Designing a survivor-orientated restorative justice programme for use in cases of sexual abuse: An interpretative phenomenological analysis.

Angela marinari
Dedications

This thesis is dedicated to Sarah, Jane, Alice, Helen, Emma and Claire. I am humbled by your strength and determination, and shall continue to strive for justice for you.

Acknowledgements

Without the assistance, and patience, of many people, this thesis would not have been completed:

The staff and volunteers at the host organisation, whose empathy for their clients, and their enthusiasm for this study, has never waned. I shall ensure your time assisting with this research has been well spent.

Dr Jacki Tapley and Dr Jane Winstone, whose guidance and feedback have been crucial in corolling grand ideas and dedication to the cause into an academic thesis.

Soon to be Dr Dubravka Polic, for all the ‘study buddy’ Skype chats, and for always using heart emojis to highlight her positive feedback.

My family and friends, particularly my parents, Christina, Henry and Luke. I love you.
Abstract

This thesis informs the design of restorative justice processes for survivors of sexual abuse, through an understanding of their lived experience of the aftermath of abuse, and their reflections regarding a restorative justice process in their cases. It evidences the conceptual capabilities of restorative justice, and presents the research definition developed for this study. The research endeavours to understand what type of restorative justice processes survivors seek, with whom, and their expectations of a process. A feminist approach to this research has been enhanced through the application of an interpretative phenomenological analysis, which privileges the voices of a small sample of survivors. The interpretation of their stories draws on the researcher’s professional and academic knowledge and experience, to reach transferable theoretical insights which inform the theory and practice of restorative justice in cases of sexual abuse.

This analysis identified the complex, triangulated relationships between the survivor, their abuser, and those who facilitated their abuse, and a desire for a restorative justice process with these facilitators. The participants’ need for the act of abuse and the impact of the abuse to be recognised by others was only partially achieved through the criminal justice system, and required additional paths to justice, at a time appropriate to the participants’ recovery. Finally, the ability of the participant to gain control over their narrative of abuse, is the journey envisaged when considering a restorative justice process in their cases. This thesis presents an optional, staged programme of restorative justice; the provision of general narratives of sexual abuse to develop personal narratives, and restorative justice processes with their facilitators of abuse, prior to a restorative justice process with their abuser. Measuring the level of control felt by a survivor over their narrative of abuse is proposed as a method of evaluation of the programme.
Abbreviations

ISVA – Independent Sexual Violence Advisor

IPA – Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

BACP - British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy

RESTORE - Responsibility and Equity for Sexual Transgressions Offering a Restorative Experience
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.

Word count: 49,959

Dissemination: British Society of Criminology Conference, 2015
## Contents

Chapter One: Introduction .......................................................................................................... 11

1.1 Research aims and objectives ........................................................................................... 12
1.2 Research definition of restorative justice ......................................................................... 13
1.3 Research setting ................................................................................................................ 14
1.4 The researcher .................................................................................................................. 14
1.5 Structure of the thesis ...................................................................................................... 16

Chapter Two: Literature Review ................................................................................................. 19

2.1 Principles of restorative justice......................................................................................... 21
  2.1.1 Restorative justice as a process ................................................................................. 21
  2.1.2 Restorative justice as an outcome ............................................................................. 24
  2.1.3 Restorative justice as a victim-orientated approach ................................................. 25
  2.1.4 Defining restorative justice ........................................................................................ 27
2.2 Feminist approaches to restorative justice....................................................................... 28
  2.2.1 Retribution or restoration: survivors’ justice needs .................................................. 28
  2.2.2 Voice, narrative and empowerment .......................................................................... 31
  2.2.3 Restorative justice and domestic abuse .................................................................... 33
2.3 Restorative justice and sexual violence ............................................................................ 36
  2.3.1 Differentiating sexual abuse from domestic abuse ................................................... 36
  2.3.2 Diversion from court in cases of sexual abuse ........................................................... 37
  2.3.3 Additional paths to justice ......................................................................................... 40
  2.3.4 Survivor choice........................................................................................................... 43
2.4 Summary ........................................................................................................................... 45

Chapter Three: Methodology ..................................................................................................... 46

3.1 Methodological Opportunities and Constraints ............................................................... 47
  3.1.1 Theoretical approach ................................................................................................. 47
  3.1.2 Collaboration .............................................................................................................. 50
  3.1.3 Selection of participants ............................................................................................ 52
  3.1.4 Reflexivity ................................................................................................................... 53
3.2 Methodological choices .................................................................................................... 56
  3.2.1 Analytical approach .................................................................................................... 56
  3.2.2 Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) ........................................................ 57
  3.2.3 Methods of data collection ........................................................................................ 59
  3.2.4 Collaboration and the research design ...................................................................... 60
3.3 Methodological Application.............................................................................................. 66
6.2.2 Validation through the criminal justice system ....................................................... 168
6.2.3 Validation through restorative justice processes .................................................... 170
6.2.4 Recognising the impact of the abuse ....................................................................... 173
6.3 Control of the narrative .................................................................................................. 175
6.3.1 Voice, and the role of narrative ............................................................................... 175
6.3.2 Developing their narrative through professional knowledge .................................. 178
6.3.3 Control of the narrative as a measurement of success ........................................... 180
6.4 Summary ......................................................................................................................... 183

Chapter Seven: Conclusion ....................................................................................................... 186
7.1 Informing the design of restorative justice programmes ............................................... 186
7.2 Original contribution and the significance of the research ............................................ 188
7.3 Recommendations .......................................................................................................... 189

References ................................................................................................................................ 192
List of Appendices ..................................................................................................................... 208
  Appendix A: Confirmation of agreement to collaborate with the research............... 208
  Appendix B: Host organisation’s confidentiality policy .................................................... 211
  Appendix C: Ethical approval and confirmation ............................................................... 215
  Appendix D: Participant consent form ........................................................................... 217
  Appendix E: ISVA led questionnaire .............................................................................. 218
  Appendix F: ISVA briefing note ..................................................................................... 225
  Appendix G: Framework for selection of participants .................................................... 229
  Appendix H: Participant letters ..................................................................................... 230
  Appendix I: Final participant letter .............................................................................. 235
  Appendix J: Semi-structured interview schedule ............................................................. 238
  Appendix K: Example of theming from text and notes .................................................... 243
  Appendix L: Representation of cross-themes ................................................................... 248
  Appendix M: Sarah’s circle of emotion ........................................................................ 251
  Appendix N: Sarah’s themes .......................................................................................... 252
  Appendix O: Jane’s circle of emotion .......................................................................... 254
  Appendix P: Jane’s themes ............................................................................................ 255
  Appendix Q: Alice’s circle of emotion ......................................................................... 258
  Appendix R: Alice’s themes .......................................................................................... 259
  Appendix S: Helen’s circle of emotion ......................................................................... 262
  Appendix T: Helen’s themes .......................................................................................... 263
  Appendix U: Emma’s circle of emotion ...................................................................... 265
  Appendix V: Emma’s themes ....................................................................................... 266
Chapter One: Introduction

This thesis explores survivors’ experiences of sexual abuse, and their reflections on the sense of justice they feel in order to inform the design of a programme of restorative justice services. Despite the current political support for expanding restorative justice services to victims of crime in the United Kingdom (House of Commons Justice Committee, 2016; Ministry of Justice, 2015), there remains considerable controversy regarding their use in cases of sexual abuse (Koss, 2015). The existing path for justice, the criminal justice route, is criticised for the poor levels of confidence it inspires in survivors, the traumatic experience it represents for many survivors, and its low conviction rates (Herman, 2005; Hohl and Stanko, 2015; Jordan, 2011; Koss, 2010). Therefore, the provision of additional paths to justice may increase the sense of justice felt by survivors, and enhance their recovery from abuse (Daly, 2005; Jülich and Landon, 2017; Keenan, 2014). There have been programmes developed to deliver restorative justice services to survivors of sexual abuse (Jülich, Buttle, Cummins and Freeborn, 2010: Koss, 2010; 2014: Mercer, Sten, Keenan and Zinsstag, 2015; Umbreit, Bradshaw and Coates, 2012), however there are significant differences in their approach to the provision of services and their interaction with the criminal justice system.

All of these services create the opportunity for a survivor to engage in a dialogue with their abuser, which may entail a face to face meeting. However, restorative justice processes can be applied when harm has been caused, rather than necessitating a criminal offence to have been committed (Braithwaite, 2004; Daly, 2016). In conceptualising restorative justice in this manner, there is the possibility for a survivor to seek a process with those who have harmed them, other than their abuser, and therefore the possibilities for a programme for survivors are broader than those previously designed. Fundamental to any such design is to understand
the arrays of harms that have been caused to survivors, and which of those they do not feel have been addressed. This thesis seeks to explore survivors’ reflections on these harms, to inform the design of a restorative justice programme that incorporates the needs they express.

1.1 Research aims and objectives

The aim of this research is to give voice to survivors’ experiences and their stated needs through a feminist approach, and to critically analyse their thoughts, reflections and proposals in order to identify theoretical conclusions which may be transferable to other survivors. These conclusions will then inform the design of a survivor-orientated restorative justice programme.

This thesis will address the following research objectives:

- Do survivors seek a restorative justice process with those who have caused them harm, other than the abuser?
- Which restorative justice processes address the stated needs of survivors?
- What are survivors seeking to achieve through a restorative justice process?
- To propose recommendations for the development of a restorative justice programme for survivors.
1.2 Research definition of restorative justice

The academic debate regarding the definition of restorative justice is explored in chapter two, analysing the conceptual confusion surrounding central elements of a restorative justice process. The key principles are identified, and their relevance to survivors’ of sexual abuse assessed, in order to create the research definition of restorative justice developed for this study:

Restorative justice is any process by which someone harmed by another can, by means of a third-party facilitator, instigate a dialogue with the person that has harmed them. This dialogue must proceed on an acceptance that harm has been caused by the other party. This communication should allow the person harmed to express that harm, ask questions, and to seek restoration should they wish to do so. The process aims to increase the sense of justice felt by the person harmed, and to assist them to heal.

This definition incorporates the forms of harm which may be caused to a survivor of sexual abuse, but which may not constitute a criminal offence. It focuses on the communication between the individuals taking part, rather than adhering to a conference model of restorative justice. It preferences survivor choice through their ability to instigate a process, whilst ensuring that acceptance of the harm caused remains fundamental. It recognises that the purpose of a restorative justice process is to increase the sense of justice felt by the survivor, and that doing so should be healing. This definition has been reflected throughout the research design, and in the portrayal of restorative justice to the host organisation and the participants.
1.3 Research setting

This research study has been designed and conducted in collaboration with a host organisation, which will seek to adapt the research findings into its own service development for the benefit of its clients. The host organisation provides counselling to survivors of sexual violence, and undertakes training and awareness raising activities. They also provide an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) service, which supports survivors through the reporting and court process, and assists survivors in navigating other state agencies. At the time of the research, 1500 clients accessed services with the host organisation each year. The participants were all clients of the host organisation, enabling participants to continue to draw on their support throughout the research. The host organisation, during the initial discussions regarding the research topic, raised the question of provision of a restorative justice process for survivors who have been harmed by those other than their abusers, and their professional knowledge has contributed significantly to the focus and design of this research study.

1.4 The researcher

The researcher is a police officer, with experience of interviewing survivors of abuse, and investigating sexual offences. Two particular moments in her career have significantly influenced the researcher’s approach to this area of research. The first involved an abuser who had abused his step-daughters in turn over many years. During his interview he attempted to speak about the incidents, but was repeatedly interrupted by his solicitor to ensure he provided a ‘no comment’ interview. He pleaded guilty at the earliest opportunity, and the researcher has reflected as to what he would have said if he had discussed his abuse, and whether this would have provided any comfort to his step-daughters. The second involved a
young mother who had been raped by her partner, reported immediately to the police. After a
torrid experience of testifying in court, her abuser was acquitted. On his release, he
telephoned her to apologise for the rape, and promised to leave her alone in future. Whatever
the veracity of that apology and promise; she felt it greatly improved her recovery and allowed
her to put the crime behind her. The researcher’s personal view is that all those who commit
sexual offences should be prosecuted, but recognises the often insurmountable difficulties in
achieving this, and supports all survivors in being able to determine their own path through
the complexities of justice and recovery. To assist in achieving this, the researcher became a
director of the host organisation in 2010, seeking to support the provision of additional
services to survivors of sexual abuse, and to enhance her personal contribution to this area.

Following a conversation with Heather Strang, the researcher was introduced to the
possibilities of restorative justice for survivors of sexual abuse. In further discussions with
professional colleagues, significant scepticism was encountered; a scepticism the researcher
shares when considering restorative justice within the criminal justice system for cases of
sexual abuse. However, colleagues at the host organisation demonstrated hope and
enthusiasm for additional paths for justice for the survivors they were supporting. It is this
realm of the researcher’s professional practice to which the research will be applied.

Merging professional practice with academic endeavour enables the researcher to interweave
professional knowledge with research evidence to ascertain fresh insights, perspectives and
directions. The researcher’s experience in striving to provide justice for survivors of sexual
abuse, combined with the host organisation’s experiences in supporting survivors through the
justice process, and through their emotional recovery, has led to the insights that informed the
review of the academic literature in this area and determined the direction of the research.
1.5 Structure of the thesis

In order to address the above research aims and objectives, this thesis provides a review of the relevant literature and an explanation of the research methods, before presenting the voice of the participants, and the analysis of their accounts. This is critically analysed against the academic literature to produce the theoretical conclusions of this study. These inform the design of a survivor-orientated restorative justice programme for use in sexual abuse cases, and leads to the recommendations for future practice and research. Following this introductory chapter, the thesis comprises the following chapters:

Chapter two presents the academic literature relevant to this study. The principles of restorative justice are explored through the debate regarding definition, proceeding towards the definition of restorative justice used within this research. The theoretical debates surrounding restorative justice are contemplated through a feminist analysis, including the significant criticism surrounding the use of restorative justice in cases of domestic abuse. The chapter concludes by considering the application of restorative justice principles to sexual abuse, and through a critical analysis of existing programmes, explores the alternative types of restorative justice available.

Chapter three presents the methodological approach of this study, and its application to the research topic. A feminist approach to the research design is enhanced through collaboration with the host organisation, an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) design, and the use of semi-structured interviews drawing on feminist interviewing theory. The process of analysis is described in detail, and the chapter concludes with a consideration as to the most
appropriate framework for evaluating the reliability, generalisability and validity of this research study, with the relevant elements highlighted.

Chapter four presents the participants in this research, achieving the IPA aim of giving voice to those being studied. Each participant’s story is heard through the most prevalent themes identified from their interview, providing case history information, and exploring their emotions, justice experiences and recovery as part of their reflections on the use of restorative justice in their cases.

Chapter five presents the theoretical interpretation of the findings of this study, through the analysis of the themes identified from the participants’ interviews. These are created through the building of cross-themes from the interviews, supported by direct reference to the participants’ voices. Through layers of interpretation, these are sculpted into three super-ordinate themes; vulnerability, recognition of the act and the impact, and control of the narrative.

Chapter six presents the discussion of these findings, leading to this study’s response to the research objectives. Each super-ordinate theme is contemplated in turn, highlighting their areas of convergence and divergence with the academic literature. In doing so, the theoretical conclusions of the research are identified, and their influence on the design of a restorative justice programme is discussed.

Chapter seven concludes the thesis and, following a summary of the research study, the theoretical conclusions drawn from the analysis are combined to propose a design for a future
restorative justice programme. The original contributions to academic knowledge and
professional practice are identified, and recommendations are proposed for the further policy
development and academic research required in this area.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

This literature review is a presentation of the debates and current focus of academic research, providing a narrative regarding the application of restorative justice to sexual abuse from a survivor perspective. Initial literature searches were conducted using Google Scholar, and the University of Portsmouth library catalogue, informing the choice of the research project and its focus. Prior to initiating data collection, a systematic search was conducted for all academic literature referring to the use of restorative justice in sexual offences. The search term - “restorative justice“ and sex* - was entered into the Criminal Justice Abstracts, SocIndex and PsychInfo databases, returning 195 results between 1996 and 2014. These were reviewed for their relevance to this research study, with its focus on the survivor perspective of restorative justice. Alerts were created, and occasional searches of Google Scholar were conducted during the research. The systematic search was repeated prior to the completion of this thesis, generating 70 results between 2013 and 2017. In this way, the literature review incorporates the relevant findings from the searches, and positions this research within the existing academic literature.

In order to design a victim-orientated restorative justice programme, it is necessary to begin by exploring the principles of restorative justice. This literature review therefore begins with an exploration of the principles of restorative justice through the debate regarding definition (Braithwaite, 2004; Daly, 2016; Marshall, 1999). In doing so, the review is able to identify the approach to restorative justice taken in this study, clarify its conceptual limits and provide a platform for critical analysis of the approach, through the proposed definition of restorative justice.
A feminist lens is chosen through which to examine the more significant theoretical debates surrounding restorative justice. The notion of restorative justice as a more caring form of justice, and therefore intrinsically feminine and feminist (Daly and Stubbs, 2006), is critically examined through the retributive versus restorative justice dichotomy (Zehr, 1990). This includes its influence on the debate regarding the therapeutic benefits of restorative justice and the role of narrative in creating justice and therapeutic outcomes. A feminist lens is maintained through a discussion of the application of restorative justice processes in domestic abuse cases; a debate drawing on previous criticisms of mediation (Fischer, Vidmar and Ellis, 1992), with contemporary capacity to polarise opinion (Koss, 2015). The clarity of the definition of restorative justice that is being considered enables this debate to be navigated from theoretical and practical standpoints.

