos of the organisation and the awareness of the individual practitioner themselves. Given the learning that can be achieved through reflection, there would be a need for the reflection to be processed at some point which may encroach on family life. However, as the practitioners of this study noted that one of the ways in which they maintained their own safety and wellbeing was to keep work life and home life separate. Perhaps there needs to be time set aside in the working day specifically for reflection.

5.6 Perception of Professional worth

5.6.1 Disjuncture (ethical stress)

Fenton (2015) discusses ethical stress, or 'disjuncture', which she states is due to an 'inability of workers to base their practice on social work values' (2015, p.1415). Fenton further argues that at the forefront of criminal justice social work practice in Scotland is the new penology of risk management and public protection and as a result social work practitioners have a reduced commitment to their social work values. As mentioned in section 5.5 of the literature review, social workers are also legislatively obliged to advise, assist and befriend those who come into contact with social work services (HMSO, 1968), which as stated previously is also in accordance with social work values. However, the social workers participating in the current research appeared to be focussed not only on risk assessment, risk management, public protection but also on the welfare of their clients '*...you want to make things better for people and you want to.... help them solve their problems....*', '*... whilst that monitoring process is going on, you're doing all the other [welfare] stuff which you would hope would reduce their risk of further reoffending....*' (Madeline.48 & 124.). Additionally, it appeared that the participants believed that by supporting clients to improve their wellbeing they [the participants] reduced the risk of harm to the public and therefore contributed to public protection. This would suggest that participants did not believe that promoting their clients' welfare and protecting the public were mutually exclusive. Indeed, criminal justice social workers, in Scotland, are required to balance care with control and are making decisions on this basis. It does appear though that participants have embraced the desistance theory, a theory of how and why those who offend come to stop offending (McNeill, 2006). Furthermore, having knowledge and understanding of desistance is critical to criminal justice social work practice (McNeill, 2006). Given that a welfare approach has a long history within criminal

justice social work in Scotland, perhaps practitioners have accommodated the language of new penology. For example, it is clear that participants disliked some of the vocabulary used in criminal justice and by the public and indeed pointed out that they were uncomfortable with the terminology of this research such as 'violent offenders' and 'offenders' as this would suggest an homogenous group and further stigmatises an already disadvantaged group. Although they did believe that part of their function was public protection, they felt just as strongly that the wellbeing of their clients was also a focus for their practice. This perhaps necessitates that criminal justice social workers adopt a pragmatic approach to their practice and as a result participants did not appear to suffer from role conflict as they were able to accommodate the two positions within their practice. Furthermore, CJSWs are used to balancing competing dichotomies, for example risk/needs, care/control. As CJSWs are working in organisations that prescribe the role and function of their employees, CJSW are required to complete certain tasks and use the language that is common to that task. However, CJSWs also work with clients according to the desistance theory (McNeill, 2006) which is how people come to stop offending. An important aspect of this is the welfare of the client. If people stop offending this would contribute to public protection and therefore the two positions do not appear to be mutually exclusive.

In addition, Fenton (2015) suggests that the organisational ethos can further add to disjuncture if the organisation, management and supervisors adhere strictly to the managerialist paradigm. Although this was not a focus of the current study, participants appeared to seek support from their supervisors which they stated lessened their stress, as documented in the findings chapter, section 4.2. This would suggest that, for the practitioners in this research, their supervisors had an ethos that was in alignment with social work values.

5.6.2 Media Influence on Professional Worth

As stated in section 5.5.2, Mawby and Worrall (2013) highlighted that there is not enough positive media coverage of criminal justice social work and the media seems only to be interested in criminal justice when ‘mistakes’ are made which leads to a negative portrayal of criminal justice in general and criminal justice social work in particular. As Mawby and Worrall conclude this can be demoralising for staff. Although only a few participants spoke of the negative portrayal by the media of their role, I felt this was an important issue. As a criminal justice social worker, I have been involved in discussions with colleagues at various times throughout my career and would agree that sometimes the media’s negative portrayal can have a negative influence. However, despite this disproportionately negative portrayal, the participants of this study did not report being demoralised but more that they had made efforts to disregard the media or to remind themselves of what they were attempting to achieve. Furthermore, they appeared to understand that the public’s perception of them was heavily influenced by the media. This supports Davidson and King (2005) who found that public knowledge and perception of social workers in Scotland was influenced by reports in newspapers, television news and documentaries. They felt that the public’s negative view of social work was out of misinformation by the media and therefore they could maintain a positive sense of professional worth despite this negative portrayal. In terms of criminal justice, Chapman, Mirrlees-Black and Brawn (2002) reported that in general, public understanding of the criminal justice system and sentencing was deficient and the most adverse opinions came from those who had the least knowledge. If criminal justice agencies continue to allow the media’s negative portrayal to dominate, this may prevent individuals entering into this type of work and, as mentioned above, could demoralise the existing staff. This would therefore suggest that criminal justice services, including criminal justice social work and their organisations, have a

responsibility for providing the public with positive and accurate information on criminal justice social work and the reasoning behind the work they do. This would support Kaufman and Raymond (1996) who argue 'The more that social work is perceived positively, the more likely it is to gain support for its programmes, to have its services utilized, to maintain morale, to attract recruits and to have its voice heard' (cited in Reid & Misener, 2001, p.194). Providing accurate information to the general public may also instil more faith in the system (Chapman, et al., 2001).

5.6.3 Job Satisfaction

The final point I wish to consider in this discussion is that of job satisfaction. Herzberg, identified job satisfaction as the 'over-all attitude towards his job, whether he likes or dislikes it' (1959, p.5), and Williamson describes job satisfaction as 'a pleasurable affective state associated with one's job' (1996, p.15). It was evident that all participants enjoyed the job they were doing, although the reasons they gave for this enjoyment differed. For some participants, it was the human interaction which contributed to their enjoyment '*...when you getpeople who do change.... then you feel, yeah.... a success you know that.... so yeah I mean there's a lot of good bits about the job....*' (Tom.124). For others, it was the complexity and challenge of the role '*...I quite like it, that way I like Criminal Justice, I like, and I like the challenge....*' (Sally.91), and yet to others it was that they were making a valuable contribution to society by way of public protection '*....I'm very clear on...., my reasons for doing it and I've a good clear focus on protection....*' (Anne.27).

Job satisfaction was not a direct question asked of participants, and only arose in their answers to other questions, but it is linked to feelings of professional worth in this research.

It appeared that for most of the participants, a combination of several factors contributed to their enjoyment of their job. For example, they believed they were supporting their clients to make positive changes but were also contributing to society in the form of reducing the harm caused by some of their clients and that this balancing act was also complex. As stated in section 4.4 they felt their tasks to be morally worthwhile '*...I enjoy the job that I do, I feel proud that I do the job I do.... I think it's an important piece of work....*' (Bert.78). In addition, research by Acquavita, Pittman, Gibbons, and Castellanos-Brown, (2009) demonstrated that organisational dynamics such as: work setting, (Gleason-Winn & Mindel, 1999); professional autonomy and support, (Pockett, 2003); supervision, (Cole et al., 2004; Abu-Bader, 2005); acknowledgement by employers, (Huxley et al., 2005); are more predictive of job satisfaction than the individual characteristics of practitioners. Some of the participants of the current research spoke of how having inadequate supervision, and lack of support from their supervisor had previously made them less happy with their job and therefore decided to change their place of employment. It is therefore important for staff retention that organisations, tasked with providing social work services, need to foster an environment that has positive regard to the values of the social work profession. Further, staff supervision should review practitioners' cases but should also review practitioners' views of their role, and function and monitor their wellbeing. In this way, if there is a deterioration in health or job satisfaction, this can be addressed at the earliest stage where support may make a difference.

Chapter 6 Limitations, Recommendations and Conclusion

This chapter provides some comments on the research including the limitations and recommendations prior to the summary of the research.

6.1 Limitations

6.1.1 Generalisability

Although sufficient for the methodology (Rennie, 2012), the sample size is small and represents a small proportion of the total criminal justice social workers working in Scotland and therefore the results cannot be generalised to the entire population of criminal justice social workers. As can be seen from the participant information sheet, around two thirds of the participants were female with one third male. Freedom of information requests to five local authorities in Scotland revealed that, at least in terms of gender, the present study is representative. Additionally, the research is the outcome of a snapshot of a small group of practitioners on a particular day of interviewing which may have been influenced by a number of factors prior to and during the data collection.