The relevance of this debate to sexual abuse focuses on the characteristics of sexual abuse in comparison with those of gendered violence in general (Curtis-Fawley and Daly, 2005). The elements of difference between these forms of gendered harms are presented, as well as additional arguments regarding the benefit for survivors of this particular crime type, with their own specific characteristics (Herman, 2005; Koss, 2010). These are explored with reference to existing practice and the empirical evidence provided by those practices, identifying evidential support for this differentiation of sexual abuse. In doing so, the variety of approaches and the limited consistency in the design of restorative justice programmes for survivors of sexual abuse becomes apparent, strengthening the argument for the necessity of this research, and indicating its potential contribution to professional and academic fields. This review concludes by discussing the role of survivor choice, and its requirement for a range of options alongside professional support to enable genuine alternative routes to justice and healing for survivors.
2.1 Principles of restorative justice

2.1.1 Restorative justice as a process

Despite the recent interest in restorative justice across numerous jurisdictions, there is not an agreed definition as to what restorative justice is, and what processes it encompasses (Daly, 2016). Restorative justice is used in many guises, from school disciplinary processes and workplace disputes, as a process for tackling youth offending through early intervention, and as part of the criminal justice system (Restorative Justice Council, 2017). Daly (2016) identifies this range of uses as creating the conceptual confusion as to what restorative justice represents, as well as the proliferation of the terminology of restoration in many reforms of the criminal justice system, in order to contrast them with more punitive or formal processes. She argues that a clear definition of restorative justice is required, in order to empirically assess processes, and to build an evidence base which can be relied upon. Daly (2016) therefore presents this definition:

> Restorative justice is a contemporary justice mechanism to address crime, disputes, and bounded community conflict. The mechanism is a meeting (or several meetings) of affected individuals, facilitated by one or more impartial people. Meetings can take place at all phases of the criminal process — pre-arrest, diversion from court, pre-sentence, and post-sentence — as well as for offending or conflicts not reported to the police. Specific practices will vary, depending on context, but are guided by rules and procedures that align with what is appropriate in the context of the crime, dispute, or bounded conflict. (Daly, 2016, p.21)

In doing so, Daly (2016) rejects the notion that restorative justice is a latter day development of pre-modern community methods of resolving disputes, and overtly distances the use of
restorative justice in domestic contexts from that in post-conflict arenas. This reduces the conceptual congestion surrounding restorative justice, and draws theoretical boundaries around different areas of academic research. She allows for the application of restorative justice processes to disputes other than crime, and in her description of “affected individuals” (Daly, 2016 p.21), appears to allow for a broadening of the application beyond the offender and the victim. This conceptual imprecision enables the wider consideration of alternative applications, which are central to this research study.

Daly (2016) highlights the role of the meeting as critical to a restorative justice process, ruling out such practices as shuttle dialogue; that is a facilitated conversation via a third party, as well as forms such as the use of proxy victim or offenders. In doing so, she reflects the empirical evidential base for restorative justice, which is strongest when considering face to face conferencing; a meeting which brings together “offenders, their victims, and their respective kin and communities, in order to decide what the offender should do to repair the harm that a crime has caused” (Sherman and Strang, 2012 p.216). A systematic review of conferencing demonstrated statistically significant findings; that reoffending rates were lower and victim satisfaction rates higher, than those proceeding with traditional court processes (Sherman, Strang, Mayo-Wilson, Woods and Ariel, 2015). Through Daly’s (2016) incorporation of the need for a meeting in her definition, she maintains conceptual closeness with the empirical evidence for restorative justice.

Whilst this definitional focus may have significant benefits in standardising the approach to research and expanding the evidential base through the use of common metrics, Daly’s (2016) definition reflects the use of restorative justice within her geographical area; the extensive use of conferencing in the youth justice system and its extension through all justice systems in Australia. The professional practice developing in the UK is not drawing on such a systemic
integration of restorative justice in the criminal justice system, and the Ministry of Justice (2016) includes forms of restorative justice enabling communication between a victim and offender, without necessitating a face to face meeting. Whilst the evidence supporting these alternatives is not provided by the systematic review, this reflects a paucity of evidence rather than a rejection of the approach. The Ministry of Justice (2016) draw on Braithwaite’s (2004) definition of restorative justice to justify its approach:

Restorative justice is a process where all the stakeholders affected by an injustice have an opportunity to discuss how they have been affected by the injustice and to decide what should be done to repair the harm. With crime, restorative justice is about the idea that because crime hurts, justice should heal. It follows that conversations with those who have been hurt and with those who have afflicted the harm must be central to the process (Braitewaite, 2004, p.28)

Whilst Braithwaite’s (2004) definition references crime, it is similar in approach to Daly’s (2016) incorporation of other disputes beneath the umbrella of restorative justice, through its consideration of injustice. This is vague terminology, but allows for incorporating harm that is broader than those acts deemed criminal offences. Braithwaite’s (2004) definition does not necessitate a face to face meeting, rather focusing on the role of dialogue, through the use of discussion and conversation. This centrality of dialogue is reflected within wider UK practice (Ministry of Justice, 2016), and has a role in existing applications of restorative justice to sexual abuse (Mercer et al., 2015), and therefore Daly’s (2016) definitional focus on conferencing is too narrow for this study. Braithwaite’s (2004) focus on dialogue provides for a wider conceptualisation of restorative justice that removes the requirement for meeting an abuser face to face, which may prove an additional obstacle when considering sexual abuse.
2.1.2 Restorative justice as an outcome

Daly’s (2016) focus on restorative justice as a process has led to the elimination of any reference to restoration within her definition, meaning her definition could apply to any type of facilitated meeting between individuals. Missing from her definition are some aspects of her earlier core elements of a restorative justice approach (Daly, 2005), whereby she attempted to define how restorative justice processes vary from restorative practices, irrespective of the format used. These included the requirement for an admission of responsibility, providing an opportunity for the person harmed to speak about their experience, and for the person who caused the harm to seek ways to repair, or restore, the harm caused. The requirement for an admission, or at least the absence of denial (Daly, 2005), is the central definitional difference between restorative justice and mediation; whereby mediation is conceptualised as a conflict resolution mechanism for reaching an agreed solution, whereas restorative justice requires the person causing harm to acknowledge their actions and take responsibility for them (Presser and Gaarder, 2000). The ability of the person harmed to articulate that harm, in their own voice, and to be heard by others, is frequently identified as the justice outcome most likely to be provided by restorative justice, which is constrained within the criminal justice system (Daly, 2014; Herman, 2005). The inclusion of both these elements is therefore central to the assertion that restorative justice is an alternative justice mechanism.

The role of restoration, whether by means of apology, providing an explanation or providing compensation of some form, is a central tenet of restorative justice (Zehr, 2005). It has also been considered the primary conceptual difference between restorative justice and other criminal justice processes, as demonstrated by Marshall (1999) in his frequently quoted definition: “Restorative justice is a process whereby parties with a stake in a specific offence collectively resolve how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and its implications for the
future” (Marshall, 1999, p.5). Daly (2016) does not refer to restoration within her definition, focused as it is on the process of restorative justice, rather than the outcome. In contrast, restoration is inherent within Braithwaite’s (2004) definition, drawing on Strang and Sherman’s (2003) empirical finding that emotional restoration was more valued by victims than material restoration, to demonstrate his assertion that the harm caused should be repaired, and that justice should heal. In doing so, Braithwaite (2004) rejects a differentiation between justice outcomes and therapeutic outcomes. Daly (2014) later argued that the justice needs of victims, and the ability of restorative justice to fulfil them, should be considered separately from any therapeutic benefits that follow. Therefore, Daly (2014) is not asserting that therapeutic outcomes do not, or should not, follow from a restorative justice process, but that the measure of success of a restorative justice process should be the sense of justice it provides. She concludes that alternative methods of measurement should be developed, moving away from the extensive use of victim satisfaction data, or psychological measurements of depression and anxiety, as measures of the success of restorative justice processes. Whilst clarity of metrics is to be welcomed, the fundamental belief that justice should heal reflects the restorative element of restorative justice (Zehr, 2005), and therefore retains its inclusion in defining restorative justice for this study.

2.1.3 Restorative justice as a victim-orientated approach

Restorative justice is presented to UK victims of crime as a victim-centred approach to criminal justice (Ministry of Justice, 2016). The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (Ministry of Justice, 2015) includes the requirement for victims of crime to be provided with information regarding restorative justice, with an entitlement to restorative justice if the offender is a young person, which is someone under 18 years of age. Therefore, at the victim’s earliest introduction to restorative justice in the UK, the focus is returned to the offender. Jülich and Thorburn (2017)
trace the history of an offender focus in restorative justice, identifying the defendant-orientated nature of early practitioners, and the scholarship regarding restorative justice within penology, as supporting a less punitive approach to justice. Jülich and Thorburn’s (2017) argument that restorative justice processes reflect criminal justice processes too closely, with their inherent focus on the human rights of those accused by the state, is persuasive. They call for substantive equality between victims and offenders, concluding that restorative justice processes have greater potential for addressing such concerns than criminal justice processes, and that these are critical when considering the role of restorative justice processes in sexual offending cases.

Jülich and Thorburn’s (2017) article demonstrates how significantly restorative justice has travelled from its victim-orientated beginnings, and yet reflects some of the earliest scholarship on restorative justice. Christie’s (1977) seminal text Conflicts as Property, in which he proposed an alternative to the adversarial criminal justice system through a return of ownership of a dispute to the person harmed by it, portrayed an inherently victim-orientated process. He argued that the appropriation of the dispute by the state, in which the state seeks to prosecute the defendant, necessitates rights and protection for the defendant whilst reducing the victim to a witness in the state’s case. Christie (1977) asserted that this denies the victim any meaningful involvement in their own case, leaving the victim with the anxiety and misconceptions that may arise from a lack of contact with the other party, whilst the state retains any recompense made by the offending party. Christie’s (1977) proposal assumes substantive equality between the relevant parties, however he presents a vision of a victim-orientated process that has been lost through subsequent re-imaginings of restorative justice processes. Zehr’s (1990) subsequent writing retains this vision of restorative justice as a method of empowering victims, so that justice is not a process that is done to them, but one in
which they determine their own needs. However, neither Braithwaite (2004) nor Daly (2016) retains this sense of victim-orientation in their definitions of restorative justice.

If victim-orientation and substantive equality are to be achieved within restorative justice, there is a need for restorative justice to be instigated by victims. Consent is required by both parties to proceed, but the instigation should not be at the behest of the state, reliant upon its processes or permission, or rationed according to the age of the offending party, if it is to achieve substantive equality. Therefore, the neutrality in the language used to describe the role of the various parties to a restorative justice process assists to undermine the substantive equality of the victim, and their centrality needs to be stated if the process is to be considered as victim-orientated.

2.1.4 Defining restorative justice

This definitional debate assists to explore the key principles of restorative justice, but also demonstrates how congested the concept has become. In order to proceed with research in this area, clarity as to the definition of restorative justice being used within the study is required. The following definition is therefore proposed, which reflects the view of restorative justice portrayed to the host organisation and participants during this research:

Restorative justice is any process by which someone harmed by another can, by means of a third-party facilitator, instigate a dialogue with the person that has harmed them. This dialogue must proceed on an acceptance that harm has been caused by the other party. This communication should allow the person harmed to express that harm, ask questions, and to seek restoration should they wish to do so. The process aims to increase the sense of justice felt by the person harmed, and to assist them to heal.
This definition retains the breadth that allows for wider forms of harm to be addressed through a restorative justice process, which reflects the potential to incorporate others around a survivor whom they feel may have caused them harm, in addition to the abuser. It incorporates Braithwaite’s (2004) focus on communication through dialogue, rather than the narrower focus of Daly (2016) on meeting through conferencing, which provides for a wider choice for survivors. It ensures clarity as to the differentiation of restorative justice from mediation or other types of dialogue through the necessity of acceptance that harm has been caused. It seeks to achieve a victim-orientation through placing the instigation of a process solely with the person harmed, whilst allowing for that person to chose their own path through the process according to their individual motivations, reflecting Christie’s (1977) conceptualisation of restorative justice. Irrespective of the specific aims of the person harmed, the overall outcome should produce a sense of justice, and assist with recovery; recognising that neither are discrete outcomes that are either achieved or not, but reflect a spectrum that is individual to the circumstances of the case.

2.2 Feminist approaches to restorative justice

2.2.1 Retribution or restoration: survivors’ justice needs

Restorative justice can be discussed as an alternative ‘lens’ through which to view crime, in comparison to a retributive justice approach (Kennan, 2014; Zehr, 1990). Zehr (1990) identified the state’s monopoly of justice as central to his considerations of retributive justice; requiring for public justice which is dispensed by the state, but in the process formalising and professionalising the justice process, shifting its focus further away from the victim’s needs and normalising the punishment of offenders over other considerations, such as reducing
further offending. Restorative justice principles therefore represented changing lenses (Zehr, 1990); approaching the question of justice from the perspective of the victim, the community, and the aims of restoring the harm caused and preventing further offences. Daly (2016) argues that this presentation of restorative justice, as a binary choice between two mutually exclusive spheres of justice, may have assisted in explaining restorative justice but enhanced the conceptual confusion inherent in the debate regarding restorative justice. Zehr’s (1990) portrayal of restorative justice as informal, private and less punitive, placed restorative justice in opposition to the existing criminal justice processes (Daly, 2016). In framing restorative justice as a binary concept, criticisms that restorative justice represents the privatisation of justice, an informal process whereby power differentials can be maintained, and a process removing the symbolic validation of the conviction and subsequent sentence, have flourished (Curtis-Fawley and Daly, 2005).

The dichotomy created by the retributive and restorative lenses further infuses feminist discussion of restorative justice through its parallel with a gendered dichotomy of justice. Daly and Stubbs (2006) place the origins of this argument in Gilligan’s seminal text, In a Different Voice (1982). Through her challenge of the belief that boys had an enhanced development of moral reasoning in comparison to girls, she identified women as morally guided by an ethic of care, rather than a male ethic of justice. Restorative justice, as seen in opposition to retributive justice, represents a more caring response to crime and therefore is feminist in nature. Daly and Stubbs (2006) reject this notion of restorative justice as an inherently feminist response to crime, arguing for a focus on whether restorative justice addresses women’s justice needs to justify its feminist credentials. This argument against a retributive / restorative dichotomy was subsequently developed through the alternative terms; conventional and innovative justice responses (Daly and Bouhours, 2011). Conventional justice responses are those reforms that aim to improve the victim experience of the existing criminal justice system as a route to
solving the justice concerns raised regarding conviction rates and victim experience. These are contrasted with innovative justice responses, the introduction of newer or alternative practices designed to reconceptualise justice in the image desired by victims of violence, including their need for acknowledgement of harm and alternative methods by which this harm can be redressed. Daly (2016) asserts that many are referring to conventional justice processes when they use the term retributive justice, yet conventional justice processes have far wider aims than merely retribution. Innovative justice processes may have much to offer, but as they require the offender to have admitted their role in causing harm, they cannot be a replacement, or considered in dichotomy with conventional justice practices, which centre on a fact-finding role (Daly, 2016).

This desire for innovative justice responses to gendered violence is demonstrated through studies of survivors’ descriptions of their need for justice, and how these justice interests may be satisfied. Herman (2005) described survivors of sexual violence as seeking neither restorative nor retributive justice, but combining together elements of these. They favour exposure of the offender and incarceration, whilst seeking to heal damaged relationships between the victim and their community, rather than between the victim and the offender. Jülich (2006) identified a similar combination of the restorative and the retributive; seeking to be heard in a safe forum, for validation and for the offender to be held accountable, but de-emphasising the role of punishment in satisfying the survivors’ needs. Likewise, McGlynn, Downes and Westmarland (2017) ascertain the need to be heard and for their experiences to be recognised, as well as for meaningful consequences to follow for the offender.

This range of justice needs, as espoused by survivors, is reflected in the various uses of restorative justice for addressing sexual abuse; as a diversion and therefore alternative to a criminal justice process (Koss, 2010; 2014); as a post-sentencing process (Miller and Iovanni,
2013; Umbreit et al., 2012); or as an additional process separate from the criminal justice system (Jülich et al., 2010; Mercer et al., 2015). The ability to make an informed choice as to how to proceed requires reliable information regarding the process and the anticipated outcome. At this time there is a paucity of such reliable information (Daly, 2014), the gathering of which has been undermined by the conceptual confusion and criticisms of restorative justice in gendered violence that have arisen from it (Daly, 2016). Daly’s (2016) arguments regarding the artificiality of binary considerations of retributive or restorative justice are compelling, and reflect that many significant research programmes have recently explained restorative justice using this contrast with retributive justice (Kennan, 2014). This serves to demonstrate the influence and longevity of Zehr’s (1990) conceptualisation of restorative justice within the feminist critique of the approach, and its impact on subsequent considerations of the benefits of restorative justice for survivors of gendered violence.

2.2.2 Voice, narrative and empowerment

Voice, the ability of a survivor to tell their story, in a way that is meaningful to them, is considered to be a key justice need (Daly, 2014, Herman, 2005, Fileborn, 2017, McGlynn and Westmarland, 2018). The term ‘justice need’ is preferred here, over ‘justice interest’, as the further harm caused by not achieving a sense of voice is documented through explorations of survivors’ decisions to report to the police (Taylor and Norma, 2012) as well as the healing benefits reported from collective sharing of stories in a safe forum (Suet-Lin, Denborough, and Denborough, 2013). The ability of the criminal justice system to provide a forum for survivors to tell their stories has come under sustained criticism, highlighting the damaging effects of the courtroom’s focus on fact finding, the presentation of the survivor’s account through a prosecution lawyer, and the defence’s challenge to the survivor’s testimony, as undermining
the survivor’s sense of voice (Clark 2010, Cunnen and Hoyle, 2005, Herman, 2005). Innovative justice responses, providing alternative forums for survivors to tell their stories, and receive validation through being heard, form a central element of the challenge to conventional justice responses. Survivors may provide their stories to researchers (for example, Mitchell and Morse, 1998), and giving voice through research is a central characteristic of a feminist approach, enabling women to tell their stories in their own styles, and to have these heard in the manner they chose (Bui, 2012). Development of communication technologies have provided survivors with alternative forums for seeking informal justice (Powell, 2015), and alternative methods of being heard (Salter, 2013). Dedicated websites such as Hollaback! provide dedicated forums for street harassment story telling (Fileborn, 2014, 2017), and twitter communities around #everydaysexism and #metoo bring individual stories to a wider audience. The continued use and evolution of such forums demonstrates the desire for alternative methods of being heard, though unmediated forums cannot guarantee an audience, or validation (Salter 2013, Fileborn 2017).

Restorative justice is therefore only one innovative justice mechanism seeking to provide a forum for survivors, though within a more formal and structured setting than informal on-line mechanisms. Restorative justice processes place their focus on the stories of the participants, on truth telling, and the use of narrative as a method of communication, (Van Wormer, 2009), drawing direct contrasts to adversarial court processes (Cunneen and Hoyle, 2005), which excludes the voices of those involved in the crime and most affected by it (Toews and Zehr, 2012). The ability of restorative justice to create a forum for voice is thought to significantly contribute to reported high levels of satisfaction with restorative justice processes (Bazemore and Green, 2007), through the empowerment that can be gained by doing so (Presser and Gaarder 2000; Toews and Zehr, 2012). However, voice as a justice need has been identified not only as the ability to speak about the event, but as having active participation in the
process (McGlynn et al., 2017). In McGlynn et al.’s (2017) study, survivors referenced having more control over the justice process, by having influence over the direction of the investigation and the decisions made in their case. This reflects similar findings in Kennan’s (2014) study of restorative justice and sexual abuse, identifying survivors’ desire for control and ownership over any restorative justice process. Some indications that restorative justice can produce this sense of influence are incorporated into Koss’s (2014) findings, in which she delved into the reported victim satisfaction with restorative justice processes. She identified that more than 90% of participants reported that they felt safe, supported, listened to and treated respectfully and fairly. When a successful restorative justice process occurs, it should fulfil the need of survivors to tell their story, and to gain empowerment through sharing their narrative of the abuse they have suffered, and the harm it has caused them. However, it must always be the case that survivors have control and influence over the use of restorative justice, and therefore be able to fulfil this additional aspect of voice. In doing so, restorative justice demonstrates the possibilities for alternative justice responses from which survivors can choose their preferred method to seek justice, according to their individual justice needs.

2.2.3 Restorative justice and domestic abuse

Whilst there is significant criticism regarding the use of restorative justice processes in domestic abuse cases, the literature focuses upon intimate partner abuse rather than the wider questions of family violence. This criticism draws upon earlier feminist opposition to the use of mediation in abusive relationships, due to the similarities between their philosophies and processes (Busch, 2002; Hooper and Busch, 1996). Arguments for mediation, whether as part of marriage counselling or as dispute resolution in divorce proceedings, included that families were best placed to identify their own solutions, and that rather than the intrusiveness of the court room, facilitated agreements would lead to more effective remedies.
(Lerman, 1984). This shows similarities with Zehr’s (1990) presentation of restorative justice in contrast to retributive justice, as a less punitive process which retrieves the case from the formal constrictions of the state, returning it to the parties to agree restitution. Mediation differs from restorative justice in that the aim of mediation is conflict resolution, to reconcile or reach an agreement, having recognised their respective responsibility for the situation (Bethel and Singer, 1982). It considers past events, if they are important to the parties in their search for an agreement, but does not reach a judgement as to responsibility, and it requires the parties to have parity with each other to raise their concerns and reach a fair solution (Bethel and Singer, 1982). Conversely, restorative justice requires the person causing harm to acknowledge their actions and accept responsibility for them (Presser and Gaarder, 2000). Mediation came to be seen as a panacea for the failings of the legal system to tackle intimate partner abuse, but it failed to identify the control elements underlying violence, failed to rectify power imbalances, and failed to protect women (Fischer et al., 1992). It is unsurprising that, despite their conceptual differences, similar trepidation is expressed regarding the current enthusiasm for restorative justice (Koss, 2015).

Challenges to the use of restorative justice in domestic abuse cases have continued along similar themes to those identified with mediation (Koss, 2015), and retain a similar focus on intimate partner violence rather than other family relationships, with specific reference to coercive and controlling relationships. Victims are disadvantaged in the process, with fear of further violence and a decreased capacity for decision making as a result of the abuse leaving victims particularly vulnerable (Hooper and Busch, 1996). Victims typically seek assistance at a time of crisis, following an escalation in violence, and require the protection of law enforcement to ensure their future safety (Stubbs, 2002). Diversion from the court process therefore occurs when the victim is at their most vulnerable, and requires them to make significant decisions at a time of crisis. Restorative justice processes may begin with a focus on
the violence of the offender and safety of the victim, but become distracted by other matters, or participants and facilitators may fail to challenge the offender because of their own fear of the offender (Busch, 2002). Apology and forgiveness are recognised elements of an abusive cycle to maintain control, and therefore a restorative justice process may reinforce this cycle rather than terminating it (Stubbs, 2007). The legal system provides symbolic and public demonstration of society’s intolerance of abuse and applies its condemnation (Hudson, 1998), whereas abuse frequently occurs within a societal context that legitimises or condones such behaviour (Busch 2002; Hooper and Busch, 1996). The preference for a community based resolution over a legal one therefore privatises the justice available to the victim. Overall, this feminist critique indicates that the failures of mediation in tackling violence against women have merely been replicated in restorative justice processes.

This feminist critique regarding the use of restorative justice in cases of intimate partner abuse is compelling and has maintained its strength over time and further debate (House of Commons Justice Committee, 2016). This has led to a continuing determination that in the UK, restorative justice is not recommended in cases of intimate partner abuse as an alternative to prosecution (Association of Chief Police Officers, 2011; HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, 2014; House of Commons Justice Committee, 2016). An indication of the difficulties in ensuring these recommendations are applied in practice is demonstrated by McGlynn, Westmarland and Johnson’s (2017) finding, that more than 5000 out-of-court disposals were used for domestic abuse cases in the UK in 2014. Such instances may indicate that the use of restorative justice, like mediation before it, acts as a method of minimising and privatising gendered violence, is operating within a society which continues to underestimate the risk violent men pose to their partners, and continues to seek methods for circumventing the need to hold violent men accountable for their crimes. Feminist criticism regarding the use of restorative justice in intimate partner abuse is the strongest criticism of restorative justice
available, and it continues to influence the debate surrounding the use of restorative justice in sexual abuse cases.

2.3 Restorative justice and sexual violence

2.3.1 Differentiating sexual abuse from domestic abuse

There is an inclination for the debate about restorative justice in domestic abuse cases to broaden to include all forms of gendered harm, including sexual abuse (Stubbs, 2016), paying insufficient attention to the wide variety of crime characteristics represented within sexual offences, and their differences from domestic abuse (Koss, 2014). There are many intersections between the two abuse types; many sexual offences occur within intimate relationships, and sexual offences are often accompanied by other forms of domestic abuse (Hopkins and Koss, 2005). Sexual offences have suffered from a similar reluctance to apply the symbolic force of prosecution and conviction (Hudson, 2002), with repeated concerns regarding conviction rates in the UK (Hohl and Stanko, 2015; Lovett and Kelly, 2009; Stern, 2010). Sexual offences are also power based crimes, demonstrating power relationships between the abuser and the victim that can be extensive and long lasting (Jülich, 2006). Concerns regarding the community’s acceptance of intimate partner abuse are reflected in the enduring nature of rape myths; generally false assumptions about how, when and to whom rape occurs, and have the effect of denying offences have occurred, or placing blame onto their victims (Hohl and Stanko, 2015; Lonsway and Fitzgerald, 1994).

However, there are also significant and relevant differences between the two abuse types. Not all sexual offences are committed as part of a cycle of abuse, and may be discrete events that
do not entail coercion over time (Curtis-Fawley and Daly, 2005). Approximately 30% of sexual offences reported to the police are reported more than a year after the event (Hohl and Stanko, 2015), and at times may be reported many decades after the event. These findings do not take into account those that do not report to the police, with some studies finding more than half of victims (56%) attending a sexual assault centre wait over a year to disclose their abuse (Monroe, Kinney, Weist, Dafeamekpor, Dantzler and Reynolds, 2005). In contrast, domestic abuse is usually reported at a time of crisis (Stubbs, 2002), highlighting an important difference between the abuse types. The circumstances of reporting are relevant to the debate regarding restorative justice because it prompts further consideration of the balance between victim safety and victim choice. Reducing justice opportunities and making decisions for victims as to the appropriate legal or justice path for them, risks reinforcing the disempowerment felt by victims as a result of the crime by preventing them from having influence over their own cases (Edwards and Haslett, 2003). It also treats survivors as if they were a congruent group of people with similar experiences, capacity for empowerment and consistent desires for outcomes (Edwards and Haslett, 2003). With support from experienced victim advocates and time to allow for a fuller exploration of their issues and needs, it is possible to empower victims to make their own decisions as to the justice option which best serves their needs (Coward, 2000).

2.3.2 Diversion from court in cases of sexual abuse

Diversionary processes of restorative justice involve the diversion of a criminal case from a criminal court, which can occur at numerous stages of the criminal justice process. A restorative justice process can be held instead of an arrest being made, rather than a court case taking place, or before sentencing occurs (Daly, 2016). A central argument for the introduction of restorative justice processes as a diversion from, or substitute for, the criminal
justice system in cases of sexual abuse, focuses on the experiences of those attending court and their likelihood of obtaining justice by this route. Jordan (2011) emphatically argues for wholesale reform of the justice system, emphasising that reporting rates are low, confidence levels are low, and survivors’ experiences are poor. Jordan’s (2011) argument is that the adversarial system is the fundamental reason for low conviction rates, with support coming from Lovett and Kelly’s (2009) finding that those countries in Europe with the lowest conviction rates for rape, are those with adversarial systems. Koss (2010) also presents a critical analysis of the adversarial system: identifying the combative nature of the court hearings; the search for truth through the examination of witnesses which means credibility is routinely challenged; the need to discuss intimate details of the offence; and for the victim to defend herself against challenges that may otherwise lead to self-blame and minimisation; as contributing to the failures of the adversarial system in prosecuting violence against women. This is supported by earlier findings, such as Herman (2005) who concluded that the current adversarial legal system fails to meet any victims’ needs, and Hopkins and Koss (2005) who identified that, even if violence against women was prosecuted in such a manner as to increase the level of convictions, these underlying desires to feel a degree of control, to tell their story and not to suffer additional trauma under cross examination would remain. However, whilst high attrition rates and low conviction rates remain a significant challenge for the criminal justice system (Hohl and Stanko, 2015; Stern, 2010), a decade of proposed reforms to address these challenges have not been appropriately resourced and fully implemented (Angiolini, 2015). It is, therefore, not yet clear whether the reforms to the existing system will be successful in addressing the above criticisms, once properly implemented and resourced.

It may be that the benefits of restorative justice are centred in their ability to improve the experience of the criminal justice system through enhanced procedural justice (Tyler, 1988),
rather than through enhanced restoration (Bazemore and Green, 2007). Daly’s (2003) earlier work regarding the use of restorative justice conferences identified that procedural justice was present in between 80-95% of cases, whereas restorative words or actions occurred in 30-50% of cases. The tendency to measure victim satisfaction as the predominant indicator of a benefit for the victim (Daly 2014; Sherman et al. 2015) disguises the uncertainty which remains in identifying the primary driver of these higher satisfaction levels (Bazemore and Green, 2007). Sceptism regarding the genuine benefits for victims, beyond procedural justice, can be identified in many feminist criticisms regarding the use of restorative justice as a predominant justice mechanism in sexual offences (Hopkins and Koss, 2005). Widespread implementation may lead to victims not having an informed choice as to whether to participate, insufficient resources being available, and standards diminishing over time (Coward, 2000). Such concerns are supported by Choi, Bazemore and Gilbert’s (2012) review of restorative justice processes, showing a tendency for the programmes to become increasingly offender-centred over time. Widespread introduction of restorative justice practices for sexual offences would require a greater evidence base, systematic demonstration of its victim-focus, and clarity over the benefits obtained beyond creating an improved sense of fairness; benefits which may follow successful reform of the existing system (Angiolini, 2015).

Whilst there may not be sufficient evidence for a wholesale reform of the adversarial justice system, smaller research programmes continue to build the evidence base to enhance our knowledge of these potential benefits and challenges. Such programmes have been trialled with sexual offences, for example extending existing youth offending conferencing programmes in Australia (Daly 2005) and the RESTORE (Responsibility and Equity for Sexual Transgressions Offering a Restorative Experience) programme in the United States (Koss 2010; 2014). Both programmes require an admission to the offence, do not take cases with previous offending histories, and can revert to a court case if a conference is not completed. Daly (2005)
argued that the sanctions arising from conferences were comparable to those from court cases, but required fewer hearings and experienced fewer delays. She extrapolated these findings to conclude this to be a preferable experience for victims, but does not collate data reporting on this. Koss (2014) argues that the RESTORE programme aims to reduce attrition associated with the court process through encouraging admissions in exchange for a certainty of outcome, thereby achieving justice outcomes in cases that would otherwise fail. However, there is limited evidence that the cases referred to the programme would not have proceeded successfully to court. For both programmes, the benefits for the victims are presented as a higher rate of admissions and an avoidance of testifying at court. However, these come at the loss of court sanction and the option of imprisonment. Both programmes remain close to the existing criminal justice system, retaining the focus on defendant’s human rights and state influence at the expense of survivors’ control of the process; reflecting Jülich and Thorburn’s (2017) concern regarding substantive equality. Overall, the evidence available is not sufficient to fully mitigate the feminist critique of its use.

2.3.3 Additional paths to justice

Arguments against the use of restorative justice in gendered violence are tempered when approaching restorative justice as an additional justice process, rather than as an alternative to prosecution in the form of diversion (Hudson, 2002). Victim sensitive offender dialogue has been developed in the US for victims of serious crimes, including sexual offences, to facilitate a dialogue with the offender after their conviction (Umbreit et al. 2012). Always initiated by the victim, the aims of the programme are therapeutic; to achieve empowerment through dialogue, and preliminary data indicates high levels of satisfaction with the process and the outcome (Umbreit, Bradshaw and Coates, 2001). However, the authors stated further, more rigorous research was required, and cautioned against an expansion of the process without
best practice safeguards. Reviewing post-conviction restorative justice used in domestic abuse via a case study method, Miller and Iovanni (2013) supported this differentiation from diversionary systems of restorative justice, and also defined the process as a therapeutic one. They reported that in post-conviction cases: responsibility is clearly defined and sanctioned by the criminal justice system; the victim has found her voice and is ready for the process; and the offender is likely to have benefitted from some treatment. Post-conviction models of restorative justice represent a lower risk to survivors than pre-conviction models, whilst demonstrating survivor interest in such processes even after formal justice has been achieved (Umbreit et al., 2001).

There are some programmes of restorative justice that have provided survivors with an additional route to justice in cases where formal justice has not been achieved. The Centre for Victims of Sexual Assault in Copenhagen facilitates survivor-led dialogue with abusers as part of its therapeutic responses, noting that speaking with the abuser can be empowering, and lead to emotional restoration of the survivor (Madsen, 2004). Referring to their programme as a feminist restorative justice approach, they offer a dialogue facilitated by a third party, whether in person as part of a conference or by correspondence; the case determines the process rather than the programme (Mercer et al., 2015). Approximately 15 women a year enter the programme, with a third of those progressing through their framework to meet their abuser face to face (Paii and Sten, 2011). A review of 16 cases in 2005, identified that 11 had not reported their offences to the police, representing survivors who wished to proceed with a restorative justice option but not a prosecution; unfortunately, their reasons for this are not included (Madsen, 2005, cited by Paii and Sten, 2011). The range of motivations demonstrated by their clients were later reported, and include to have their voice heard; to hear an explanation or apology; to obtain justice through confrontation; and to meet deliberately rather than accidentally (Mercer et al., 2015). They determine that these cannot be clearly
defined as therapeutic needs or justice needs, but that “all want to add another narrative to the story of the assault and restore their dignity” (Mercer et al., 2015, p.27), providing a strong indicator of the purpose sought by survivors through a restorative justice process.