6.1.2 Criteria for Inclusion

The criteria for inclusion in the study was that participants had to be working as a criminal justice social worker for two years. However, it is noted that social workers do not start to work with the most complex cases, on their own, until after two years. It may be that this is too short a time for some of the negative effects to become problematic, for example burnout takes longer to develop. However, there were only two participants with the minimum required experience and their answers did not significantly differ from those who had more experience.

Although all participants were required to have worked with violent offenders, none of the participants worked solely with violent offenders, hence there may have been contamination of thought from their generic caseloads. Consequently, the personal and professional impacts may not be solely a result of working with violent offenders. Nevertheless, the data gathered was the practitioners' perception of their work with violent offenders.

6.1.3 Demand Characteristics

Participants may have been unduly influenced by the researcher's style of interviewing, personal biases and characteristics. Participants may have wanted to provide 'good answers' for the researcher and may have given answers they thought the researcher wanted. Still, participants were made aware at the start of the interview that there was no hidden agenda, no right or wrong answers, and it was their experience that was the focus of the interview. What is more, a limited literature review was undertaken and while that did influence the two pilot interviews the researcher took steps to ensure that the prior reading did not influence the remaining 17 interviews.

6.1.4 Written Language

During the analysis, the inflection of the spoken word is lost from written text which may produce a slightly altered meaning to the participants' experiences and therefore the researcher's interpretation of that experience may be weakened. However, in keeping with the methodology, all participants were sent the findings chapter to ascertain if the researcher's interpretation fitted with their experiences, and also with their recollections of their interviews. The comments in appendix Q demonstrates that participants felt the interpretation was an accurate reflection of their experiences.

6.2 Recommendations

6.2.1 Organisation

It is clear from the data collected that the participants of this study relied heavily on their colleagues, not only for emotional support and professional development but also for their sense of professional efficacy and morale, and as a result collegial support traversed three of the four main categories. In Scotland, most local authorities are having to make cuts to their services due to austerity measures. As such some local authorities are attempting to save money by reducing their overhead costs, moving toward flexible working conditions, including hot desking and working from home. This could entail CJSWs working alongside an occupational therapist or an administrative assistant and may therefore not encounter another CJSW in the course of their working day except for supervision. If the results of this study are representative of criminal justice social workers' experiences this would be detrimental not only to the safety and well-being of criminal justice social workers but also to their professional development and professional identity. It is also the case that the participants of this study, in line with other research, attempt to have a divide between their work life and their private life and therefore working from home may not be a welcome change to working conditions. It is important for local authorities to note this as it could add stress to criminal justice social workers, which may not be easily overcome as they would not be able to discuss it with their colleagues.

Supervision and supervisors were also seen as important sources of support and professional development and positive experience of supervision contributed to practitioners' job satisfaction. Organisations and supervisors also have a role to play in supporting practitioners to learn from mistakes and therefore should foster a climate of learning rather than blame. Supervisors should monitor practitioners'

motivation, attitudes to their job and wellbeing to address any adverse changes at the earliest opportunity.

6.2.2 Training

As extant literature suggests, most social workers will encounter angry or abusive individuals at some point in their career and therefore it would perhaps be easy to presume that student social workers are sufficiently trained in de-escalation techniques or provided instruction in basic self-defence techniques. It is apparent from this study that this is not always the case. Perhaps this is something which initial training courses should make available to all their social work students. Some participants reflected that they did not think there was a training course that could prepare someone for such a difficult encounter. But, if practiced enough it becomes part of the skill set that one adopts. Furthermore, participants of this study were aware and acknowledged the negative impact of working with their clients. Providing training on the negative effects of this type of work raises the student's level of awareness of the potential negative impact on them and could better prepare them for their future practice. Additionally, organisations should provide ongoing training on recognising and overcoming the negative effects of their work with clients.

6.3 Further Research

Much of the research utilised for the literature review is from the United States of America, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand as well as England and while there can be inferences drawn, more research needs to be undertaken with criminal justice social workers in Scotland in terms of the effects of working with clients and coping strategies utilised. This would put the wellbeing of Scottish criminal justice social workers at the forefront of research and perhaps would have the effect of ensuring that CJSWs feel their views and wellbeing are appropriately valued. Furthermore, as CJSWs are dealing with difficult and complex situations each day it would be advantageous to undertake further

research on the coping strategies employed by CJSWs to ascertain how these mitigate the effects of their demanding role. Furthermore, qualitative research between the criminal justice agencies (e.g. probation, police and prison officers) may highlight differences and/or similarities in the way practitioners deal with the demands of their work.

6.4 Conclusion

This research set out to investigate the professional and personal impact of working with violent offenders on CJSWs. It is an important area of research, not least because of the potential effects on CJSWs of working with difficult and dangerous individuals. There is potential for practitioners to develop burnout, vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue and, if not supported appropriately, could lead to greater absenteeism from work. Moreover, there does not appear to be existing research in this specific area.

The research is qualitative, utilising methodical hermeneutics as a methodological approach to grounded theory methods (Rennie, 2000). Nineteen participants were interviewed using semi-structured interviews, which were recorded and transcribed. Eighteen transcriptions were analysed utilising Embodied Categorizing, (Rennie & Fergus, 2006) a variant of the constant comparative method which is utilised in grounded theory.

Four main categories: Potential Contaminants to Self; Safety and Wellbeing; Developing Professionally; and Perception of Professional Worth; evolved from the analysis. A core category of Developing Professional Resilience emerged from the four main categories. Main category 1, Potential Contaminants to Self, demonstrated that participants suffered some negative effects both professionally and personally, e.g. fear, intrusive thoughts and sleep disturbances, as a

consequence of working with violent offenders. Main category II, indicates that participants were aware of the potential negative effects to their 'safety and wellbeing' and strove to take measures to mitigate these utilising several strategies and sources of support e.g. exiting a dangerous situation, seeking support from colleagues, seeking supervision and engaging in pleasurable pastimes. Main category III, Developing Professionally, emerged from participants discussing their professional journey from beginning social worker to their current practice and the differences therein. Participants discussed initially not knowing what they didn't know and gradually developing professional competence and confidence over time. Participants discussed finding value in their work which they greatly enjoyed despite obstacles to efficacy and negative media and public image. This is encapsulated by the final main category Perception of Professional Worth. The core category, Developing Professional Resilience, emerged from the four main categories and depicts the participants' commitment to themselves, their clients and the social work cause, despite the difficulties they encounter.

The research highlights that although participants discussed being negatively affected by their work, at times, they could mitigate this by: being aware of the potential negative consequences; taking control of their own wellbeing and accepting their emotions. This enabled participants to seek suitable supports and use each encounter to learn and grow as a practitioner. Collegial support was valuable to all participants and this traversed three out of the four main categories. The research has implications for local authorities who, under budgetary constraints, are moving toward flexible working patterns, enabling a rationalisation of their accommodation and although this may seem positive, the wellbeing of practitioners, their professional development, identity and job satisfaction could be negatively affected by this. Further research in this area would therefore be advantageous.

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Appendix A Literature Placement: A Discussion

Introduction

'If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got'. (Henry Ford, 1863-1947, American founder of the Ford Motor Company)

Prior to embarking on my Doctoral study, I had conducted research at Masters level and throughout the research process I carried out a literature review at a number of stages along the way. Not only did I consult extant literature to ensure that I was not duplicating previous research but also to set the scene historically, politically, culturally and professionally. I also reviewed the literature prior to designing the research to ensure my methodology and methods were appropriate and consistent for the type of research I was conducting. Additionally, once I had collected the data, I consulted the literature to set my results within appropriate theoretical frameworks. Although I found conducting literature reviews challenging, in terms of the amount of data it generates, I also gained greater understanding and insights into my research topic. All previous research projects have been conducted utilising quantitative methods. Moreover, the write up of these studies followed the conventional quantitative dissertation format of abstract, introduction, literature review, results, discussion and conclusion.

However, having decided to set my doctoral research within a qualitative paradigm, I realise that undertaking qualitative research is complex, not least because of the variety of epistemological and ontological positions on what constitutes valid research, but there is much debate about the positioning of the literature review within qualitative research. Some articles suggest that the discussion on the

positioning of the literature review within grounded theory research is confusing and contradictory especially to trainee researchers (McCallin, 2003; McGhee, Marland, & Atkinson 2007; Thornberg, 2012). Some articles then provide the outline of the various arguments for and against reading of extant literature prior to data collection and with each offering, what they claim to be, the accepted or justifiable position with regards to the literature review's placement within grounded theory research. Consequently, I have found these suggestions add to the confusion. I now realise that these are interpretations and not hard and fast facts that are true and irrefutable. I understand that I need to find my own path through the arguments to achieve a fit that is not only consistent with my worldview but one that is also congruent with my methodology and the research intent. Therefore, the remainder of this chapter will provide a discussion of the purpose of the literature review and then critically discuss the positioning of my literature review, which I have chosen to delay until the data analysis stage which is in keeping with the methodical hermeneutic approach to grounded theory as proposed by Professor David Rennie (1998)

The Purpose of a Literature Review

There seems to be compelling evidence which supports the notion that research, in conventional quantitative research, cannot be considered valid if there is no extensive reviewing of the substantive literature in the area of study prior to engaging with the collection of data, Indeed Booth, Papaioannou, and Sutton (2012) state that:

'Conducting any type of research project without conducting a literature review can be likened to travelling to a strange and exotic country but never coming out of your hotel room...Granted you may reach your destination, you may even achieve the occasional moment of insight but you will be starved of so many valuable moments of discovery' (p.1).

Furthermore, they assert that one cannot fully comprehend the area under investigation unless a literature review is conducted. In conducting the literature review the researcher is also able to appreciate previously researched areas, identify gaps in knowledge and recognise suitable research methods for the topic under investigation (Booth et, al., 2012). This would seem to support Sanders and Wilkins (2010) who also acknowledge that consulting the literature may provide ideas about appropriate methodologies for the topic under investigation. The findings of the literature may also be used to support the formulation of one's own research hypothesis or the reason for the research (Sanders & Wilkins, 2010).

Hart asserts that a review of the literature prior to data collection assesses whether the area or topic is open to research. Furthermore, Hart notes that a review of the literature:

- Places the topic in a historical perspective
- Identifies key landmark studies through selection of key sources and authors
- Establishes context for your interest
- Distinguishes what has already been done to identify reasons for your own work

(Hart, 1998)

There would appear to be a general agreement about the purpose of the literature review, which is not dependent on the researcher's discipline of study (Cooper, 1989; Bruce, 1994; Hart, 1998). Randolph (2009) asserts that the research could possibly be regarded as unsound if the literature review is weak.

Nonetheless as stated previously the role and timing of the literature review within qualitative research in general and grounded theory studies in particular is more uncertain and is contested. Indeed McGhee, Marland and Atkinson (2007) note that the timing of the literature review within grounded theory research is often influenced by the epistemological position of the researcher. Therefore the next sections will discuss the pertinent arguments by exploring the views of the two founding fathers of grounded theory, Glaser and Strauss on the positioning of the literature review. Although their original position was somewhat clear, Glaser and Strauss have parted company and perhaps one of the major ways they differ now is on their views of the purpose and timing of the literature review. Reference to Charmaz' constructivist account of grounded theory will also contribute to the debate before finally discussing David Rennie's position on the literature review (Rennie, 2000)

[The Original Position of Glaser & Strauss \(1967\)](#)

In their original work, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, Glaser and Strauss (1967) proposed grounded theory as an innovative methodology, which was a direct challenge to the predominant rational approach to research (Rennie, 2000), the purpose of which was to test hypotheses and develop grand theories (Kennedy & Lingard, 2006). Glaser and Strauss (1967) proposed however that testing hypotheses was not the objective of grounded theory where the research focus is on 'the discovery of theory from data' (p.1) in this way the objective is to develop new theory which is grounded in the data. The development of theory from data and a post-positivist stance of the researcher remaining objective led Glaser and Strauss (1967) to propose that only once the Core Category, which is the overarching meaning derived from the characteristics contained in the subsequent categories and sub categories, has been discovered and a theoretical framework of how all

these categories and sub categories relate to the Core Category has been identified, should one review the existing literature. The focus of this is to ascertain whether other researchers have found comparable categories with possible significance. While initially this was the view put forward by both Glaser and Strauss (1967) in the years that followed Glaser and Strauss disagreed in several areas of the original grounded theory, one of those being the timing of the literature review. As I have chosen to delay my literature review I will now discuss the relevant positions below.

Glaser

Glaser (1992) adheres steadfastly to the original position by recommending that researchers delay reviewing extant literature so that they are open to discovering what the data holds and are not prematurely influenced by the extant literature. By doing so the researcher avoids 'forcing the data to fit pre-existing concepts' (Glaser, 1978, p.31). Glaser argues that the research problem and solution are 'grounded in the data'. In this way, theories or concepts are developed from the gathered data, in a process of induction, rather than from the literature. Glaser argues that 'a well done grounded theory will usually, if not invariably, transcend diverse previous works while integrating them into a new theory of greater scope than extant ones' (Glaser, 1978, p.10). However, Glaser (1992,) is also pragmatic and states that while the ideal approach would be to delay the literature, in grounded theory this is often unachievable due to the requirements of academic institutions, funding bodies or ethics committees. In these instances, Glaser gives the impression that the researcher 'should not fall on their sword' but should conduct a brief review of the literature to enable the research to proceed (1992). Furthermore, he notes that if a review of the literature is required then the researcher should be consciously aware of the influence this has on their pre-conceptions but also to trust that through the Constant Comparative method grounded theory

is self-correcting (Glaser, 2010). This was reassuring to me as I was advised by my academic supervisor that it was unlikely that my research proposal would be accepted without first having a literature review, even though I explained I felt this would unduly influence the findings and was against my methodology. However, Glaser's (1992) comments also led me to question whether the delay in reviewing the literature was essential given that the method was self-correcting.

In a podcast of a DVD Glaser goes on to advise:

‘...don't worry, the literature aint going nowhere.... quite often I've seen it that the literature review is beside the point and once the theory is out.... you go to a whole different literature.... in Avida's moral reckoning it is a waste of time if you are going to do grounded theory and discover what is going on.... and that's why I say you do the literature review afterwards.... yes you have to integrate it into the current literature of a field....’ (Glaser, 2010).

Glaser at no time suggests that a review of the literature should not be conducted but does however advocate delaying the literature review so that the researcher is objective and is not unduly influenced by pre-existing theoretical frameworks. By the quote above it is apparent that Glaser viewed conducting a literature review at an early stage as a waste of time; nonetheless Strauss & Corbin have a different view.

Strauss and Corbin

Strauss moved away from his original position of not reviewing the data until the analysis has begun. He along with Corbin (1990) advocates that researchers conduct the literature review early as this enhances ‘theoretical sensitivity’. Theoretical sensitivity allows the researcher to know what data are important in developing the grounded theory. Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Corbin and Strauss (1990) also suggest that the literature review itself can provide additional data that can also

be included in the analysis. In a move away from the original position of induction alone, Strauss and Corbin (1990) viewed the development of a grounded theory as a result of the interaction of induction and deduction. Instead of beginning with a hypothesis, grounded theory begins with a topic of interest. The data is collected allowing relevant ideas to develop, which are then tested for fit within existing data. Strauss and Corbin (1990; 1998) view objectivity as essential and they too argue that open-mindedness is fundamental to ensure that data is not disregarded as unimportant because it does not fit with the preconceived notions of the researcher. Rennie (2012) notes however that when transcripts of meetings Strauss had with his students (see Strauss, 1987) it was evident that the students had moved to theory before the concepts had been fully developed. This gives weight to the notion of delaying the literature review as only this, in my view, (will help to ensure congruence to the inductive nature of the process) and prevent prematurely fitting data into pre-existing concepts.