The interest in restorative justice from those survivors who have not chosen to report to the police has also been noted as part of Project Restore-NZ (Jülich et al. 2010), a New Zealand programme inspired by RESTORE (Koss 2010). In addition to court referrals, the programme allows for self-referrals; of a total of 29, 10 were self referrals. These were termed therapeutic conversations that did not carry a guarantee of confidentiality, but there was an expectation that a prosecution would not follow (Jülich et al., 2010). Their paper unfortunately does not separate outcomes for self referrals from others within the programme. They report nine conferences from the 29 referrals, and high levels of satisfaction from victims, reflecting the paucity of evidence gathered from those engaging with the programme (Jülich et al. 2010). However, it does provide additional support to Madsen’s (2005; cited in Paii and Sten, 2011) finding of interest in restorative justice as an alternative to reporting the offence. Such programmes demonstrate the range of options available to offer restorative justice to survivors of sexual violence without diverting cases from prosecution. By allowing survivors to refer themselves into programmes either post-conviction, or instead of reporting their offences, these programmes create genuine opportunities for extending the range of justice options available. These programmes demonstrate that restorative justice can be accessible for those not seeking a criminal justice process; though as the numbers of cases undertaken are small, they are unable to demonstrate how such practices may be consistently and effectively offered on a broader scale. Of the criticisms raised regarding restorative justice, focus is still required to ensure substantive equality is achieved. Mercer et al. (2015) echo Umbreit et al.’s (2001) insistence on training and adherence to best practice, and incorporating sufficient time and support for both parties, whilst adding the necessity of a multi-disciplinary
approach, centred within a survivor-focused service. The longevity of both programmes, in comparison to RESTORE which ceased in 2007 for lack of funding and political support (Koss, 2014), assists to demonstrate that models of restorative justice presenting additional paths to justice are able to overcome genuine concerns regarding survivors’ safety, whilst enhancing survivors’ choice.

2.3.4 Survivor choice

There have been some attempts to establish the level of interest in restorative justice from survivors of sexual abuse, as there is a general sense that such interest exists. McGlynn, Westmarland and Godden (2012) reference examples of cases reported favourably in the press but not evaluated from an academic perspective, and more recent publicity is associated with South of Forgiveness (Elva and Stranger, 2017), a book written by a feminist author and the man who raped her as a teenager, discussing her approach to him some 25 years later and their subsequent journey of recovery together. Marsh and Wager (2015) surveyed interest in restorative justice, gaining responses from 40 people who identified as survivors of sexual abuse. Of these, 35% believed there would be a benefit to them in taking part in a restorative justice conference, with 71% believing it should be available to those survivors who sought it. Keenan (2014) also reports strong support for additional justice mechanisms, including restorative justice, being available for survivors. Jülich (2006) interviewed 21 adult survivors of child sex abuse in New Zealand, exploring their views of justice. She stated her participants reported a need to tell their story and be heard in a safe forum, which they did not consider the court process had provided them. Whilst Jülich (2006) felt their expressed needs indicated that restorative justice would assist her participants to achieve them, she found that having explained restorative justice there was no participant who considered it appropriate for them. Participants described the ability of their abusers to manipulate them when they were
children, as well as others around them, and their fears that this power imbalance would continue as adults should they meet with their abuser again. Such findings caution against considering that restorative justice would be suitable for large numbers of survivors, or that generally expressed interest will translate into specific interest of a significant magnitude. A genuinely survivor focused service would enable survivor choice, and not presume that survivors’ interests can be addressed by restorative justice in all cases.

However, Jülich (2006) unearths an additional finding regarding survivors’ justice interests which are not addressed by existing designs of restorative justice programmes. Her participants also expressed a desire to receive validation from others beyond their abuser, extending to those who were bystanders in their abuse. Jülich (2006) defined bystanders as being part of the family dynamics surrounding the abuse but not directly involved in it. This finding is also reflected in a similar study conducted by Herman (2005). She found that her participants, 22 survivors of sexual or domestic abuse, also sought validation from bystanders, and often wished to hear apologies from those they felt had enabled their abuse through complicity or inaction. Her participants believed these bystanders shared some responsibility for the crimes, and some considered them more culpable. These findings are not reflected in the subsequent design of restorative justice programmes nor their reported application, but were reflected in the researcher’s initial discussions with the host organisation. Such indications may mean that there is scope for a wider application of restorative justice in sexual offences beyond the abuser, and demonstrates that understanding survivors’ choices and motivations regarding restorative justice remains under-researched.
2.4 Summary

This chapter has navigated the controversies surrounding the use of restorative justice in cases of sexual abuse. The quality of the debate suffers for a paucity of agreed terms, metrics and comparable evidence, whilst prompting passionate support and criticism in almost equal measure. The researcher has defined restorative justice as it will be considered in this study, drawing conceptual lines around the debate to consider which elements of this debate should apply, and which can be adequately rebuffed. This approach has been extended to incorporate the use of restorative justice in sexual abuse, separating strands of rhetoric along logical lines to arrive at the researcher’s conclusion regarding the use and application of restorative justice in sexual abuse. This study does not consider the use of restorative justice as an alternative to, or diversion from, prosecution, but as an additional justice mechanism that can be available to survivors as they chose their path to justice and healing.

This chapter identifies the relevance of the research objectives to the academic literature. There is a poverty of understanding of survivors’ sense of harm caused by bystanders to their abuse, and their desire to explore restorative justice processes with persons that have caused them harm but not directly abused them. The motivation of survivors, their level of interest in restorative justice, and the interaction between their justice needs and their therapeutic needs remains unclear. Therefore, the meaning survivors place on these various processes would benefit from further exploration and theorisation. These gaps enable consideration of the alternative designs of restorative justice programmes which may be applicable, and could be made available, to enhance survivor choice. The need to approach these questions from a feminist perspective has been established, as well as a need to privilege survivors’ voices strongly throughout the research study.
Chapter Three: Methodology

This chapter addresses the methodological approach to the research objectives, justifying the chosen research methods and providing a transparent and comprehensive description of the process. The feminist analysis of the literature is complemented by a feminist approach to the research, which is reflected through a collaboration model. Collaboration required the research to comply with two ethical frameworks and encompass the host organisation’s aims for the research, as well as the purpose of this research study. This collaborative approach enabled access to participants and to practitioner knowledge, whilst introducing some constraints to the research design and the selection of participants. The first section, therefore, focuses on the opportunities and constraints on this research, elements which are inherent to the research setting.

The chapter then considers the choices made during the design of the study, including the analytical approach and the methods of data collection undertaken. An interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach is adopted, as it allows for the voices of the participants to be heard, reflects the richness of the data obtained from a small sample of participants, and enables the consideration of future experiences. These elements satisfy the feminist approach taken to this study, as well as gathering data which is likely to address the research objectives. Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the dominant method of data collection and are discussed at length, including how the power differentials inherent within interviews were overcome using a feminist approach to interviewing. The influence of collaboration is further demonstrated, and this section highlights the negotiations and accommodations required to successfully access and obtain the data for this study.
The third section of this chapter focuses on the application of the analytical approach, detailing the process taken from transcription to writing, and providing the necessary clarity for a qualitative study using an interpretative method. In doing so, the creation of cross-themes, building into sections which form the super-ordinate themes is explored, identifying the decisions taken to translate the IPA methodology into the methods used in this research. The chapter concludes by considering how the reliability, generalisability and validity of the research should be assessed, and adopts Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) framework for assessing the trustworthiness of qualitative research. The considerations as to how IPA studies in general, and this study in particular, fulfil these requirements provide the limitations of the research and its application to other circumstances.

3.1 Methodological Opportunities and Constraints

3.1.1 Theoretical approach

The aim of this research study is to understand the emotions, motivations and hypothetical actions of survivors of sexual abuse. Wilhelm Dithley’s scholarship, from the mid 1800’s, proposed that as all human actions occurred within the social, cultural and historical environment in which they were based, social research should explore the lived experiences of those studied (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls and Ormston, 2014). Therefore, to understand human action, some interpretation is required in addition to observation (Bryman, 2012). Max Weber, drawing on these propositions, argued that the study of social reality differed from the study of natural reality (Crotty, 1998). However, without some attempt to categorise or link such research to a wider body of knowledge, theoretical ideas and concept formation would be stymied (Hughes and Sharrock, 1997). Concerned regarding the loss of objectivity, explanatory
capacity and conclusiveness of social research, Weber proposed that researchers should present their findings as value judgements, rather than facts, and as a presentation of the human as researcher and researched, thereby adding levels of interpretation to all social research (Hughes and Sharrock, 1997). Interpretative research could therefore lead to surprising findings, but these findings are the researcher’s interpretations, rather than a mere report of the facts (Bryman, 2012). For these reasons, the researcher’s interpretations influence the research from its conception, its design, analysis and dissemination. Influences upon interpretation are presented to the reader, each of whom will interpret the researcher’s interpretations, to inform their own understanding.

The theoretical approach to a research study is determined at the earliest stages, and includes the selection of the research area and the focus chosen whilst analysing the existing literature, where theory begins to inform the researcher’s views as to what phenomena may be explored, what relationships may be uncovered and the impact of the research findings (Brown and Baker, 2007). The role of gender is apparent as a significant and defining position from which to approach the application of the principles of restorative justice to sexual abuse. The role of gender relationships in the framing of sexual abuse is a consistent factor; whether by means of prevalence, rape myths, or the continued efforts to reform the criminal justice system to provide justice for women (Hohl and Stanko, 2015; Lonsway and Fitzgerald, 1994; Lovett and Kelly, 2009). The debate regarding the use of restorative justice in sexual violence has drawn heavily on feminist approaches, with criticisms of the approach frequently reflecting wider concerns regarding patriarchal systems of state control, the minimisation of the experiences of women, and the reinforcement of existing power structures (Hooper and Busch, 1996; Hudson, 1998; Stubbs, 2002). It therefore follows that this research study, immersed within this debate, would also adopt a feminist approach to knowledge creation, and apply feminist
principles to the conduct of the research study, the interpretation of its findings and the future use of the research (Harding, 2012).

A feminist approach fits within the interpretativist paradigm, reflecting its privileging of the participant’s view, an understanding of the human condition as situated and subjective, and informing rather than prescribing human interactions (Brown and Baker, 2007). Within this, a feminist approach is not a singular approach to knowledge, truth and understanding, and may be approached from a variety of political positions (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002). For this reason, feminist standpoint theory (Harding, 1986) drew together the approaches of many researchers seeking to locate their research in women’s experiences, or standpoints, to determine some key characteristics of a feminist approach (Hekman, 1997). These centre around the relationship between knowledge and power; the need to ground knowledge in the diversity of women’s experiences, including their emotions; that knowledge is always partial and value laden; and that the researcher must ensure that they are not reinforcing existing power structures. The need for reflexivity on the part of the researcher is therefore paramount (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002). Therefore, rather than considering a feminist approach to be a specific methodology, it is conducting research in a consistent manner with feminist ideology and justifying its design, application and results through a gendered prism of power relationships.

A feminist approach does not dictate the use of qualitative methods, and there are researchers adapting quantitative methods to reflect women’s experiences and investigations into gendered fields such as sexual violence (Beetham and Demetriades, 2007). However, qualitative research is closely associated with the interpretativist paradigm, collecting data in order to allow theory to emerge, seeking understanding and meaning that is historically and socially situated (Bryman, 2012), and reflects elements of a feminist approach in its
consideration of knowledge as value laden, situated, and emergent. Whilst a pragmatic approach asserts that the methods can be transferred into another research paradigm, creating an epistemological justification for mixing methods within a research study (Bryman, 2012; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner, 2007), the ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions of the theoretical approaches have shaped qualitative methods over time (Sale, Lohfield, and Brazil, 2002), aligning qualitative methods closely with feminist approaches. The purpose of this study is to understand the emotion, meaning and motivations of individuals, requiring closeness to participants, rich data and detailed analysis. Therefore a qualitative methodological approach has been taken to the research questions.

3.1.2 Collaboration

This research study was undertaken in a collaborative manner with the host organisation from the earliest stages, with the practitioners involved in determining the purpose of the research, the creation of the research questions and the research design. Creating this shared approach to research incorporates a range of views and experiences, requires negotiation and the gaining of trust, and leads to knowledge transfer between the researcher and the participants, or in this case those representing the participants (Costley, Elliot and Gibbs, 2010). When successful, collaboration ensures co-operation rather than the granting of access (Wanat 2008), and in this study not only enabled access to participants, but to the knowledge and experience of practitioners, and the support they were able to offer to participants throughout the study, whilst providing a setting for the implementation of the research findings. However, collaboration has also been described as a time consuming and high maintenance approach which can add complexity to the process of designing and conducting research (Costley et al., 2010). In this case, collaboration was achieved through numerous discussions with directors,
senior managers and practitioners, namely Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs), spanning 18 months of meetings and debate between the initial consideration of the topic area and the initial collection of data. Final agreement for collaboration was confirmed in writing (Appendix A). Collaboration can minimise power differences between researchers and participants through consultation and negotiation, which in this case was conducted through practitioners, as well as maximising the ability of the research to create social change, two key aspects of a feminist approach (Harding and Norberg 2005).

Collaboration introduced additional ethical considerations, the negotiation of which improved the design and application of the study. The host organisation is a member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and abides by their ethical framework, therefore the BACP Ethical Guidelines for Researching (Bond, 2004) were applied to this research in addition to the University of Portsmouth’s Ethical Framework. These created an additional requirement for governance and support that were met through the governance provided by the Chair (Consultant Psychiatrist) and a fellow director (Senior Law Academic), and through all parties including the researcher engaging in monthly clinical supervision sessions with a BACP approved provider; one purpose of which is to provide a safe environment to discuss ethical concerns and maximise ethical practice. Additional considerations focused on the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, given that they were also clients of the host organisation. The BACP Ethical Guidelines for Researching state that similar approaches should be taken between the research and the counselling service provided (Bond, 2004). In line with this, the host organisation’s confidentiality policy was applied to the content of any data collected from clients (Appendix B). Given that participants were approached through the host organisation, whom continued to provide them support during the study, this consistency was highly desirable and in the best interests of the participants. The host organisation’s existing anonymity arrangements, the use of client
codes, were extended to the research documentation. Given that at the time of the research, approximately 1500 clients a year accessed services, it is not considered that identifying the host organisation would lead to identification of the participant. All participants were made aware of the links between the host organisation and the research at each stage of their involvement. Appendix C contains confirmation of favourable ethical approval, and the ethical conduct of this research.

3.1.3 Selection of participants

The selection of participants for the study was conducted through the host organisation, and was a further area of lengthy negotiation. The senior manager wished for ISVA clients to be approached rather than counselling clients, given that the relationship between ISVA and client was more practical focused than the emotional focus of the counsellor, minimising the likelihood of interfering with the client-practitioner relationship. There was also concern that there may be a negative impact in a court case if a client engaged with the research and presented any atypical views regarding their abuser that may not be understood by a jury, should these later be disclosed. It was therefore agreed that only those clients not currently involved with the criminal justice process would be approached for inclusion in the study, which eliminated a large proportion of the ISVA client base. The ISVAs were then able to utilise their professional judgement to determine when they considered the timing to be appropriate for an approach to the remainder of their clients, provided they were over 18 years of age, to introduce them to the study and its purpose. These decisions eliminated any possibility of gaining a sample purposively chosen to provide a range of ages, gender or ethnicity, or any influence over the crime type, length of time since the abuse, or any other factor. All participants would be ISVA clients not currently engaged within the criminal justice system,
with any further homogeneity or elements of difference moving beyond the influence of the researcher. The small number of clients falling within these criteria meant that there were no other sampling criteria applied to their initial selection for inclusion in the research.

The identification of participants proved lengthy, with seven clients approached over twelve months. All but one of those approached engaged with the research study and provided sufficient data for the research study to progress. One client declined to begin the initial stages of the research for personal reasons, but no negative consequences followed for the client or their relationship with the ISVAs, which improved the ISVAs’ confidence in approaching clients to take part in the study. All six participants were female and of white British origin, reflecting the substantial over-representation of these categories in the ISVA client base. Whilst such negotiation greatly constrained participant selection, it also enabled the identification and approach of participants that many find ethically challenging to include in research studies (Downes, Kelly and Westmarland, 2014) and ensured the provision of support for participants through the collaborative arrangements, that would have been absent had a more conventional access agreement been reached.

3.1.4 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is demonstrated through the researcher’s ability to consider their subjectivities, whether in relation to the participants or in relation to the research area, and the influence these may have had on the research findings (Bryman, 2012). The ability to acknowledge and reference one’s own values, cultural and social position is a genuine research challenge (Roulston, 2010), and is imperative when undertaking feminist research, which is cognisant of the power relationships underpinning the research study (Harding and Norberg, 2005). Self
awareness, an acknowledgement and acceptance of subjectivity, and a consideration as to how these have affected the research process should be evident throughout the text, as well as overtly stated within a subjectivity statement (Roulston, 2010).

Professional doctoral research poses alternative research opportunities and dilemmas when compared with traditional doctoral research, due to the positioning of the researcher within a professional as well an academic environment (Costley et al. 2010). In this case, in addition to the voluntary role of director with the host organisation, the researcher is employed as a police officer, immersed in the practice and culture of this profession, and undoubtedly influenced by this occupational experience. Both roles consider sexual abuse, and whilst there are overlaps in ideology and knowledge bases between the two organisations, there are also differing perspectives and motivations. It became evident that the researcher is a partial insider to the host organisation and their spheres of knowledge and ideology, and that these differing perspectives from and between collaborative partners served as an additional prompt towards reflexivity (Labaree, 2002).

Insider research can be considered as research within the organisation in which one is employed or research within a community to which the researcher belongs, gaining exclusive insight into the field of study that may not be available to those outside the community (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007). An insider position may also be envisioned in terms of responsibility towards those whom the research affects, with Labaree (2002) highlighting the greater considerations necessary in representing participants and the population under study when the researcher is part of that community. In these circumstances, insider positioning within the host organisation enabled collaboration and co-operation that may not otherwise have been possible, by providing the researcher with the terminology and ideological understandings to move to a position more similar to that held by the ISVAs than by the police.
service. However, the role of the researcher as a director of the organisation introduces a power relationship with the practitioners that could not be avoided, but was mitigated in part through relationship building, open and frequent discussions, the involvement of other senior staff and directors in oversight, and the efforts of the researcher to create a rapport and a collaborative environment.