Glaser and Strauss (1967), Glaser (1978; 2005) and Strauss and Corbin (1990; 1998), although disagreeing with the positioning of the literature review still hold that researchers can and should be objective. This is in line with their epistemological assumptions that there is a reality that can be observed as separate from those researching it. As stated previously the development of grounded theory methodology was post-positivistic. However, to add to the debate and perhaps the confusion Charmaz (2006) has proposed another viewpoint which will be explored in the next section.

Charmaz

Charmaz (2006) from a constructivist epistemology, challenges both the positivist and post-positivist stance (Mills, Bonner, & Francis 2006), arguing that total objectivity is not possible and instead acknowledges that both the participant and researcher co-construct meaning but that

the final report will contain the researcher's views (Charmaz & Mitchell, 1996). Charmaz therefore does not consider delaying the literature review as essential. Furthermore Charmaz (2006) argues that an initial review of the literature is required in order to discover gaps in the area of enquiry. Grounded theory for Charmaz (2005; 2006; 2011) depends on the interplay between data gathering and data analysis. That said Charmaz (2011) highlights that analysing data has more importance than gathering data, though concedes that the process of conducting a grounded theory begins with inductive data gathering. For Charmaz the most important impact of grounded theory to the collection of data is its 'emphasis on using tentative theoretical categories to inform subsequent data collection' (2011, p.166). The account given by Charmaz seems reminiscent of the position taken by Strauss and Corbin (1990; 1998) and would seem to entail some hypothesis testing which would not only include induction but a mixture of induction and deduction. Charmaz (2006) acknowledges this by arguing that it would be naïve to suggest that Glaser and Strauss's original grounded theory contained purely induction. Although I am more inclined towards a constructivist stance, in my view if one is creating 'tentative theoretical categories to inform subsequent data collection' can one claim to be allowing each participant to talk of their experience of a phenomenon? It would appear to me that, if this were the case, the researcher is driving the research in the area the researcher wants to go. The point I am making is that what is not explored may be more relevant to the participants' experience than the previous data collection. Another argument that could be made is that the direction of the research would be somewhat reliant on the quality of the initial literature review or the initial interviews.

During an interview with Graham R. Gibbs in 2013, when asked directly about the positioning of the literature review within grounded theory research, Charmaz (2013) states '....what I'm most concerned....

is that people grapple with their own starting points and standing points, where they are coming from.....’.

In this way I feel that Charmaz gives me permission, as the sole researcher in charge of my research project, to find my own way according to my world-view. Furthermore, Charmaz indicates that researchers should not unnecessarily narrow the topic before commencing the data collection. One should start with a broad area and that ‘you should always work with what you find which is always your interpretation’ (Charmaz, 2013).

Having discussed the positions taken by Glaser and Strauss; Glaser; Strauss and Corbin; and Charmaz the next section will discuss Rennie’s justification for delaying the literature review until after the findings.

Rennie

Rennie (2000) argues that it is Glaser’s position that is most in keeping with the original objectives of grounded theory and advocates that ‘inquirers into a phenomenon should avoid reading about it prior to inquiry and analysis to minimise the imposition of prejudices’ (p.71). Rennie recognises that people will already come to research with pre-existing knowledge but suggests that there is no reason to purposefully add to it. It is worth reiterating that methodical hermeneutics is solely concerned with the experience of the individual and not necessarily whether it fits with pre-existing research. Rennie (2000) further adds there is also no need in grounded theory for internal validity, which is what Strauss and Corbin (1990; 1998) strive to do with the mix of induction and deduction, which will be discussed later in the methodology chapter. It would appear that Rennie accepts what Charmaz (2011) states that it is a little naïve to believe that grounded theory is purely induction, Rennie argues that the interplay is between

induction and abduction and the constant comparative method which makes grounded theory internally valid.

Personal View

It seems to me that, although there are strengths and weaknesses, for conducting a literature review prior to data collection and analysis and the same with delaying the literature review, given that the reasoning rests on philosophical assumptions it cannot be proved one way or another. The researcher therefore has to find their own path through the research process guided by the research intent. I have chosen to delay consulting the existing literature because I am of the view that this path best fits not only with my chosen methodology but also my experience as a practitioner. For example, when I see clients for the first time I tend to read only that which keeps me safe, i.e. there will be notes in the front of the file advising if a client is known to have been aggressive towards staff. Even if there is no such note, there is a presumption on the first few meetings that a client may be volatile or violent which aids staff safety. However, I do not tend to read the case file of the client prior to that first meeting, not because I am lazy or disinterested, but through experience I have discovered that by delaying reading the file I can let the client tell their story without prejudging them or half listening to them because I am looking for fit with what I already know about them and without me guiding them to find out what I want to find out. I find the stories they tell are much richer than when I direct them. Following the first meeting I will then read the file and on the next meeting I will be more directive in my interviews seeking to understand why they have chosen not to disclose certain aspects. Furthermore, as a practicing CJSW, my experience and knowledge may influence my interpretation of the data and therefore it is important that additional information is kept to a minimum so as not to contaminate my interpretation thereof.

I started the chapter with a quote by Henry Ford not necessarily as an advocate for doing things differently though that certainly is also true, but it was more about ‘if we define things by what we know we will not discover anything new’. My interpretation or rewording of Ford’s quote is:

‘If we always look for what we have found, we’ll only find what we have always found’.

It was important for me in this research to not look at what has been found previously but to pay attention to participants’ interpretation of their experience. Given that the initial literature search produced no articles or books that matched the topic of interest, I felt confident that my research was innovative and, because of this, could be exploratory in nature. I could allow participants the freedom to discuss their experiences of working with violent offenders and the impact this has had on them which, is entirely in keeping with methodical hermeneutics. This supports the notion that methodical hermeneutics is a suitable and appropriate methodology for this research.

Appendix B Extract of Reflective Account

After the first feelings of excitement, of doing a piece of real research and being able to make choices and direct my own project, which as an employee of large organisations all of my working life and where the decisions were taken and made for me to follow, had waned, reality set in.....

An 'Aha' moment

From the outset I had taken the decision to delay the literature review until data collection. This decision was not taken lightly but I agreed with Glaser's and David Rennie's stance that to undertake the literature review before data collection would potentially influence the outcome of a qualitative research, (the arguments are set out in Appendix A). Nevertheless, I was obliged to undertake a literature review for the research proposal, as dictated by the Faculty Chair of the Ethics Committee. I was disappointed, feeling I was departing from the chosen methodology, and thus felt the methodology was diluted. I was worried that this would further influence my research, already being influenced as an insider. But above all else, believing in the research topic, I wanted to continue. Just as Glaser said, I did not want to sacrifice the research but more that I had to keep it in mind when I was conducting the interviews and keeping in mind and continually reflecting and asking, was the literature review influencing the analysis or was the analysis grounded in the data? After the third interview, I was becoming despondent about the interviews feeling that I was not 'discovering' anything. Thinking to myself 'but nothing is coming up, there is no obvious vicarious trauma or burnout, and only one person so far has fleetingly mentioned compassion fatigue.....?'.aha.....this is exactly what I was supposed to be looking out for and indeed showed me that conducting the literature review had directed me to look for certain things and I felt I was potentially

focussing the interview in such a way as to generate what I was looking for. I realised that I should not have been looking for anything, except for the participants' true reflections of their account of their experiences. This was a critical moment in the research as it enabled me to relax and allow the stories to unfold. I was aware that this process could happen, but nevertheless it did happen. Fortunately for me, having only conducted three interviews, I was not almost finished data collection and moreover, the first two were also pilot interviews. It highlighted that I was reflecting on my reflection. It was not only a critical moment in the research process but also a turning point in such that I realized I must be 'vigilant' at all times, within this process. It also gave me confidence that I could tell the difference between my own experience/knowledge and that of the participants.

[From Practitioner to Researcher](#)

Those participants interviewed were peers in terms of fulfilling a similar role as my full-time job, moreover three team leaders from different local authorities volunteered to participate. I had not considered the impact this would have on me but I felt initially anxious because it was almost like putting my interview style on the line, as a large proportion of the criminal justice social worker's job is about gathering information from interviewing. I felt afraid they, particularly one interviewee who holds a senior position over me, might negatively judge my abilities leaving them feeling either not heard or understood, nor having been given the full opportunity to recount their experiences. Furthermore, the interviewee holding a senior post may have questioned my abilities to fulfil my role. This feeling made me prepare my interviews carefully by reading more about Socratic questioning and reading other interview schedules. For my own learning I asked the interviewee, once the interview finished, for any feedback how they experienced the interview.

Reflecting the Method

Interviews over, a real panic descended. I had gathered data from 19 participants, which according to the methodology was at the very maximum of the methodological hermeneutics approach.

Being a novice researcher I had to go entirely by the requirements of my then supervisor who had indicated I should interview 35 participants as a minimum, further interviewing service managers, university course leaders and policy makers for it to be robust. Countless sleepless nights, emails to professor Rennie, and a search of similar methodological qualitative theses suggested 12 participants to interview would be sufficient to reach saturation point. These conflicting demands created a lot of methodological angst. Having already stepped away from the purist tradition as previously mentioned, I was adamant that I was going to adhere to the methodology as close as possible. But being a pragmatist and wanting to conform to my supervisor's demands I came to a compromise of interviewing between 12 and 17 participants. Gaining access to potential participants was difficult from the outset, as the 32 local authorities in Scotland each have their own ethical (access) approval routes to participants. I experienced these difficulties as hindering my progress and I became increasingly anxious as I felt 'blocked' at every avenue/step I took on my methodological 'crusade'. Refusing to give in and be defeated I stayed on task resulting in 19 participants who agreed to take part in the research. The ability to keep going in the face of adversity, I now believe, is essential when conducting research. Despite all, I now feel a great sense of achievement and believe I will be able to fulfil any further projects which may come my way in the future.

Having looked at established qualitative analysis software I did not consider these an appropriate use of time to learn the application of the software. This necessitated the creation of my own basic data organisational tool as the information generated was too copious to

handle by pen and paper alone. This has given me confidence in my creative abilities which I thought I previously did not have. I now realize with the whole research process that I can and will rise to the occasion.

Finally

The research process has taught me many things, the main thing being that methodical hermeneutics suits my style, because of its pragmatic approach in trying to reconcile realism with relativism. I feel that this approach is a very good fit for myself and for criminal justice social work research, as an added tool.

Doing the doctorate has impacted on my professional and academic abilities, I have become more confident and analytical in my report writing abilities. It feels like an awakening: I don't live in isolation and nothing is neutral. Reflection is the key to understanding my fit within my profession and organisation. I feel that now my strength within my job comes from integrating my new found academic experience and knowledge with my professional experience and knowledge. I now ask myself 'does it matter whether practice informs research or research informs practice?'. It seems they are interwoven and not easily extrapolated, similar to my research findings.

Even though the entire process of doing the research has been very difficult at times I found it enjoyable for the most part and would hope to continue to conduct research and utilise this in my practice.

"The expert at anything was once a beginner" - Helen Heyes
Dunblane, August 2017.

Appendix C Copy of Email from Professor D. L. Rennie

From: "David L. Rennie" <drennie@yorku.ca>
Date: 5 March 2013 at 23:08:56 GMT
To: Dawn Gray <dawn_gray@me.com>
Subject: Re: Methodical Hermeneutics

Dear Dawn: Before I answer your questions, I have to mention that my methodical hermeneutic methodology is just that, a methodology, or theory of method which I propose applies to all forms of qualitative research. Hence, you will have to decide which method to use. It seems to me that the grounded theory method, thematic analysis, descriptive phenomenological psychology and interpretative interpretative analysis would all be candidates. The number of interviews you would want will depend on the method (DPA and IPA tend to be satisfied with, say, 5 or so participants, while TA and the GTM generally entail 10 or so, depending on the coherence of the returns. With any of them it will impossible to do the analysis without transcription, so forget about that. In case you don't have it, I'll send a recent article on the methodology, in a separate email. I wish you luck with your project. Best wishes, David

--

David L. Rennie
Professor Emeritus and Senior Scholar
Department of Psychology, York University
Toronto, Canada M3J 1P3

Appendix D Interview Questions

For the Semi-Structured Interviews with Participants

Note: This interview schedule is an informal, initial guide for me as interviewer, in order to gently steer the participant back to the focus and respond to issues I wish to hear more about for this study.

Question 1:

I would just like to check if you have worked with violent offenders yes/no

have you been a criminal justice social worker for at least 2 years. Yes/no

Question 2:

Please tell me about your experience of working with violent offenders.

Question 3:

Do you think working with violent offenders has had any impact on your professional life?

if so

Do you have any examples of how working with violent offenders has had an impact on your professional life?

(if required) Can you expand on that a bit

Question 4:

Do you think there has been any impact on your personal life?

if so

Can you give me some examples?

(if required) Can you expand on that a bit more

Question 5:

Has there been a time when you have required support due to your work with violent offenders?

What was it that made you seek support

What support did you seek

Can you tell me a bit more about that

Question 6:

During your initial training to become a social worker, did you have specific training for working with violent offenders?

If required – what did that training entail

Have you had any specific training for work with violent offenders since then

In your opinion how has this prepared you for your work with violent offenders

If yes how?

If no why not?

What do you think could be done differently

Question 7:

If you have worked with more than one violent offender, do you think your previous experience has

helped or hindered your work with future violent offenders,

can you explain that a bit further

Appendix E Favourable Ethical Opinion



Dawn Gray
Professional Doctorate Student
Institute of Criminal Justice Studies
University of Portsmouth

REC reference number: 14/15:06
Please quote this number on all correspondence.

3rd November 2014

Dear Dawn,

Full Title of Study: Working with violent offenders: the impact upon criminal justice social workers working in Scotland.

Documents reviewed:

Consent Form
Ethics narrative
Interview Schedule
Invitation Letter
Participant Information Sheet
Protocol
Questionnaire

Further to our recent correspondence, this proposal was reviewed by The Research Ethics Committee of The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

I am pleased to tell you that the proposal was awarded a favourable ethical opinion by the committee.

Kind regards,

FHSS FREC Vice Chair
Richard Hitchcock

Members participating in the review:

- Nathan Hall
- Richard Hitchcock
- Geoff Wade

Appendix F Research Approval Template



Research Approval Template

This template should be completed and submitted along with any research proposal to: Chair of the Organisational Development Standing Committee, Social Work Scotland Roseberry House, 19 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5BH.

Title of research

Timescale for research

Lead contact details

Name

Address

Telephone number

Email

Please detail what ethic approval process the research proposal has been subject to:

Please detail the governance arrangements in place to oversee the research:

Please detail how the proposal will add to the body of Social Work knowledge:

Please describe how the research compliments any other similar research:

Please detail if the proposal will encourage innovation, influence policy development, promote partnership working, promote outcomes for service users or contribute to the setting of standards?

Please detail the anticipated time commitments on individual authorities if they agree to participate in the research:

Recommendation: To be completed by the Social Work Scotland Organisational Development Standing Committee.

Signed

Date

Appendix G Social Work Scotland Support for Research

From: ArmstrongT ArmstrongT [redacted]
Subject: FW: Social Work Research
Date: 8 January 2015 at 16:43
To: dawn.gray@myport.ac.uk
Cc: Sophie Mills sophie.mills@socialworkscotland.org



Dawn

I refer to our previous correspondence regarding your proposed research “Working with violent offenders: the impact upon criminal justice social workers working in Scotland.” I am pleased to advise you that Social work Scotland are happy to support this piece of research. As I previously advised you Social Work Scotland is not an executive decision making body and as such we can only lend our support to a piece of research and it is up to individual local authorities or organisations to decide for themselves whether they are willing to participate in the research. However I would refer you to the email below from Margaret Anderson, Chair of our Criminal Justice Standing Committee in which she identifies two local authority areas who have indicated a willingness to participate in the research. Can I take this opportunity to wish you every success in your research and we look forward to hearing of the outcome of it in due course.

Yours sincerely

Tim Armstrong, Chair of the Social Work Scotland Organisational Development Standing Committee.