Other subjectivities are harder to demonstrate through the study and therefore must simply be stated for the reader. The researcher is white, female and British, with a graduate education in chemistry, and post-graduate education in social policy and criminology, and police leadership and management. She holds the rank of Inspector in the police service. The researcher does not identify as a survivor nor a perpetrator of sexual abuse, but her professional experience focuses on the experience of survivors, and supporting them through investigations. Her professional experience of perpetrators includes interviewing those suspected of such crimes, but has not involved the close contact and relationship building that she has experienced with survivors. The researcher held a higher educational and professional position than all the participants, though they themselves varied in status. Therefore, the researcher aimed to minimise these power differentials through the use of casual dress and language; meeting the participants at a time and place of their choosing; developing trust and rapport prior to initiating the interview and in fully explaining the opportunities available to the participants to pause the interview, halt, or to withdraw their consent afterwards through contact with their ISVA. Reflexivity assisted in identifying some of these elements, which also drew on the researchers’ communication skills developed through her career in policing, and the variety of people encountered as a result. This reflexivity was also applied when reflecting upon her interpretations of the participants’ accounts, to ensure their voice was heard and that the findings remained true to this.
3.2 Methodological choices

3.2.1 Analytical approach

Within an interpretativist paradigm there are a number of theoretical approaches, a range of data collection methods and as many approaches to the analysis of the data once it is obtained. A body of data may be analysed through different approaches for different outcomes, with the retention of data for the use in future studies of growing interest to qualitative researchers (Bryman, 2012). When researching sensitive topics, such as those in this study, there is an ethical obligation to maximise the learning and knowledge that can be created from the data generously gifted by participants, therefore an option was provided to consent to their data being retained for use in future studies conducted in line with the same ethical standards (Appendix D). Whilst numerous analytical processes may be applied to the same body of data, the analytical approach will produce more substantial research, more trustworthy conclusions and more relevant knowledge if the data collection method is tailored to suit the analytical approach (Costley et al., 2010). Therefore an early consideration of the analytical approach to data was undertaken in this study.

Common analytical methods of analysis for interpretative studies include grounded theory and thematic analysis. Grounded theory is a form of inductive analysis described in detail by Strauss and Corbin (2015), whereby recurring and significant themes are identified from the data in a structured manner that produces valid analysis without the constraints offered by deductive approaches (Thomas, 2006). Allowing categories to emerge from the data is arguably grounded theory’s greatest strength, through its grounding of the theory in the data, allowing formal theoretical models to be built (Strauss and Corbin, 2015). However, grounded
theory requires data to be gathered to a point of saturation, which could not be feasibly achieved within this study due to the constraints on sampling.

Thematic content analysis is closely linked to grounded theory, and shares similar transcription and coding elements as well as approaching data in a systematic yet flexible way through identifying themes in the data and collating together evidence from the data to support those themes (Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick, 2008). However, theoretical models are only one output of this technique, and it is frequently used to solve real-world problems (Braun and Clarke, 2006). For these reasons, thematic content analysis was initially considered the most appropriate analytical method for this study. However, during the early data collection stages, it became apparent that the number of participants likely to be available to be included in the study would be insufficient to achieve the data saturation preferred by this approach. Alongside this, the richness of the participants’ accounts became clear, providing their experiences of justice and their remaining feelings towards their abusers and others that have harmed them. A thematic content analysis would not have privileged individual voices but would seek consensus and similarity between their accounts and explore areas of difference. This analytical approach could be conducted if a large enough sample could be obtained, however the participants’ experiences, voices and the complexity of these would be lost in the comparison across the data sample and in subsequent analysis. For these reasons, thematic contact analysis was not considered a suitable analytical approach for this study.

3.2.2 Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA)

IPA seeks to explore participants’ experiences of a particular phenomenon; to understand their lived experience and how they make sense of it (Smith, 2004) and to reflect this deeper understanding in the development of future policies and research areas (Clarke, 2009). In this
way, IPA honours a phenomenological commitment to understanding the narratives and hearing the voices of the participants, whilst interpreting these narratives to develop theoretical insights which inform the reader, fellow researchers and through them, policy and practice (Larkin, Watts and Clifton, 2006). In doing so it enables the feminist approach of grounding knowledge in the diversity of women’s experiences, including their emotions, by reflecting the voices of the participants and the diversity of their lived, but often hidden, reality (Burgess-Proctor, 2015). IPA seeks intensive, detailed accounts from a small sample of participants, does not attempt to achieve data saturation, and provides space for the individual voice of a participant to be heard (Smith and Osborn, 2008). This analytical approach allows the researcher to present and interpret an individual participant’s experiences, and seek areas of similarity and contention between experiences, as well as consider how these reflections should influence future research and policy development in the topic area. The richness of the data obtained is thereby reflected in the analysis, and a small sample assists the feasibility of a study which entails individuals in receipt of support from a counselling service speaking about highly sensitive subjects. However, in achieving depth of the individual case, this analytical method sacrifices some claims to its significance, able only to state that the analysis produced is a credible account, rather than the only credible account of the phenomena under study (Pringle, Drummond, McLafferty and Hendry, 2011). Whilst this limitation may impede research in more established areas, the research focus remains in the early stages of exploration, and therefore other elements of the IPA approach are more persuasive towards its use. The approach enables consideration of future experiences, which is imperative when the research purpose is to consider future applications of restorative justice, and prompts the individual participant to reflect upon their experiences to consider their reactions to future, hypothetical events; these reflections then become the phenomenon under study (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). For these reasons, an IPA analytical approach is
considered to reflect the feminist approach to this study, and enable the analysis of data in order to address the research objectives.

3.2.3 Methods of data collection

IPA requires rich, detailed, first person accounts of lived experiences; it does not dictate a method of achieving these accounts (Smith et al., 2009). Case studies, observations and group interviews present possible sources of accounts, albeit the semi-structured interview is the favoured data collection method for the majority of published IPA studies (Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2014) and qualitative researchers in general (Hammersley, 2008). Semi structured interviews allow for a focus on a particular experience, whilst enabling flexibility to explore the experience from the participant’s view, allow for diversions and further reflections, and to capture this data as the first person account required for analysis (Miner-Romanoff, 2012). A first person account is not to be interpreted as a genuine access to the experience described; it is partial and complex. The experience is interpreted by the participant and co-constructed between the participant and researcher before being further interpreted by the researcher during analysis (Larkin et al., 2006). Silverman (2015) is particularly critical of researchers who default to the use of interviews rather than consider and justify their decision regarding the use of other naturally occurring data. However, the use of oral histories and narratives has a strong tradition within feminist research (Sangster, 1994); studying the perspectives of victims and offenders, to engage in the social context of their experience, has been a frequently used research technique in criminology (McLaughlin and Muncie, 2012). Therefore, the gaining of survivors’ accounts is consistent with these traditions. In considering this research topic, the opportunity of a case study did not exist at the initiation of this research, and such an examination would not answer the research questions. For similar reasons, there was not the opportunity to observe a process or a naturally occurring discussion of experiences that may
be suitable for analysis. Group interviews are of growing interest in the field of IPA (Smith, 2004) but introduce elements of group dynamics that may be difficult to untangle when considering a deeply personal, complex and emergent area of research. Due to the feasibility and ethical considerations which would be necessary to conduct group interviews in this study, individual semi-structured interviews were the preferred method of data collection.

### 3.2.4 Collaboration and the research design

During the research design stages, some differences in purpose were identified between the researcher and the host organisation. The former became increasingly focused on the meaning created by the participants and understanding their relationships and motivations, whereas the latter wished to gain some insight into the breadth of interest in restorative justice to support future funding applications. An early solution to this divergence of interests was to gather broader information by way of a questionnaire to satisfy the host organisation’s aims, and to obtain the depth of information by interview for the researcher’s aims. The questionnaire would be circulated by the ISVAs and some would be invited for interview. In the process of this, when discussing how to prompt a participant to consider the range of people they may wish to discuss in relation to restorative justice, an ISVA suggested using the circle of support from existing client surveys, which prompts clients to consider what practical support they may benefit from, and to consider the strength of their needs on a scale of 1-10. An adaption of this to consider emotions, termed here as ‘circle of emotion’ was developed to mirror the process already undertaken by ISVAs, and was accompanied by some case history information and an opportunity to determine between the types of restorative justice and the clients’ level of interest. This questionnaire is attached in Appendix E.
Given the complexity of the questions under consideration, it was agreed that this would be an assisted questionnaire (Holt and Pamment, 2011). Whilst there is a lack of consensus as to what constitutes an assisted questionnaire, this method allows for participants to be guided through the questionnaire, to be briefed as to its meaning and purpose, and assists to maintain the participants’ agreement and co-operation (Holt and Pamment, 2011). To enable this, a briefing note was also created for the ISVAs (Appendix F). This questionnaire was conducted with clients by ISVAs, and their notes were then available during the subsequent interview. The interactions between the ISVAs and the clients were not audio-recorded, and whilst the content was referred to in both the interview and the presentation of the research findings, the interview data formed the basis for the analysis. Upon completion of the questionnaire, ISVAs would select some participants to invite to take part in interviews, and a screening process was created for this purpose (Appendix G). Purposive sampling was therefore proposed, to select participants whom held stronger views on restorative justice, and could therefore be assumed to provide richer data for analysis. The ISVAs could complete a number of the questionnaires, which would be analysed separately for the host organisation.

Whilst a practical approach to a divergence in purpose, this solution inevitably impacted on the interviews that were subsequently conducted. Participants experienced a staged introduction to the subject area, provided with time to reflect and consider the research topic between their questionnaire and their interview. This was considered to enhance the participants’ ability to discuss their reactions to future, hypothetical events that comprises part of an IPA study (Smith et al., 2009). It also meant that participants were more informed as to the nature and purpose of the interview and the likely content, increasing the level of informed consent they were able to provide before taking part in an interview. The questionnaire formed a basis for discussion during the interview, considering the questionnaire as case notes and drawing upon the content, in particular the circle of emotion,
to initiate and direct the discussion. However, the participant was introduced to the research area by the ISVAs, reducing consistency and limiting the ability to incorporate their initial reflections into the analysis of the research area. It asks the participant to cover similar ground on two occasions, increasing the potential for distress, and doubles the time commitment being requested of the participant. Overall, it is considered that the benefits of such an arrangement outweighed the disadvantages, and the questionnaire was completed with all participants prior to their interview. Once it became apparent that there was a limited group of clients to invite to take part in the research, the screening process for interview (Appendix G) was removed and all those completing the questionnaire were invited to take part in the research interviews, all of whom agreed. The sampling method therefore reverted fully to a convenience sample. Whilst the research could not therefore be representative of the population under study, it is still able to assist greatly in the level of understanding of the phenomena under study (Newburn, 2007).

3.2.5 Research interviews

Semi-structured interviews are not only the principal means of gathering data in IPA studies and qualitative studies in general (Hammersley, 2008; Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2014), but are also widely used by feminist researchers (Reinharz and Davidman, 1992). A feminist approach to interviewing focuses on the relationship that is sought between the participant and the researcher; that is ethical, open, non-exploitative and focused on women’s experiences and emotions (Roulston, 2010). This can be achieved by minimising hierarchal differences, through the provision of information, and by demonstrating warmth towards the participant (Campbell, Adams, Wasco, Ahrens and Sefl, 2010). Reinharz and Davidman (1992) explore how interviews, particularly when women are interviewed by other women, can allow women’s voices to be heard. The meaning that is created within the interview is not influenced by a
male view, and allows topics which would otherwise remain unexplored to be unearthed, defined and shared. However, interviews between women that may appear to be non-exploitative and empathetic can still be heavily influenced by power differences between the researcher and the participant (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2005), and reflexivity is still required to minimise these effects (Roulston, 2010).

Although interviews can give access to opinions, feelings, emotions and experiences (Denscombe, 2014) the data obtained from an interview is an account from the participant, rather than a report (Roulston, 2010). Participants may produce a socially acceptable account (Arksey and Knight, 1999), demonstrating discourse practices whereby participants construct their account in reaction to cues from the researcher, so that the reality is co-created during the interview process (Hammersley, 2008). IPA embraces this meaning making, seeking to prompt the participant into co-creating their account, including with regard to future experiences, whose reflections then become the phenomenon being studied and interpreted by the researcher (Smith et al., 2009). In this way, interviews will only produce partial knowledge of a participant’s experiences, but this is consistent with an IPA study, and with a feminist approach that considers all knowledge to be partial and value laden (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002).

An interview can be construed as a conversation between the participant and the researcher (Arksey and Knight, 1999), but involves assumptions by both parties as to their role and their understanding of the purpose of the interview (Denscombe, 2014). The researcher sets the agenda for the interview, frames the topic under discussion, records the content and directs the participant as to the lines of discussion that may prove valuable to the research (Denscombe, 2014). How questions and the subsequent responses are voiced and heard by those in an interview situation will be affected by how they feel about the topic, or about each
other (Seidman, Rubin, Rubin and Dilley, 2004). Such circumstances reflect the power
differentials inherent in any interview situation (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2005), and exist
irrespective of any additional power differentials or perceptions relating to age, race, or class.
Indeed, considering an interview to be a conversation can lead to poor preparation, planning
and execution (Denscombe, 2014). Whilst developing a relationship beyond the interview
phase, and gaining intimacy through self-disclosure, are suggested as methods of minimising
power differentials and undertaking feminist interviewing (Oakley, 1981; Roulston, 2010), they
require a deeper and more lengthy submersion in the research environment more akin to
ethnography than is feasible for this study.

In this case, a relationship already existed between the participant and the ISVA, which by its
professional nature is also not an equal relationship but one with its own power differentials.
However, the relationship had been built over a longer period, and extended beyond the
interview phase. The research topic was introduced within this relationship, enabling the
participant to give the fullest informed consent prior to be interviewed. It was clarified at each
stage that the host organisation may develop a restorative justice process but that this was not
currently available, and that the final research product would be made available to them. The
researcher was introduced via the participant letter, provided to the participants prior to and
following their assisted questionnaire (Appendix H). This described the researcher as a
doctoral student and a director of the host organisation, but not her professional position as a
police officer, due to its limited relevance to that stage of the process.

The researcher introduced herself during a rapport building stage prior to the interview, a
stage which is imperative to build a degree of trust and understanding (Arksey and Knight,
1999). The researcher referenced her profession during this stage, in a self-deprecating
manner by suggesting the participant indicate if she strayed into any terminology, and this was
conducted prior to obtaining the participant’s consent to proceed with the interview. Participants were able to raise any concerns regarding the research with their ISVA as well as with the University of Portsmouth, and to withdraw their consent via the ISVA should they wish to do so, which was made clear from the earliest contact. A final letter to the participant was provided at the end of the interview, which highlighted the role of the ISVA in representing the participant (Appendix I). In this way, the ISVA was placed in the role of advocate for the participant as well as a source of empowerment and representation, and assisted to minimise the power differentials and gain the intimacy described by Roulston (2010).

A further element influencing the power differentials between the researcher and the participant is the extent to which the interview is structured. The researcher arrives with an agenda, a preconceived expectation as to the content that the participant can provide that the researcher believes to be relevant to the research being undertaken (Denscombe 2014). A semi-structured interview places more form on the interview than an unstructured interview, but provides a space for discussion and diversion not available in a structured interview (Bryman, 2012). An interview guide provides a framework for the interview, using open questions and follow up prompts to explore the participants’ viewpoints (Arksey and Knight, 1999). The actual undertaking of the interview will vary depending on the researcher and the participant taking part, with alterations, adaption and diversions that may more closely represent a guided conversation than an interview (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). Flexibility and the ability to listen and react to the participant is therefore crucial (Roulston, 2010). The extent to which this occurs will have a significant impact on the content of the interview, with less structured interviews producing data with less consistency and possibly less relevance to the research topic. They may, however, produce insights that could not be
foreseen by the researcher, and create more opportunity for participants to influence the analysis and findings produced by the research (Roulston 2010).

Whilst a more structured introduction to the topic was conducted by the ISVAs in their assisted questionnaires, a less structured approach was preferred in the interviews. The circle of emotion provided a starting point for the discussion, which was then guided by the researcher’s desire to understand their circle of emotion and their further reflections. A semi-structured interview guide was produced (Appendix J), but this was rarely referred to during the interview, serving mainly as a prompt to the researcher in the latter stages to consider any additional topics to introduce to the conversation. The outcome was interviews that were guided more strongly by the participant than was initially anticipated.

3.3 Methodological Application

3.3.1 Analytical approach

IPA analysis shares many similarities with qualitative analysis in general, and has been described as a stance or perspective on analysis rather than a distinct method, with two complementary aims; to “give voice” to the participants and to “make sense” of their words through interpretation (Larkin et al., 2006 p.102). Alternatively this can be considered as different versions of understanding, “understand in the sense of identifying or empathising with, and understanding as trying to make sense of” (Smith and Osbourn, 2008, p.54). The application of IPA methodology to a particular set of data should be sensitive to the data under examination, and there is no set process for an IPA analysis (Creswell, 2007). However, the definitive guide is considered to be the comprehensive description of IPA analysis provided by Smith et al. (2009) (Smith, 2017). Full copies of the transcripts cannot be reproduced to
protect the confidentiality of the participant, and therefore the analytical method is described in detail with some short extracts provided within appendices for illumination purposes.

3.3.2 Transcription

The semi-structured interviews were audio recorded and transcribed to produce the data for subsequent analysis. It is the researcher’s view that transcription is part of the analysis process and heightens the researcher’s knowledge of the text, and therefore transcription was conducted by the researcher herself, with early insights gathered during this to inform subsequent stages of analysis. IPA transcription requires a high level of accuracy, including within the texts indications of pauses, corrections, and repeated words to more closely reflect the expression and meaning of the participant (Biggerstaff and Thompson, 2008). Whilst it was anticipated that this would require three sessions of transcription for each interview, the first proved to have a good degree of accuracy, with only a second session required to ensure corrections and pauses were accurately included. The researcher heard the emphasis used by the interviewee when reading and re-reading the text, and therefore emphasis was present during the analysis process, but not included in the quotes used in the final writing of the analysis for ease of reading. Once the transcription was deemed complete, each line of text was numbered to allow for tracking and accurate quoting, and each participant was allocated a pseudonym that reflected their gender and ethnicity.

3.3.3 Noting and categorisation

Once the transcription sheets were completed, each were read and re-read for insights. This was conducted on a single case at a time, taking each interview through the noting phase to
categorisation before embarking on the next interview. This is true to the idiographic commitment in IPA (Smith et al., 2009) reflecting the importance and value of each individual case, and the necessity of approaching the text with an open mind as to the analytical insights it may gift to the researcher. Initially, Biggerstaff and Thompson’s (2008) recommendation for noting was followed, highlighting areas of text and making electronic notes in the margin reflecting the researcher’s thoughts, emotions, questions and comments on the text. This stage was referred to as ‘free association’ as it was unguided, unrestrained and unstructured in its approach.

Further noting of the text then followed Smith et al.’s (2009) structure, considering in turn descriptive phrasing, linguistic phrasing and conceptual phrasing. Noting a description of the content represents a basic understanding of the text, highlighting what is being said and to what purposes. The linguistic noting allows for the analysis to be informed by how the participant phrases their text, their use of pauses or laughter, pronoun use or repetition, providing an alternative reading of the text that reflects the participant’s view of the content. Conceptual noting allows for a deeper level of analysis by the researcher, considering the interpretation of the text, and prompting further reflections. In particular, it reflects those sociological concepts which may be relevant to the analysis, following Willig’s (2001) recommendations that researchers consider which psychological concepts are evident in the data; this recognises IPA’s development as a psychological analysis technique, however it is considered here that sociological concepts are as relevant when conducting this IPA analysis.

3.3.4 Themes

It is possible to consider each transcription as it builds upon those previous, considering which themes are evident in the new data. Alternatively, each data set is considered individually,
before conducting a cross case analysis (Biggerstaff and Thompson, 2008). As the data collected for this study did not represent as closely a homogenous sample as frequently used in IPA research, the latter approach was preferred, allowing each data set to enlighten and for insights to be noted, prior to conducting cross case analysis. Smith (2004) also prefers this approach, considering it to reflect the idiographic nature of IPA and the importance of each individual participant’s experiences. Collating together the notes for a small section of text, it was allocated theme categories to reflect the totality of the text and notes [Appendix K]. At times a singular theme was identified; at times a small number of applicable themes were identified. There were attempts to consolidate themes throughout an individual data set, allowing a theme to gather sufficient data and consistency to be aptly described. This was not attempted across the data sets, leading to a low number of repeated themes across the sets and with some similar themes with differing titles and angles of approach to the data. Those themes only identified once within the text were not explored any further, being considered as having insufficient traction within the text to be considered a theme. All others were summarised, and were included in latter stages of analysis.

Themes were collated and their presence in the interview represented numerically, organised by the number of times they were identified in the text. Frequency should not be the sole consideration of the value of a theme, with Biggerstaff and Thompson (2008) highlighting the importance of the richness of the data, the interpretative value of the theme or its ability to illuminate other parts of the text. However, themes appearing most frequently in the data were ideal for describing each individual participant’s story, demonstrating the relative importance of these themes for the participant when produced from a less structured, free-flowing interview (Smith et al., 2009). Initial drafting of those themes showing this level of depth through a data set were drafted into short analyses, summarising the theme and key quotes from the data. For each interview, the four most prevalent themes were expanded
upon to tell the participants’ story, which became chapter four. This privileged the participant’s choice of topic, and fulfils the phenomenological element of IPA (Larkin et al., 2006).

3.3.5 Cross case analysis

A cross case analysis was then conducted using the themes identified from each interview. The cross-themes were collated with a short description, and reviewed for similarity, a complementary nature or other pattern or connection. Initial groupings of cross-themes were drafted along with key quotes from interviews which illuminated the theme, which were then reviewed and further focused upon the essence of the cross-theme under consideration. This led to some of the contributing themes changing, some cross-themes being re-named to accurately reflect the resulting content, and enabled an interpretation of the participants’ individual themes into a cross analysis suitable for further analysis (Appendix L), (Smith et al., 2009). Given that the sample was not a homogenous one and that the participants showed significant differences between their experiences and the focus of their accounts, it was considered that there was sufficient coverage across the cases if the cross-theme was represented in at least three of the six interviews. This was the lower of the prevalence levels recommended by Smith et al. (2009), but represents the prevalence considered to be rigorous within an IPA study (Smith, 2011). The prevalence of a theme does not indicate its level of consistency or similarity, leaving scope for variation as to how that theme is expressed by the individual participant. It would be possible to apply more stringent criteria, but the researcher considers valuable insights would be lost. The prevalence of the cross-themes is re-produced in Appendix L allowing the reader to consider the impact this choice may have on the final analysis. The cross-themes were drafted with these links between the underlying themes informing the analysis, and represented by significant extracts from each participant within the
This ensures that the analysis is not purely descriptive, that it remains closely linked to the participants’ accounts, and aims to avoid presenting cautious analysis that fails to develop the interpretative or conceptual elements present (Larkin et al., 2006).

3.3.6 Super-ordinate themes

Cross-themes were collated into super-ordinate themes via sections, gathering themes together by their ability to explain or illuminate issues that the participants and the researcher have identified through this analysis. This interpretation is described as a double hermeneutic, that is that “the participants are trying to make sense of their world, the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world” (Smith and Osborn, 2008, p.53). This analysis and subsequent writing are extensions of this meaning making, and should progress in tandem (Smith et al., 2009), and the super-ordinate themes underwent numerous drafts and re-organisation as their meanings emerged. In order to demonstrate the strength of the analysis, a substantial results section is produced, aimed at giving both the account of the data and its interpretation for the reader to consider. In particular, the use of transcript extracts is explicitly recommended (Smith et al., 2009), and this application is apparent in the presentation of the super-ordinate themes in chapter five. The relevance of the super-ordinate themes and their consideration in light of the wider literature in general and the research question in particular is expanded upon with the subsequent discussion (chapter six), with further interpretation of the super-ordinate themes occurring during this stage, ensuring sufficient theorisation of the concepts identified. For these reasons, an IPA study may consider alternative, sometimes surprising literature as part of its analysis (Smith et al., 2009).
3.4 Evaluation

3.4.1 Framework for evaluation

Interpretative research selects participants likely to aid understanding of the phenomenon, seeking to understand the meaning or actions of individuals at a particular point in time, and therefore interpretative enquiry requires assessment criteria that accommodate these aims (Morehouse, 2012). Assessments of internal and external validity, for example, reflect judgements of the quality of quantitative research, whereas the quality of qualitative research requires an assessment of the integrity of the conclusions (Bryman, 2012), which may also be considered as its trustworthiness (Yancher, 2006). Lincoln and Guba (1985) drafted an evaluation framework for assessing the trustworthiness of qualitative research; whilst these are not globally accepted criteria for judging quality (Roulston, 2010), they have formed the basis upon which many other academics have drafted quality frameworks (Scott, Brown and Lunt, 2004). Trustworthiness can be understood as comprising the confidence that can be had in the construction of the reality created (credibility); the ability to transfer results into other contexts (transferability); the consistency of the findings with the data (dependability); and the separation of the researcher’s interests from the findings, to the extent that another researcher would have reached similar conclusions from the same data (confirmability) (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). When considering these criteria to assess the quality of an IPA study, which by its nature requires the researcher to embark upon extensive interpretation of a small number of participant accounts (Smith et al., 2009), transferability and confirmability assessments require a consideration as to how these concepts can be conceptualised within, and applied to, an IPA study. In contrast, credibility and dependability require an assessment
of the adherence of the study to an IPA approach, which in this case is explored through Yardley’s (2008) principles for assessing validity in IPA studies.

3.4.2 Transferability and confirmability

The transferability of this study (the ability to transfer the results into other contexts) can be considered as an assessment of its generalisability, but holds a key element of difference (Morehouse, 2012). Transferability places some responsibility on the reader to consider the extent to which the findings transfer to the context they are considering, rather than placing the responsibility on the researcher to demonstrate the extent to which the findings can be generalised, and are therefore applicable (Yanchar, 2006). Further research, using alternative methods, is required to consider the extent to which the findings can be applied in general (Arksey and Knight, 1999). IPA studies seek a homogenous sample of participants, studying those that share important variables relating to the topic under consideration (Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2014). The extent of the homogeneity of the sample will therefore influence the transferability of the study. The sample used in this study demonstrated homogeneity in terms of their race and ethnicity, their gender, their self-identification as survivors of sexual abuse, their accessing of counselling services and their willingness to be participants in the study. The sample was not homogenous when considering their experience of sexual abuse, their willingness to report their offences to the police and the outcome of any report, and their approach to restorative justice in their cases. The sample size may seem small in comparison with other qualitative studies, but a sample of six is usual and anticipated within an IPA study (Brocki and Wearden, 2006). However, the constraints on the sampling methods, discussed above reduced the ability to select a more homogenous sample. As the reader considers transferring these findings to other scenarios, it should be noted that the interpretative
analysis cannot be transferred to any single group of survivors; the results are informative rather than conclusive.

However, transferability also refers to the aim of interpretative enquiry to reach theoretical propositions, rather than statistical ones (Silverman, 2015), that is that qualitative research seeks to generalise to theory, rather than to populations (Bryman, 2012). The theoretical findings may therefore be transferable to other contexts through their demonstration of the social processes involved, whereas the empirical findings could not be expected to (Silverman, 2015). A similar consideration should be applied to IPA studies, with researchers aiming for “theoretical transferability rather than empirical generalisability” (Smith et al. 2009, p.51). This theoretical transferability is demonstrated through the integration of the analysis with the existing theory held within the academic literature, an “analytic commentary” (Reid, Flowers and Larkin, 2005 p.23) which assists to identify the constructive insights and broader applications. In doing so, an IPA study can influence the theoretical development of the academic knowledge relating to the topic, and through this, influence professional policy and practice (Pringle et al. 2011).

Assessing the confirmability of this study (the extent that another researcher would have reached similar conclusions from the same data), represents a challenge for an IPA study. By its nature, an IPA study requires significant interpretation of the accounts of the participants, described as a creative activity, which sculpts themes from these accounts whilst drawing on the knowledge and experience of the researcher (Smith et al. 2009). For these reasons, Yardley (2000) considers that such an assessment of confirmability would be inappropriate, given that the findings will represent one of many interpretations of the account. However, interpretative methods in general are not considered to produce objective accounts or to be fully replicable,
and therefore other approaches to demonstrating subjectivity and establishing credibility have emerged (Bryman, 2012). Reflexivity, and the accompanying representation of the subjectivity of the researcher’s position, assists to achieve this, as does the ability of the researcher to demonstrate their knowledge and experience in their field (Roulston, 2010). In addition, providing transparency as to the research decisions, ethical considerations and the process of conducting the research steps, aids the reader’s ability to assess the confirmability of the study (Roulston, 2010; Smith et al. 2009). Ultimately, the confirmability of a study will be demonstrated through its resonance with the reader (Van der Zalm and Bergum, 2000).

3.4.3 Credibility and dependability

The credibility of this study, (the confidence that can be had in the construction of the reality created) and the dependability of this study, (the consistency of the findings with the data), are established using Yardley’s (2008) criteria for assessing the validity of IPA studies. Yardley (2008) proposes four broad principles for assessing validity in IPA studies; sensitivity to context; commitment and rigour; transparency and coherence; and impact and importance. Sensitivity to the context implies an understanding of the position of the participants, and an appreciation of the circumstances surrounding the experiences the researcher is trying to gain access to. This should begin from the earliest stages of the research, and include questions such as the proposed methods of approach for inclusion in the study, the methods of data collection and the consideration of IPA as an analytical tool (Smith et al., 2009). These mirror the aims of the feminist approach taken by this research, and have been achieved through collaboration, reflexivity and privileging of participants’ voices in the findings. Yardley (2008) adds that the analysis itself should also remain sensitive to the context in which the data was collected, avoiding the imposition of the researchers’ agenda or meanings onto the data, and
developing an interpretation that remains true to the wider context of the data provided. The steps taken through the analysis and the display of the participants voices add confidence that these findings remain in touch with the participants’ original data and display this sensitivity.

Commitment and rigour can be demonstrated through the attentiveness to the participant during data collection and considerable personal commitment to the participants throughout the study, whilst achieving a structured systematic approach to analysis that enables the interpretative nature of IPA to create the necessary depth of analysis (Smith et al., 2009). Smith (2011) indicates that the rigour of an IPA study can be assessed through the prevalence of the accounts within a theme, and that with a sample of the size used here, extracts from half the participants should be present within a theme. This is demonstrated through the description of the analytical process, and through the extracts chosen to articulate the themes. This depth of analysis, the structured process of achieving insights and demonstrating their links to the text, and the privileging of the participants voices demonstrate the commitment and rigour of this study.

Yardley (2008) determines coherence to consider the study as a whole, the extent to which it is a consistent and complete study which has intrinsic value for its readers. This includes presenting findings that are consistent with the method of analysis and does not ignore the limitations of the research methods to make exaggerated claims. Transparency relies upon clarity over the exact methods used, with sufficient details and examples for the reader to be able to examine the steps undertaken, and sufficient reflection for the reader to understand the necessary alterations and accommodations made as the methodology is applied to the research context (Yardley, 2008). In addition to explaining the steps taken and justifying decisions made during the research, Smith et al. (2009) add the proportionality of the analysis; drawing upon all participants and being even-handed in the representation of each voice.
within the analysis and final text. It is asserted that this methodology chapter provides the detail required for transparency, and when considered alongside the forthcoming chapters demonstrates the coherence of the research study, with clarity as to how the participants stories interweave and are interpreted to produce the final conclusions, a process which demonstrates the coherence of the entire study. The impact and importance of the study is demonstrated through its links with the existing literature, and the integration of the findings into the current research and policy environments to demonstrate its relevance, leading to the recommendations arising from this study. Taken in their totality, these assessments against Yardley’s (2008) principles establish the credibility and dependability of this research.

3.5 Summary

This chapter has explored the methodological approach to the research study, identified the constraints and opportunities associated with the research setting, the choices made in the research design, and the application of the methodological approach to the data collection and analysis stages. In doing so, the influence of collaboration on this research study is identified as significant. The discussions, negotiations, dilemmas and insights have been explored and presented alongside the methodological choices made, demonstrating the diligence of all parties to the development of an ethical, feasible and credible response to the research objectives. The impact on the selection of participants, and the resulting small sample available for this study arose as a direct result of these negotiations, and represent the most substantial impact of collaboration on the research design. However, this also serves to demonstrate the success of steps taken by the researcher to ensure parity of esteem between her and the host organisation.
Through an exploration of the applicability of IPA to this study, its relevance to a feminist approach has been highlighted. The ability to give voice to the participants through an IPA study mirrors the desire to tell women’s stories, and have their reflections enhanced through a research study rather than minimised through the analysis. This has been complemented through a feminist approach to interviewing, through the descriptions of the setting, support and rapport building undertaken, combined with a less structured gathering of data from participants, allowing interviews to be led by participants through reference to their circle of emotion. In doing so, the interviews retained the feminist approach taken to the research in general. The data analysis processes were rigorous, and this has been demonstrated through the detailed description of the steps taken, and the methodological decisions taken as the methodology was translated to accommodate the research study. The interpretative nature of IPA analysis allows for significant subjectivity, and the transferability and confirmability of IPA research has been explored, identifying the limitations of this study and the theoretical basis for raising conclusions and recommendations from its findings. The credibility and dependability of this research has been discussed through a consideration of validity in IPA research, highlighting how this research can be evaluated through this.
Chapter Four: Giving Voice

This chapter presents the participants in this study and provides the space for their voices to be heard, and their stories to be told. Not only is this a key element of IPA, it is central to a feminist approach to research. The four most prevalent themes for each participant are described; including significant extracts from their interviews to ensure their story is told using their own words. This enables their individual stories to be heard whilst protecting their anonymity.

Sarah was abused by various members of her family when she was a child. She demonstrates the ongoing harm she suffers as a result of the abuse, her reflections on the outcome of the subsequent court cases, and her desire for further information that drives her to seek a restorative justice process. The second participant, Jane, was abused by her partner, who is currently serving a prison sentence for this abuse. She displays her desire for a restorative justice process to enable her abuser’s parents to recognise the harm that has been caused and to agree the boundaries of their relationship, which continues for the benefit of her children.

Alice experienced two instances of sexual abuse as a child, by an abuser who also committed significant abuse against her brother. She expresses her sense of a personal journey, enlightened through her professional knowledge, but wishes to remain fully separated from her abuser. The fourth participant, Helen, was abused by an older teenager when she was about 12 years old, which she felt had a significant impact on her later teenage behaviour. She exhibits her changing reflections of her abuse over the following decades, which frames her considerations of a restorative justice process with her childhood friends.
Emma suffered sexual abuse from an older child when she was about seven years old. She reflects on how she became a victim of abuse, and how she has begun her recovery. She recognises that the final step will be a form of dialogue with her abuser, but did not feel she has the necessary emotional strength at the time of her interview. The sixth participant, Clare, experienced a single, non contact abusive act whilst receiving counselling for previous sexual abuse she suffered as a child. She reflects on the institutional responses to her disclosure, and her focus on sharing her experience and preventing further offences, which she feels a restorative justice process would assist her in achieving. This chapter enables the individual voices of the participants to be heard, which informs their perspective on restorative justice, as well as the justice outcomes and healing that they continue to seek.