Appendix H Sample of a Local Authority Consent Form

RESEARCHER DETAILS

Name of Researcher	
Designation	
Organisation	
Address	
Contact Number(s)	Telephone
Email Address	

PROJECT DETAILS

Project Title/Research Question
--

Overall Aims/Objectives of Project

--

Details of Methodology

--

Will you require access to Service Users/Carers or Staff? (Please tick relevant box below)

--	--	--	--

Yes

No

If yes, please specify below.

--

Please provide specific details of the type of information/records you require access to.

--

How will you use this information?

Please describe the intended output of your research e.g. thesis, newspaper article, book

Please provide details of your intended target audience

Reason for request to Council

Please highlight the potential risks associated with your research. How do you plan to limit these risks?

--

Please provide details of who is managing your research project (e.g. yourself, consultant, university mentor)

--

Have you submitted or do you intend to submit your proposal elsewhere? (Please tick relevant box below)

Yes		No	

If yes, please include details of where you have submitted your request and whether or not this request has been accepted

--

VALUE OF RESEARCH

Please describe the benefit of your research to Council

CONFIDENTIALITY

Please provide details of the steps you will take to ensure that any confidential information obtained from Council will be kept secure

What assurances can you give that any confidential information relating to specific individuals will be unidentifiable in any published material?

PROJECT TIMESCALE

Please provide the anticipated timescale of your project.	
Start Date	
Finish Date	

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please provide details of any other relevant information you feel would support your request

DECLARATION

I certify that the information provided in this application is accurate and that I shall inform _____ Council of any changes to any of the above information.

I confirm that I have also read the _____ Council Housing & Community Care Research Protocol and assure that my research proposal conforms to the ethical standards specified within this document.

Signature

Date

FOR COMPLETION BY _____ COUNCIL

Date completed application received

Application Accepted

Application Rejected

Please state reasons for rejection below

Name of Service Manager

Signature

Date

Appendix I Specimen Local Authority Consent to Research

From: [redacted]
Subject: RE: Research
Date: 9 February 2015 at 15:31
To: Dawn Gray dawn.gray@myport.ac.uk
Cc: [redacted]



Many thanks Dawn. We're now happy for you to go ahead with arrangements for interviews with Pamela and her team. I hope the research goes well, and we look forward to hearing the outcome.

Regards

[redacted]

[redacted]

Team Leader
Learning and Organisational Development

[redacted]

Tel.: [redacted]
Mob.: [redacted]
E-mail: [redacted]

[redacted]

Appendix J Consent to Research in Workplace

Institute for Criminal Justice Studies, University of Portsmouth,
Ravelin House, Museum Road, Portsmouth PO1 2QQ,
Tel: +44 (0)23 9284 3933.
Student Researcher: Dawn Gray, Dawn.Gray@myport.ac.uk
Academic Supervisor: Dr Jane Winstone,



Dear Mr

As previously discussed, as part of my continued professional development, I am undertaking a Professional Doctorate degree in Criminal Justice at the University of Portsmouth under the supervision of Dr Jane Winstone. As part of this I am conducting research on the impact that working with violent offenders has on criminal justice social workers.

Although the University of Portsmouth are sponsoring the research, and as such the research has been given favourable ethical opinion, I write to you to gain formal consent to conduct the research, and to contact staff in the team you manage. If you are agreeable I propose that contact with staff, in the first instance, will be via an email from yourself.

As I plan to conduct the interviews out with the working hours of participants and in an office/room I have rented there should be no financial cost to the local authority. In terms of the reputation of the local authority, the local authority will not be specifically identified. I will also make it clear that the opinions expressed in the thesis and any publication(s) are entirely my own and are not intended to represent the opinions of the local authority. As I am carrying out the research on my own behalf the local authority will have no ownership of any data collected.

If you are agreeable could you reply to my University of Portsmouth email address, noted above, to confirm that you are giving me consent to conduct the research within my own workplace. Following this, if you are agreeable, I will email you the Participant Information Sheet and Participant Consent form. I would welcome the opportunity of discussing the research in a team meeting in which I will make clear that participation in the research is entirely voluntary.

If you have any concerns regarding any aspect of the research please contact my academic supervisor at the address noted above. Complaints may be made to Dr Phil Clements, head of the University of Portsmouth Institute of Criminal Justice Studies or the University of Portsmouth complaints manager, Samantha Hill, Tel: 023 9284 3642 Email: Samantha.hill@port.ac.uk.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Yours truly,

Dawn Gray
Student Researcher, University of Portsmouth

ICJS Ethics Documentation July 2013

Appendix K Participant Information Sheet



Title: Working with Violent Offenders: The Impact Upon Criminal Justice Social Workers

I would like to invite you to take part in research, which aims to discover the impact that working with violent offenders has on criminal justice social workers. The following information sheet provides you with some details about the nature of the study and what your role would be in order that you can make an informed choice about whether you want to participate or not. If you want further information please do not hesitate to ask. Alternatively you could seek further information from any of the academic staff mentioned above who will also be happy to discuss the research with you.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the study is to explore the perceived impact that working with violent offenders has on criminal justice social workers working in Scotland. The findings of the research will be used to critically reflect on policy and practice of working with violent offenders and perhaps contribute to future practice. The research will also contribute to a professional doctorate in criminal justice, which I am currently undertaking with the University of Portsmouth.

Why have I been invited?

I am seeking to interview between 12 – 17 criminal justice social workers who have been working with violent offenders and therefore I have asked permission from the service managers from all 32 local authorities to email this information sheet to criminal justice social workers in their local authority. I do not know your email address and I will not contact you directly unless you contact me, at the email address provided, giving me permission to do so.

Do I have to take part?

The short answer to this is NO. You have a choice about whether you participate or not and even if you decide to participate you can withdraw at any stage until the findings are being reported. Withdrawal from the research will not be held against you. Participation in the research is entirely voluntary.

In the following few paragraphs I will describe what the study entails and what your contribution will be. If you agree to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form prior to the interview taking place. I will also ask for a few demographic details but, although this is desirable, it is not an essential part of the research.

What will happen to me if I take part?

The research involves a 1-2-1 interview with myself, which will last approximately 1 hour. This will be a semi-structured interview, which is designed to explore the impact working with violent offenders has had on you. There are no right or wrong answers as I am interested on your experience. It is my plan to conduct the interviews out with your working day and I plan to hire suitable premises to conduct the interviews, which I believe will aid anonymity and confidentiality.

The interview will be recorded on a digital voice recorder. The audio file of the interview will be transcribed and a copy will be sent to you in order that you can decide whether the transcription is an accurate reflection of the interview. At this stage you will be given the opportunity to make any further comments on the subject or indeed on the interview itself. Consent will also be sought for your data to be used in the write up of the research. If you decide to withdraw at this stage there will be absolutely no pressure put on you to reconsider your decision. Unfortunately there will not be an opportunity to withdraw once I have analysed the data and incorporated your data into the findings, as this will be used in my write-up, mainly my thesis. It is also be my intention to publish the research in an academic journal.

It would be my intention that once I have analysed the data I write to you and ask for comments on the analysis. This again would be entirely voluntary but it would be useful for me to gain some feedback on whether the analysis is an authentic interpretation of your experience.

Expenses and payments

There will be no payment for taking part in the research as such but reasonable expenses for travel will be reimbursed.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

The most obvious disadvantage will be that participating will take up a bit of your own time as the research will be conducted out with your normal working hours. However I believe this should be no more than 3 hours, over a 6 – 9 month period, and potentially could be a lot less than this. This includes the initial interview, reading the transcript and providing feedback and reading the analysis and findings and providing feedback. However I feel that conducting the research in this way will ensure that your employer will not know that you are participating in the research unless you decide to tell them. In no way will the data you provide me be used for performance management.

Given the nature of the topic there is potential for participants to be upset during the interview. Please be assured that, if this happens, you will be treated with sensitivity and indeed the interview will be stopped. It will be your decision whether you continue or not. If required, I will provide you with relevant agencies in your local area that may be able to support you.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There might not be any direct benefits to participants beyond feeling good about having participated in the research its self. However conducting the research is also part of my desire to give criminal justice social workers 'a voice' about their work. It is hoped then that in participating in the research you will feel that you have been given the opportunity to speak freely about this aspect of your work and feel that you have been heard. Furthermore it is hoped that the findings of the research and your participation will contribute to a critical reflection on existing policy and practice in an effort to hopefully influence future policy and practice.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

Confidentiality and anonymity are given a high priority. However, you should know that if you decide to participate in the research some of the data collected may be looked at by authorised persons from The University of Portsmouth to check that the study is being carried out correctly. The data may also be looked at by external examiners and individuals from regulatory authorities. All will have a duty of confidentiality to you as a research participant and will do their best to meet this duty.

Initially the recordings of the interview will be located on a digital voice recorder and when not in use will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. As soon as practicable, the digital audio file will be encrypted and stored on password protected computer in a password protected folder in a computer which is encrypted. When not in use the computer will be locked in a cupboard. The audio file will be transcribed and will use your chosen pseudonym in order to protect your identity. The transcripts will be stored in a locked filing cabinet when not in use. All data will be protected and stored in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. Data will be destroyed as per University guidelines on completion of the degree or withdrawal from the course. You have the right to check the accuracy of data held about them and correct any errors.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

You should tell me that you do not want to carry on with the study. If you feel that you are unable to do this then you should contact my supervisor at the university. As stated above, your participation in the research is entirely voluntary and there will be no negative consequences for yourself if you withdraw your consent. However unfortunately once the findings have been analysed it will be impossible to withdraw your data. However, prior to the analysis you will be provided with the transcript and permission sought for your data to be used. If you decide to withdraw at this stage or before, all data pertaining to you will be destroyed and no reference will be made to it.

What if there is a problem?

If you are concerned about any aspect of this study please tell me, or you may wish to contact my supervisor, Dr Jane Winstone, at the email address overleaf or by phoning 023 9284 3933, and she will do her best to answer your questions. If you are still concerned and wish to formally complain, you can do this by contacting Dr Phil Clements, head of the ICJS, at the email address overleaf or again by phoning 023 9284 3933.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

Prior to the completion of my Thesis I will contact participants with a summary of my findings in order to check that my analysis of the data is an accurate interpretation of participants' experiences. Participants will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the analysis. The results of this research will be contained within my Doctoral Thesis and it would also be my intention to seek publication of the research. If/when the research is being considered for publication, I will contact the participants to notify them of this. Once the submission has been accepted I would provide participants with a copy of the article.

Unless you have explicitly stated that you want to be named in the findings, your anonymity will be protected and you will not be identified in any report or publication.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The University of Portsmouth is sponsoring the research and therefore will provide proper academic supervision and insurance. The research is entirely self-funded and therefore no local authority or employer will have any influence over the reporting of the research.

Who has reviewed the study?

All Research carried out by students of the University of Portsmouth is subject to a process of ethical review. This is an independent body of people who look after participants' interests. My research has been ethically reviewed and I have been given permission to conduct my research. This means that the University of Portsmouth are satisfied that I will conduct the research in an ethical manner.

Further information

If you would like to discuss any aspect of the research with me please do not hesitate to contact me at Dawn.Gray@myport.ac.uk. Contacting me will not be viewed as consent to participate.

Concluding statement

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this information sheet. Should you choose to participate in the research you will be required to sign a consent form. You will be given a copy of the consent form and this information sheet to keep for your records.

Dawn Gray

November/December 2014

Appendix L Participant Research Consent Form



Participant Research Consent Form

Working with violent offenders: the impact upon criminal justice social workers working in Scotland.

	Yes	No
I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated September 2014 for the above research.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have had the opportunity to ask questions and either these questions have been answered satisfactorily or I have not required any additional clarification.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to the Interview being digitally recorded and stored as explained in the Participant Research Information Sheet, which will be in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I agree to the transcript produced following the interview to be included in the research as explained in the Participant Research Information Sheet

I understand that the transcript and the data generated from it may be examined by academic supervisors from the University of Portsmouth, External Examiners or from regulatory authorities as explained in the Participant Research Information Sheet. I give my consent for this.

I understand that, following the reading of the transcript, I can have certain parts altered or omitted from the final research paper.

I understand that it is the intention of the researcher to publish the findings of the research and that participants' anonymity will be maintained at all times.

I understand that my participation in the research is entirely voluntary and I can withdraw from it at anytime with no explanation being required for withdrawal. However I also understand that once the data has been analysed and the findings of the research published I will not be able to withdraw my contribution.

I agree to participate in the research

Name:

Address: C/o

Phone:

Signature:

Date:

(when completed 1 copy to participant and 1 copy to researcher's file)

The supervisor of this research project is Dr Jane Winstone, Jane.Winstone@port.ac.uk, at the Institute for Criminal Justice Studies, University of Portsmouth, Ravelin House, Museum Road, Portsmouth PO1 2QQ, Tel: +44 (0)23 9284 3933. Please feel free to contact her should you require further information regarding this research.

If you are concerned or have a complaint about any aspect of this research please write to Dr Phil Clements, phil.clements@port.ac.uk, Head of the Institute for Criminal Justice at the address above or alternatively you may wish to contact Mr David Carpenter, david.carpenter@port.ac.uk, University Ethics Adviser

Appendix M Invitation to Participate Letter



Study Title: Working with Violent Offenders: The Perceived Impact Upon Criminal Justice Social Workers

Dear Potential Participant,

I would like to invite you to participate in research, which aims to discover the impact that working with violent offenders has on criminal justice social workers. I am a third year student with the University of Portsmouth studying for a Professional Doctorate in Criminal Justice. I am also a criminal justice social worker, working in Scotland.

I have asked your service manager to forward this email and attached Information Sheet and Consent Form to all criminal justice social workers in their department. Your service manager has not provided me with any of your personal contact details including address, phone number or email address and I will **not** contact you directly unless you contact me stating that you would like to participate in the research. As the research is entirely voluntary there will be no negative or positive consequences of not wishing to participate. I may ask your service manager to send a further email around to remind people about the research. This is not an attempt to pressure anyone into participating just merely a reminder. Once again participation in research is entirely voluntary and even if initially you agree to participate you can withdraw at any point until the data is being analysed.

I have attached an information sheet, which gives more details about the research. Should you have any questions regarding the research please do not

hesitate to contact me at my University of Portsmouth email address dawn.gray@myport.ac.uk or you may choose to contact my academic supervisor at the University of Portsmouth whose contact details are noted above.

If you wish to participate in the research please email me at my University of Portsmouth email address dawn.gray@myport.ac.uk or write to the University address noted above. I will **not** inform your employer whether you respond or not.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and attached documents.

Yours truly,

Dawn Gray

Student Researcher, University of Portsmouth

Appendix N Participant Monitoring Form

Age	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-25 <input type="checkbox"/> 26-35 <input type="checkbox"/> 46-55 <input type="checkbox"/> 56-65 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 and over <input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose

I would describe myself as:		
<p>Asian or Asian British</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/> Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background	<p style="text-align: center;">Mixed</p> <input type="checkbox"/> White & Asian <input type="checkbox"/> White & Black African <input type="checkbox"/> White & Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> Any other mixed background	<p style="text-align: center;">Other Ethnic Group</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Any other ethnic Group <input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose
<p style="text-align: center;">Black or Black British</p> <input type="checkbox"/> African <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black background	<p style="text-align: center;">White</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Irish <input type="checkbox"/> Welsh <input type="checkbox"/> Any other White background	

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to disclose
--	---

How long have you been a qualified Social Worker?	
---	--

How long have you been a Criminal Justice Social Worker?	
--	--

What Specific training have you had on identifying Risk of Serious Harm?	
--	--

Appendix O Email Sent Requesting Information Under FOI

Email: up670446@myport.ac.uk

Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 - 20170628001

Dear Madam

I am conducting a piece of research on Criminal Justice Social Workers in Scotland and wondered if you could provide me with the following information please:

- 1) The total number of criminal justice social workers employed by Council currently
- 2) The gender split of criminal justice social workers employed by Council currently
- 3) The total number of verbal threats or physical assaults on criminal justice social workers employed by Council in the last 5 years
- 4) How many disabled criminal justice social workers are employed by Council currently.