4.1 Sarah: Her story through her themes

Sarah suffered extensive sexual and physical abuse when she was a child, predominately by her parents but also by her siblings, before being abused by her uncle and aunt. She reported her abuse to the police as an adult, and following criminal trials her abusers were convicted and are serving significant sentences. Her circle of emotion is shown in Appendix M.

During her ISVA assisted questionnaire, Sarah described her father as more like an animal than a human, and her mother as being in some ways worse, for allowing and being involved in the abuse herself. Sarah felt her uncle and aunt saw her as easy prey; already victimised and therefore an easy target. Sarah demonstrated the highest levels of anger towards these family members, but also expressed a high level of guilt towards her brother. In the further information stage, she expanded this to all her siblings, for whilst they abused her, they were
also victims of abuse from their parents. Sarah reported a high level of interest in restorative justice, with a strong preference for a face to face meeting in the presence of a facilitator with both her mother and father. Of note, she also showed a high level of interest in writing a letter to her father, but not to her mother; in her interview she attributed this to her father’s preference for communication in this form, believing this to be a method he would be more likely to engage with.

The semi-structured interview took place in a private room at a children’s centre near Sarah’s home, in the presence of her ISVA. The recording lasted 1 hour 13 minutes, and Sarah spoke for long periods without prompting, maintaining a high level of interest in restorative justice throughout. In total, 53 different themes were identified across her interview (Appendix N), with 24 only being identified once. The most prevalent themes are expanded upon below.

4.1.1 Legacy

“...the abuse doesn’t just stop just because you grow up” (Sarah:88)

This theme captures the ongoing impact of abuse, of the sense of a life sentence for a victim that continues long after the abuse has stopped. Sarah references how the abuse makes her feel now, rather than how it made her feel then; demonstrating that this is about current harms rather than previous ones. Due to the identity of the abusers, the abuse is compounded by a sense of loss:

“You’ve been deprived of your extended family, you’ve been deprived, been deprived of your, of your siblings” (Sarah:157-8)
As Sarah became a mother she saw herself in her children, understanding the horror of the abuse from a different position and extending that sense of harm; a re-imagining, re-experiencing brought about from occupying a different perspective:

“...that child staring there is, is me eight year old, looks like one of my kids, and I says how, how could they do it” (Sarah:340-1)

Convictions and significant sentences did not bring this to an end as she expected, so Sarah is seeking further resolution. She is not seeking to change her emotions but to lessen them; this is not an altruistic act but a self-preserving one:

“I suppose it’s hoping for change as well... to look forward to, to recovery, to feel normal.” (Sarah:582-4)

The direct abuse of Sarah had stopped 20 years before her interview, but she demonstrates its continuing legacy:

“I just don’t want to carry the hate no more” (Sarah:444-5)

4.1.2 Sense of justice

“All the years, growing up, thinking, I’ll get you back for what you did” (Sarah:292-3)

This theme reflects how Sarah interprets the justice system’s pronouncements and overlays these with her own views and feelings. Sarah’s sense of justice flows through her interview, offering her view of the justice she received through various successful court cases. Sarah highlights the distinction the law makes between the varying acts committed by family members, particularly the distinction between rape and other sexual offences, seeing the hierarchy of their sentences as not reflecting the harm caused to her:
“...you’ve got me mother and father, me father got 18 years but she got four years less
and it’s like why? She did exactly the same crimes, why did she get four years less?”

(Sarah:184-5)

However, Sarah feels a sense of justice from having stood in court, highlighting the importance
to her of being seen and being heard. The value to her of the guilty verdicts is that the jury
listened and believed her:

“So, I was, I, as hard as it was, I stood in that dock, me, for the jury to see, for the
barristers to see, for the judge to see, and, and I did get every one of them jury
members crying” (Sarah:238-40)

Despite this, Sarah retains a sense that her abusers didn’t hear her, and that the wider world
has not heard her due to media restrictions, and this tempers her sense of justice gained
through being heard at court:

“I will get people to listen [mmm]. And it’s, in a way I did, but I never got them to listen.
I never got them to, to realize what they’d done.” (Sarah:293-4)

4.1.3 Need for explanation

“I don’t want an apology from them no. What’s sorry going to do? It’s not going to
change nothing, I just want to know why” (Sarah:427-8)

This theme demonstrates Sarah’s ongoing need to understand why she suffered the abuse she
did, including nuanced aspects of her treatment, for example, why she was singled out for
abuse but her brothers were not:
“And, then you ask why? And then because no-one’s able to answer you, it’s an empty void” (Sarah:89-90)

Her need for explanation extends beyond her abusers, and includes a desire to understand why those around her failed to intervene:

“...then when you see pictures of meself as a child, surrounded by so many people, by uncles, aunties, cousins, [pause] your nannas and granddads and, you think why didn’t you stop it?” (Sarah:96-7)

Sarah sees restorative justice as a method of achieving the explanation she failed to gain through the criminal justice process:

“I really did honestly, honestly believe, that once it got court, to court, that the answers would be asked, the questions would be answered, but they wasn’t.” (Sarah:342-4)

Sarah challenges the differentiation between sexual offences and other types of crime, discussing that she believes every victim would want to know why; why their car or their house, but that she can’t take advantage of the process open to other victims:

“Think about why? [yeah] course I do, every victim would.” (Sarah:362)

4.1.4 Experience of justice

“...no jury’s going to decide whether someone’s guilty or not guilty when they can’t see the bloody victim!” (Sarah:235-6)

This theme captures Sarah’s experience of the criminal justice system and its impact on her feelings about the justice she has received. She describes the court as being against her, feeling personal responsibility to prove she is telling the truth, and fighting against records made by social services and others:
“But I couldn’t prove it [yeah]. I couldn’t prove what the court were saying was a lie. Because they’d only got what social services had got documented [yeah], and it’s like, hello! Can you not see that this happened way before then [yeah] [laughing]. But who am I, I’m just a victim” (Sarah:214-7)

Sarah clearly views her court case as a fight, one she wanted to have and went on to win. She turned down special measures, testifying in court without screens:

“And it’s like, no, I’m not being hidden away” (Sarah:237)

There are, however, indications throughout her discussion of the intimidation, the anxiety of awaiting a decision, and the challenge to her integrity she experienced at court, referring to it as frightening. Additional emotions were laid bare when referring to her cousin testifying about her own abuse:

“...the day that me cousin gave evidence I wouldn’t sit in there, because I didn’t want her to feel, I didn’t want her to feel any more dirty than what she’d already felt [yeah], or, any more intimidated than what she felt, so I gave her that respect and stayed away” (Sarah:253-6)

4.1.5 Summary

Throughout Sarah’s interview, and reflected through her most prevalent themes, is a strong sense that the abuse is continuing to cause distress with significant gaps needing to be filled before any sense of closure can be reached. Sarah’s desire to ask questions, to understand, and to interact with her parents, is clear and unequivocal. She demonstrates no fear or reluctance to do so, albeit the strength she demonstrated in testifying indicates how unusual
she may be in this regard. Her overall need for change, to retain some hope for the future, is summarised in her unprompted comment at the end of the interview:

“I suppose it’s hoping for change as well, it’s hoping, that if I do get this, if I do get to see them, even if it is just a letter, it’s something. It’s something, to be, come from well, to look forward to, to recovery, to feel normal. Rather than just a trapped child, that’s still here, in me nightmares.” (Sarah:582-4)

4.2 Jane: Her story through her themes

Jane suffered ongoing sexual abuse from her partner; a relationship she ended after their daughter disclosed she was being sexually abused by him. She is also aware that her partner had abused his younger siblings when they were children themselves, but that his parents did not take any action. Her partner was successfully prosecuted for the abuse of Jane and their daughter, pleading guilty at the beginning of the trial. Jane retains a relationship with her (ex) partner’s parents for the benefit of her children; a daughter of 13 years and a son of 10 years at the time of the interview. Her circle of emotion is reproduced in Appendix O.

During her ISVA assisted questionnaire, Jane demonstrated stronger levels of emotion towards her abuser’s family than towards her abuser himself. Regarding the abuser, her focus was on her anger and annoyance at his refusal to acknowledge the harm he had caused, despite his guilty plea. A lack of acknowledgement of their son’s behaviour was given as the primary reason for the mixed negative emotions she felt towards his parents, referencing also their lack of support for her. Her strongest emotions were reserved for her abuser’s brother and his wife, who was also her childhood friend. Jane demonstrated interest in a restorative justice
process with her abuser’s brother, showing a preference for a face to face meeting in the presence of a facilitator and other people known to her, indicating that she must have someone present to support her. In her interview, she became focused on her abuser’s parents, rather than his brother, due to their ongoing relationship.

The semi-structured interview took place in a counselling room at the host organisations’ premises. Jane’s ISVA was not present during the interview, at Jane’s request. The recording lasted 1 hour 39 minutes and Jane spoke freely about the abuse she and her daughter had suffered, as well as the ongoing difficulties she is experiencing with her abuser’s family as a result of trying to maintain her children’s relationship with their grandparents. In total 52 different themes were identified across her interview (Appendix P) with 13 of those being identified only once. The most prevalent themes are expanded upon below.

4.2.1 Avoidance

“...the first time they found out that their son had abused somebody they brushed it under the carpet and ignored it” (Jane:67-8)

This theme captures the unwillingness of her abuser’s family to acknowledge, discuss or address the sexual abuse perpetrated by her abuser, not just in relation to her and her daughter, but his earlier abuse of other members of the family. This earlier abuse was not reported to the police but was disclosed to Jane by her abuser’s sister, and Jane links the family’s avoidance of this to the future abuse her and her daughter suffered:

“...the only time I found out about the prior abuse, I already had both kids with him”

(Jane:381)
This avoidance by the family continued after Jane’s daughter disclosed her father was raping her. Jane wishes her abuser’s family to acknowledge and recognise the abuse and the harm it has caused, and considers that restorative justice may assist with this. Whilst there was no sense throughout her interview that the family did not believe it had occurred, there was a significant reluctance to discuss it:

“But it’s again, the denial, if we don’t talk about it, don’t think about it, don’t need to accept it.” (Jane:397-8)

Jane has subsequently begun talking openly about the sexual abuse her abuser perpetrated, leading to her being ostracised from the abuser’s family. She felt this reflected a family belief that it is the disclosure of the abuse that damages the family, rather than the abuse itself. This was particular driven by her abuser’s brother, distancing Jane from his wife, her childhood friend:

“I started trying to speak out, and he doesn’t like that, so he’s cut me off, and you don’t want anything to do with her.” (Jane:265-6)

4.2.2 Negotiating relationships

“I’m doing [pause] almost what’s right by me kids but in a way that, I’m happy with”

(Jane:227-8)

This theme incorporates Jane’s need to maintain a relationship with her abuser’s family, her negotiation to minimise the impact on her and her safeguarding concerns regarding her children. Jane is clear that she has no desire for any relationship, but that her children wish to see their grandparents and therefore she needs to maintain contact with them.
“I am hoping that at some point soon that they both turn around and say we don’t want to see their grandparents, cos it’d make it far easier for me.” (Jane:176-8)

Jane has significant concerns about this relationship, stemming from the avoidance behaviour demonstrated by her abuser’s parents and her fears that they remain in contact with him in prison, despite their denials of this. This leads her to fear that they pass information about the children to him:

“They’re their grandparents. But I don’t trust them with their own grandkids.”

(Jane:151-2)

Jane describes the current negotiated relationship is for her children to meet their grandparents at a contact centre. Although this provides her with reassurance about the nature of the contact without her having to be present herself, it has also served to reinforce her children’s relationship with their grandparents, as they enjoy focused time without other distractions. The contact centre cannot be used as a permanent solution, and Jane recognises she will need to further negotiate their contact; it is this negotiation she believes restorative justice may assist with:

“...at the moment because, the only way they get to see their grandkids is by actually following what I’m setting, is, I don’t know whether it helps or whether it causes more of a, a brick wall as to well, we’ll do it, but we’ll do it because we have to do it. It’s not, not necessarily what they want.” (Jane:221-4)

4.2.3 Ongoing impact of abuse
“...you both woke up one day and you never saw your Dad again. And he’s got no idea why. So he’s had to accept that his Dad’s not there but not know why. You know why your Dad’s not there but you don’t want him to be.” (Jane:563-5)

This theme encapsulates the impact of the abuse on her family, not only the harm directly caused but the additional harm of her children losing their father. Therefore, Jane also suffers the impact of the abuse on her children. Her daughter suffered significant sexual abuse pre-puberty, and Jane is currently guiding her through her teenage years. Her son was too young to understand what was happening and therefore Jane wishes to steer him through the gaining of this knowledge in an age appropriate way:

“My son, at times, wishes his Dad was around” (Jane:201)

Jane refers to an argument between her children whereby her daughter disclosed she had been abused, requiring Jane to intervene, pointing out the different types of harm caused to her children, not equating them but attempting to prevent a further gulf opening up between her children:

“...after he found out what had gone on, he did change his mind as to, well actually Dad’s not that lovely person I thought he was [pause]. Though if you caught him on different days, he’d recall the bad times [mmm] and not so much trying to look for the good.” (Jane:204-7)

Jane contrasts her circumstances to her sister’s, who also experienced a rape but without any relationship with her abuser. This focus on the differential lifelong impact caused by her abuser being her partner, the father of her children, highlights how the abuse is continuing to have an impact:

“...my sister, she was raped but by a complete stranger, so, for her, there isn’t anybody else.” (Jane:628-9)
4.2.4 Ongoing link to abuser

“I can’t, to me he’s the sperm donor. That’s all he is. He’s not their Dad, he doesn’t deserve to be their Dad.” (Jane:640-1)

This theme reflects the ongoing contact with the abuser that is necessary because he is the father of Jane’s children. Jane did not have to testify in court, and the abuser remains in prison at the time of the interview, but Jane still had to face him in a court room because of their children:

“I mean, the kids wanted to change their surname, because they both had his. And, I had to take him to court to get that changed, and I hated it, because he stood there, and was very [pause] smug almost.” (Jane:98-100)

Jane is cognisant of the fact that he will be released one day, and that he may return to their lives, although at this time her children do not wish to have any contact. In particular, Jane does not want her abuser to know where they live. She therefore sees the information passing from her children to the abuser via his family to represent a threat to them all:

“They even knew where we’d moved to, and I wanted, I needed a complete fresh start and I didn’t want them knowing where we were because I didn’t want that accidental oh we’re in the neighbourhood, kind of a [mmm] and we’re driving around because the kids might be out.” (Jane:120-3)

Jane retains faith that her daughter will continue to refuse any contact with her father, and believes she will react strongly to her grandparents if she feels they are a challenge to this:

“I mean it all could change as soon as he’s released from prison... the first possible sign that they may still be having something to do with him, I think then she’ll turn round and go you know what, do one.” (Jane:463-7)
4.2.5 Summary

Throughout Jane’s interview, and reflected through her most prevalent themes, is a sense of a live, current issue that Jane is grappling with. Jane is in the fortunate position of having her abuser in prison, but this has not created an environment in which she can move on from the abuse and live independently from it, because of the family relationships. Jane is aware that she needs to navigate these relationships in the best interests of her children, and retains an interest in restorative justice if this can assist her in doing so; to have the harm acknowledged, negotiate contact arrangements and protect her children from any further harm.

“Yeah, as families go they are possibly one of the most dysfunctional that you could meet... their views and their outlook on life, I don’t want them passing on to my children.” (Jane:359-62)

4.3 Alice: Her story through her themes

Alice experienced two contact offences of sexual abuse by an adult family friend when she was a child. Her brother suffered extensive serious sexual abuse by the same perpetrator for many years. When her brother reported his abuse to the police, she agreed to support him by doing so too, some 35 years after the offences occurred. The abuser was identified and arrested but not prosecuted. Her circle of emotion is shown at Appendix Q.

During her ISVA assisted questionnaire, Alice only discussed her abuser but split her feelings between how she felt towards him at the time of the offences, and how she felt about him at the time of the interview, registering a significant level of sadness towards him currently. Alice
demonstrated no interest in any type of restorative justice process, stating that she did not believe it to be appropriate for these types of offence, that she did not feel she would benefit her in any way but that he may gain some satisfaction from seeing her and discussing his abuse of her.

The semi-structured interview took place in a counselling room at the host organisations’ premises. Alice completed her interview without her ISVA present, at her request. The recording lasted 1 hour and 19 minutes and Alice spoke freely and comfortably for the entire time. In total, 51 themes were identified across her interview (Appendix R) with 10 of those being identified only once. Her most prevalent themes are expanded upon below.