Appendix P FOI Results from Five Local Authorities

LOCAL AUTHORITY	TOTAL NUMBER OF CJSW	FEMALE CJSW	MALE CJSW
1	104	72	32
2	38	28	10
3	76	60	16
4	155	101	54
5	26	19	7
	399	280	119
		70%	29%

Appendix Q Participants' Comments from Email Responses

Participant	Comment
Madeline	Hi Dawn just digested your findings chapter with my tea tonight, reading the contents and other's observations/experiences has reassured me and that I am actually quite robust..... but let me tell you about today in the office.... only jesting....
Jack	Unfortunately, Jack was unable to provide feedback due to personal reasons not connected with the research.
Louise	I had a read over the findings, and yes I can relate to them. the points that others made, which I didn't mention are also relevant.
Chris	I think your findings reflect my experience of working with violent service users accurately and well. Particularly, the four main categories and their link and association with the core category. This has helped me to conceptualise how I process service user violence and aggression. It will also assist with how I deal with such situations in the future and how I scenario plan. Many Thanks
Tom	No feedback received by Tom
Sally	I have had a read, it's fascinating stuff, and yes, it does reflect my experience.
Ellie	I have read the chapter no issues with it reassuring that other have said similar things to me and that we are not alone Thanks
Murun	Work just gets in the way All read and very interesting, thank you for sending this I have enjoyed reading it I have no recollection what I said and if any of it

	<p>is in your findings but have recognised many of the thoughts, believes and actions of others.</p> <p>Thank you and sorry again for not getting back to you</p>
Catherine	<p>I have had a good read at your 17,000 words and was impressed with the content.</p> <p>It is nice to read that other Social Workers feel the same way as I do and that we offer continuity to our service users. It was also nice to know that others feel the same way about how their confidence and practice can sometimes be questioned by themselves and that, no matter what, we are all trying to do our best for the clients. We also continue to treat them as individuals with courtesy and respect despite some of the responses from them which can make us question your values and sometimes your attitude to offenders.</p>
Molly	<p>Hi Dawn,</p> <p>I have read now so some comments but looks good. A few typos!</p> <p>On page 2 there is a discussion about "a service being imposed on them" I suppose my view is that although it is a "Hobson's choice" it is a choice and some do choose not to agree to being made subject to an Order. A lot of decisions in life have a hobson's choice element. I would hope that the skill of a CJSW is the ability to create a collaborative working relationship with the person.</p> <p>On page three you mention safe colleague , I do not have an issue with this but I do not think there is a definition of a safe colleague. One that they trust, someone in a different setting?</p> <p>On page 10 you have Adrian 72 then on next line it is Adrian 70 - they maybe different people but I thought I would point it out.</p> <p>Page 14 - I completely agree about the lack of resources for violent offenders and that social workers fall back on their own skills but as we know it is important to challenge attitude and</p>

	<p>values. Often the violence can come from different places, anger, resentment and sometime the expression is valid but it is how that is achieved and we hope to mirror and model positive behaviour in supervision. Violence - the root of it - is it a coping mechanism, trauma related, reactive, alcohol related etc. which in part where identifying resources can be difficult.</p> <p>Page 7 - I am always aware of not rubbishing other professionals or the local authority so the context and down side of a corporate parent may assist but it is a quote!</p> <p>There is also that a fright can cause an experienced practitioner to doubt themselves and slip back in their development but sometimes this may appear as a retrograde step but their skills need to be emphasised so as not to paralyse and you need to take the heat off them but sometimes they do not like this A difficult line to tread - some appreciate a bit of a breathing space. Sometimes you have no idea that a case maybe be challenging until you get them in so as management you are guided by the report and the offence but often this is wrong.</p> <p>In conclusion I always try to emphasise the skills that all workers have and the skills they provide. Sometimes that is in managing their anxiety which is always justified but this may relate to where they are in their professional development and the severity of the case they are managing. A complicated picture.</p> <p>Hope this helps and if not the delete button is always there.</p>
Beth	<p>Dawn,</p> <p>I had a read through your stuff over the weekend. Interesting stuff and yes I can definitely identify and relate to a lot of your findings and suggestions regarding shared experiences. In fact reading this made me feel reassured that my feelings, thoughts and experiences are real and shared in similar ways by others. This is quite important to me as being autonomous workers we often work alone and therefore we are often unable to have an 'in the</p>

	<p>moment' shared experience with our colleagues which can be quite isolating at times. This perspective is possibly quite important when considering your methodology and justifications for using grounded theory as perhaps some of this would not have come to the surface had you approached this topic using a different methodological approach.</p> <p>Happy to continue to help or feedback in any way I can.</p>
Anne	<p>It makes sense to me. Re 4.3.1a - Inexperienced....reference to my quote about "first, criminal justice placement, - without the context of this being some 30 odd years ago and me working full-time in the voluntary sector.</p>
Adrian	
Jemima	<p>I feel you have captured my experience of working with the target group of clients. I thought your report was clearly written and well explained. I was particularly interested to read some of my colleagues' thoughts and experiences, especially with regards to how they 'deal' with stress/anxiety outside of work.</p> <p>I hope the rest of your writing goes well.</p> <p>Best wishes</p>
Jane	<p>A very interesting read, not really much I could usefully add I don't think!</p>
Bert	<p>I think it does reflect my experience of working with violent clients and many of the comments of other practitioners ring true of my own experiences, my thoughts and feelings. I think the journey towards an experienced practitioner is an interesting one and reflects my experience post qualifying of developing my practice and the means by which this has happened both formal and informal.</p> <p>Good luck getting it finished.</p> <p>Regards</p>

Theresa	<p>Hi Dawn</p> <p>Having read your findings chapter, I consider that this has captured my experience of working with potentially violent clients. It was interesting to read the views of colleagues and compare experiences and coping strategies.</p> <p>It is a difficult job however I think that the importance of working within a close, supportive team has been captured and it was good to see this reflected in many statements.</p>
Katie	<p>Unfortunately Katie had a family bereavement and was not able to provide feedback by the deadline</p>

Appendix R Form UPR16 Research Ethics Review Checklist



FORM UPR16

Research Ethics Review Checklist

Please include this completed form as an appendix to your thesis (see the Postgraduate Research Student Handbook for more information)

Postgraduate Research Student (PGRS) Information		Student ID:	UP670446	
PGRS Name:	Dawn Gray			
Department:	ICJS	First Supervisor:	Mike Nash	
Start Date: <small>(or progression date for Prof Doc students)</small>	30/09/2014			
Study Mode and Route:	Part-time <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MPhil <input type="checkbox"/>	MD <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Full-time <input type="checkbox"/>	PhD <input type="checkbox"/>	Professional Doctorate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Title of Thesis:	Developing Professional Resilience: The Impact of Working with Violent Offenders on Criminal Justice Social Workers Working in Scotland
Thesis Word Count: <small>(excluding ancillary data)</small>	49895

If you are unsure about any of the following, please contact the local representative on your Faculty Ethics Committee for advice. Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the University's Ethics Policy and any relevant University, academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study

Although the Ethics Committee may have given your study a favourable opinion, the final responsibility for the ethical conduct of this work lies with the researcher(s).

UKRIO Finished Research Checklist:

(If you would like to know more about the checklist, please see your Faculty or Departmental Ethics Committee rep or see the online version of the full checklist at: <http://www.ukrio.org/what-we-do/code-of-practice-for-research/>)

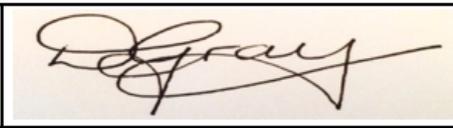
a) Have all of your research and findings been reported accurately, honestly and within a reasonable time frame?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have all contributions to knowledge been acknowledged?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have you complied with all agreements relating to intellectual property, publication and authorship?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
d) Has your research data been retained in a secure and accessible form and will it remain so for the required duration?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
e) Does your research comply with all legal, ethical, and contractual requirements?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Candidate Statement:

I have considered the ethical dimensions of the above named research project, and have successfully obtained the necessary ethical approval(s)

Ethical review number(s) from Faculty Ethics Committee (or from NRES/SCREC):	14/15:06
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If you have *not* submitted your work for ethical review, and/or you have answered 'No' to one or more of questions a) to e), please explain below why this is so:

Signed (PGRS):		Date: 07/09/2017
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