4.3.1 Journey of recovery

“I kind of taken the view that you’re gonna move at your own speed, and some people will move through it quickly, and some people, like me, need thirty-five years,” (Alice:140-142)

This theme encapsulates the sense of a personal timeline for Alice, a journey through various perspectives and considerations about her abuse and abuser, and her changing feelings towards it during her life to date. For Alice, this has involved moving through feelings of denial, through self-blame, blaming the abuser, before finally moving to a position of forgiveness, a position she held for about five to six years:

“I’ve been through it a number of um, thoughts er, along, the er, along the years, in terms of how I’ve felt about that individual, in an attempt to try and deal with it, put it in the right place, so that it doesn’t consume me,” (Alice:63-5)
Alice recognises that forgiveness is an unusual position to arrive at, and describes it as part of a reflective, spiritual process of making peace with previous events in her life, to prevent them being so consuming, and to minimise the emotional impact when thoughts were triggered:

“...some of the, erm, anger, or, er any resentment that I’m holding in for people, and obviously that would have been one of the things, and it was looking at forgiving all of that, and forgiving those people, so that I can move on, it’s very selfish, it was nothing to do with him.” (Alice:271-3)

Alice’s feelings of relative peace were disrupted by the process of reporting the abuse to the police, in particular the police interview, which triggered a range of additional emotions. These have then brought her into counselling to seek a new position of peace, taking her on another stage of her journey of recovery:

“...my only saving grace is that I’m telling myself, whether it’s right or not, that eventually I will be better for all of this [laughing]” (Alice:352-3)

4.3.2 Shared experience / different journey

“But it was something my brother said to me once, he said {Alice} we are damaged goods” (Alice:53-4)

The theme reflects Alice’s experiences alongside those of her brother, and the influence this has had on her feelings about the abuse, her success at recovery and her decision to report the abuse to the police. Their family know about her brother’s abuse, but she has not disclosed her own to them:
“They know all about {her brother}, but for him it’s all about him, you know. Which is right, it’s how it should be.” (Alice:250-1)

This leads to a dichotomy of emotions for Alice, on the one hand considering herself fortunate in comparison to her brother and recognising his position as the greater victim. On the other, Alice has adapted her recovery and her wishes regarding the abuse to accommodate her brother’s. This is most clear when Alice discusses reporting the abuse to the police in order to support him, and the impact it has had on her:

“I just felt it was all put on me, you know rather than me, coming forward to say ok I’m ready now, if ever that point would have needed to have been reached, erm I may not have had to go through that,” (Alice:347-9)

The link between her and her brother’s abuse has been strengthened by this process, with her brother willing to discuss it openly and continuing to drive the dialogue surrounding the abuse, whereas Alice is struggling again with her emotions towards the abuse:

“I’m content for it just to be where it’s at, you know, erm. But my brother’s not, he, he wants justice, he desperately wants it, yea .” (Alice:431-2)

4.3.3 Rejection of restorative justice

“I can’t see for one minute what me having a conversation with him would change. It certainly wouldn’t be for me, I don’t feel like I need him there, I think he would be the one that would get some satisfaction out of it,” (Alice:78-80)

This theme incorporates Alice’s rejection of restorative justice as a process that has any role in cases of sexual violence, as well as her personal rejection of the process as relevant or
beneficial for her. Alice does not believe it could or would contribute to her process of recovery, and sees significant danger for herself in taking part in such a process:

“...bringing that person there in front of me, would automatically in my view, put me into that vulnerable situation where that child is” (Alice:128-9)

More generally, Alice raises criticism of restorative justice based around its ability to assist in rehabilitation when she believes there are other, more appropriate methods, as well as a fear that the time frame would be imposed by the criminal justice system rather than reflecting a victim’s journey:

“...you’re talking about someone’s sexual preferences, they aren’t easy to change” (Alice:497-8)

“I don’t know how you can highlight when the time would be right for any one individual.” (Alice:147-8)

Alice does however recognise that a significant element of her own journey involved her professional knowledge of sex offenders, and that this may have answered some of the questions that others may wish to address using restorative justice:

“...it’s certainly helped me I think by working with other sexual offenders erm, who, er have different victims obviously, [mmm] but you can get a sense of how they roll in the world, [yeah] and how they think and their behaviour.” (Alice:438-40)

4.3.4 Sex offenders are different

“...they all have the same modus operandi, you know [yeah] they, they have the same way of thinking, you know, so maybe, maybe that has helped me” (Alice:441-3)
This theme incorporates Alice’s view of sex offenders as a group, and the differences between sex offenders and other types of offenders. She refers to their offending as a deep-seated fault, their sexual preference, and focuses on challenging and adapting their behaviour to control their impulses and limit the damage they can cause:

“...cos I know how they function I know how they roll, I know where, when they are manipulating the situation, I know when they are um, I, I can see where the wonky wiring is, you know,” (Alice:464-6)

The importance of this knowledge shows when Alice talks about her own abuser, and how this knowledge helped her reach a position of peace regarding him:

“...something’s happened along the way for him that he’s become that way, and I don’t necessarily mean he’s been abused or anything, he could have just been how his, how he functions, how his brain works, how he’s been able to, erm, accept those, those thoughts and feelings that are not quite right,” (Alice:85-8)

Underlying her comments however is a strong degree of humanity for sex offenders, an unwillingness to fully categorise them solely according to their offences:

“They are people. And they have just the same as most people on every other level. They’ve just got this one particularly aspect of their behaviour wrong” (Alice:530-2)

4.3.3 Summary

Throughout Alice’s interview, and reflected in her most prevalent themes, is a sense of a highly personal experience, bespoke to her and within her control, and therefore she shows her resistance to external influence on her reactions and feelings towards the abuse. She rejects the prospect of restorative justice for her on the basis of this personal journey and her
professional knowledge of sex offenders. In particular, she highlights the effect of non-disclosure, of having dealt with the issue privately for a significant length of time which has produced in her a desire to continue to manage the issue privately and at her own pace:

“...it’s a personal journey, it’s a personal thought process, of someone who hasn’t disclosed to anyone you’re not gonna tell everyone, you become very good at hiding stuff” (Alice:135-7)

4.4 Helen: Her story through her themes

Helen was abused by a friend’s family member when she was a child, over the course of approximately two years. She went on to experience single one off instances of sexual assault as a teenager, before entering a violent marriage at 18 years old, during which she suffered significant levels of serious sexual abuse. Helen escaped her marriage 21 years prior to her interview, and has been free from sexual abuse in that time. She has not reported any of the abusers to the police, nor has she had any contact with them in the intervening years. Her circle of emotion is reproduced at Appendix S.

During her ISVA assisted questionnaire, Helen showed her strongest emotions when discussing her initial abuse by a family member of her best friend, along with emotions relating to her subsequent relationship with another member of the family, and the pregnancy that arose from it. She describes her anger towards her first abuser and her first boyfriend as something she cannot let go of, and her annoyance with her best friend as she knew what was happening and encouraged it. Helen showed strong interest in a restorative justice process with her previous best friend and her first boyfriend, either by writing a letter or having a conversation
via a facilitator. She did not wish to take part in any process then involved meeting them, due to her concerns about appearing significantly different as a result of weight gain. She wished to be able to challenge them about their behaviour towards her, and to tell them about the abuse she suffered and how that impacted on her behaviour.

The semi-structured interview took place in a counselling room at the host organisations’ premises, in the presence of her ISVA. Due to a physical disability, it was not possible to undertake a lengthy interview, and the recording lasted 60 minutes in total. Helen was willing to discuss all the abusers in her life as well as providing specific detail of offences she had suffered, and frequently moved her account towards some of the more traumatic events in her life linked with these individuals. In total, 32 themes were identified, (Appendix T) with nine of those being identified only once. Her most prevalent themes are expanded upon below.

4.4.1 Vulnerability

“And then I have to keep remembering, reminding myself, my God, you were 12”

(Helen:86-7)

This theme incorporates the initial vulnerability with which Helen presented prior to any sexual abuse occurring, and the cumulative events and traumas through her childhood years that left her in an enhanced position of vulnerability by the time she met her husband. Helen references a difficult relationship with her parents, which she felt left her vulnerable to the attention showed to her by her first abuser:
“I’m not saying me Mum and Dad were bad parents cos they weren’t. But I never felt loved” (Helen:91-3)

Helen discusses feelings of maturity linked to her abuse, and a subsequent feeling of loss for her childhood. The abuse stopped when she began menstruating, but she continued to engage in an ongoing search for a sense of feeling loved:

“I still, still went to his house like, cos I was very close to his Mum and Dad, very close. [mmm]. At times I was closer to them than my own Mum and Dad [right]. I used to go, I’d clean the house and everything.” (Helen:212-4)

There is a sense of an enhanced state of vulnerability that prepares Helen for entering her relationship with her husband, during which she suffered horrific abuse. However, with the abuse came the relationship that Helen had sought, and demonstrates the consequential cycle of vulnerability and abuse:

“But the daft thing was I loved him.” (Helen:257)

4.4.2 Impact of abuse

“Yeah, it was just an act, it was just something you did” (Helen:152)

This theme references the physical and emotional impact of the abuse suffered by Helen, following her initial abuse as well as following her marriage. Helen had a relationship post her initial abuse with a member of her abuser’s family, and maintained a sexual relationship with him after he had ended their emotional relationship:

“...cos I couldn’t let go, I used to work in a solicitors, and he used to meet me at dinner time and we’d just go and have sex, and that’s when I got caught.” (Helen:209-11)
By the time Helen had had an abortion, she was suffering from eating disorders and engaging in reckless and self-harming behaviours:

“...started to drink when I was about 13 14, any opportunity I could, I’d have a drink, and I’d take paracetamol with it [mmm] so’s I’d get, just totally [mmm] hammered. Er, I mean I still do now.” (Helen:222-5)

The impact of the abuse committed by her husband culminated in a suicide attempt, following which she was helped to leave her marriage, demonstrating the scale of the impact Helen has suffered:

“I took a massive overdose and, I was taken to hospital, psychiatric nurse saw me, erm, and I was admitted to the psychiatric unit. Where I spent 12 month.” (Helen:259-60)

4.4.3 Re-orientating

“I blame myself, for going back, do you know what I mean [yeah] But then I’m like, I have to keep telling myself, yeah you were 12 he was 18,” (Helen:93-5)

This theme captures the sense of a changing view of her childhood abuse over time. It highlights the need to reconcile recollections of her experience through the eyes of the child she was with the understanding of the experience through her current eyes as an adult. Shifting between these two positions enables Helen to mitigate some of the blame she places on herself:

“I knew I shouldn’t have been doing it but it just happened” (Helen:97-8)

Helen states she understood at the time that they were doing something they shouldn’t be, that it must be a secret, and this sense of complicity has left Helen having to re-orientate her
recollections as her understanding as to just how wrong the behaviour was has become apparent to her. Whilst Helen has re-orientated her view of her childhood behaviour through her adult eyes, she continues to attribute full adult understanding to her childhood friend:

“I know she knew what was going on. [pause]. And I, I do blame her in a lot of ways.”

(Helen:132)

Helen’s friend was the same age as she, and Helen feels she has complicity in her abuse, having introduced her to the abuser and being aware as to what was happening. Helen continues to feel strongly that her friend failed to protect her, providing her with no accommodation for her own young age at the time, and it is this failure to challenge that she wishes to address through restorative justice:

“She could have told somebody. She could have done something to stop it, do you know what I mean? She could even have spoke to him. Cos like I say, he was 18. [pause] She did nothing.” (Helen:135-6)

4.4.4 Grooming

“...we used to go on a Sunday for tea, all the family used to meet up on a Sunday for tea, and then all the adults would go to the pub, and we’d stay back,” (Helen:80-2)

This theme covers Helen’s description as to how her initial abuser gained and maintained the access and secrecy required to conduct his abuse, whilst making her feel complicit in it. Helen’s parents were close friends with her abuser’s parents, creating a tight knit environment incorporating routine contact and therefore regular access. Helen describes how they had known each other for six months before the abuse began:
“...he says, come upstairs and we’ll go have a chat. And that’s when he did it”

(Helen:83-4)

The abuse continued as Helen felt an emotional attachment to her abuser, a result of receiving the attention she did not experience elsewhere. The routine contact assisting in maintaining that emotional bond, despite Helen’s awareness that it was false:

“And, like as soon as the act was over, he would just go. Erm, I was nothing then.”

(Helen:114-5)

The emotional rejection she felt kept Helen returning to seek further connection, leaving her seeing herself as complicit in her abuse rather than vulnerable. Helen retains awareness as to how strong her emotional attachment was at that time, and how it enabled the abuse to continue:

“And even though I knew what he was doing, I kept going back. And I think it was for, I think it was because [pause] erm, how can I put it? [pause] It wasn’t love, he, he, he, but I felt that” (Helen:87-9)

4.4.5 Summary

Throughout Helen’s interview, and reflected in her most prevalent themes, is an image of a highly vulnerable young female who had the misfortune of experiencing multiple abusive events at the hands of multiple abusers. The cumulative nature of these events become clear as she discusses the escalation of trauma and abuse as she entered her marriage, albeit she was less inclined to reflect upon that time during her interview. Helen maintained her desire to engage in restorative justice practices with some of those around her when she was abused, rather than directly with her abusers, albeit with the caveat of not wanting to meet directly
with them. Overall there is a sense of Helen still coming to terms with her abusive years, her changing perspective of that abuse, and moving towards seeking to understand how so many abusive men were part of her life:

“I think the thing I struggle with the most is, what gave men the right to treat me like they treated me?” (Helen:264-5)

4.5 Emma: Her story through her themes

Emma suffered serious sexual abuse whilst a young child, committed by an older child who was a friend of the family. She later learned that he was her cousin, and had been adopted by her parents’ friends. The abuse ceased when family arrangements for care of the children varied, meaning Emma remained in close contact but was naturally safeguarded by the presence of older siblings. Emma has subsequently ceased to have any contact, and for many years had forgotten about the abuse, recalling it vividly in the last few years and seeking counselling. At the time of the interview occurring, 35 years had passed since she was last abused. She has not reported the abuse to the police, but has disclosed to her family when she began counselling. Emma fears that her abuser will return to her life given the family connections. Her circle of emotion is shown in Appendix U.

During her ISVA assisted questionnaire, Emma identified her feelings regarding her abuser primarily as guilt, arising from the sense she was a willing participant in her own abuse. Emma demonstrated significant levels of interest in a restorative justice process with both her abuser and her abuser’s father, in the form of writing letters to them (as her abuser’s father is deceased this was the only option available for consideration). Writing a letter was the only
method she was willing to consider in relation to the abuser until she had gained further emotional strength, adding that she had the alternative option of letting her sister make contact with him.

The semi-structured interview took place in a counselling room at the host organisations’ premises, in the presence of Emma’s ISVA. The recording lasted just 48 minutes in total and Emma seemed to find the discussion difficult, at times choosing not to expand on certain points and appearing tired towards the end of the interview, at which point it was brought to an early conclusion. In total, 32 themes were identified across her interview (Appendix V) with 11 of those being identified only once. Her most prevalent themes are expanded upon below.

4.5.1 Intertwined relationships

“It’s almost, it’s like I fear, him getting in touch with Dad” (Emma:104)

This theme summarises the complexity of the relationships between Emma and her abuser. Whilst close friendships kept Emma and her abuser near when they were children, learning that there was a closer familial relationship between them has created a life-long link:

“He was adopted from my aunt, my aunt is his birth mum...And he’s only found out recently, that my Dad is his uncle.” (Emma:67-73)

One complication of this is that Emma fears him visiting her parents, re-entering her life in search of information about his own. Additionally, this means that decisions regarding contact, and any subsequent disclosure, are not purely within Emma’s control, with other family members also holding the ability to do so:
“I don’t want to worry about him or worry about what, if he’s going to be coming around, or [pause]. I mean when my sister was on about writing to him I was like please no, please don’t speak,” (Emma:226-8)

Overall, this means that Emma’s experience of abuse is fully intertwined with the family’s experience of the adoption and her subsequent disclosure of abuse:

“On one hand Dad feels proud of him cos he went off to university and got a degree, and he’s got quite a good job. But on the other hand, I think he was, he was horrified by what’s [pause] happened. And quite shocked really.” (Emma:84-6)

4.5.2 Talking and therapy

“It might be, it’d just that, give me a little more peace, [a bit more peace?] that’s it, it’s actually out there” (Emma:261-2)

This theme encapsulates Emma’s considerations regarding the therapeutic value of talking about her abuse and the surrounding circumstances. Initially, Emma reflected on the assisted questionnaire and the therapeutic value this brought to her in her later counselling sessions:

“It’s ok, but it did open up some, things that I’ve never, ever thought of before.” (Emma:14)

Emma expands on this theme during her discussions about her parents. She reflects on the differences between her relationship with her father; with whom she has not discussed the abuse and no longer feels close to; and her mother, towards whom she felt a lot of anger. This open display of emotion and her clarity of feeling have enabled the issues to be tackled and progressed:
“She feels like, she let me down. But actually, if anything has come from being angry towards me Mum, we’ve probably become closer.” (Emma:142-3)

Emma recognises that the next therapeutic step for her has to involve her abuser, as the only step available that would create significant change. It is this step that Emma believes would put the issue out in the open, rather than being inside her head, and bring her some peace:

“Suppose in some respects, it’s actually got to be, [abuser] knowing. What he’s done. He can be told what’s he’s done but whether he’ll accept it or not is another matter [mmm]. And getting the positive, reply from that would help.” (Emma:231-3)

4.5.3 Grooming

“I feel, he made, he made the abuse into a type of game” (Emma:120)

This theme captures Emma’s reflections on the grooming process her abuser used, in order to initiate and continue to perpetrate his abuse against her. They were both children; Emma was 7 or 8 years old, her abuser 11 or 12 years old, and they played together whilst their parents socialised together:

“I used to go to his house, and sit in his bedroom, we used to play, sort of Monopoly” (Emma:123-4)

The abuser perpetrated the abuse through a game he designed, building on the access and credibility of their existing play. This created a framework whereby the abuser could continue and escalate the sexual abuse, maintaining control whilst appearing to show the acts were conducted via chance. In doing so, Emma was left feeling complicit in their activities:
“So he’d roll the dice and then what number came on the dice that was what, that’s what would happen [right]. He’d write written sheets with one to six on...So I suppose, you know, because it’s a game, it just felt like, a participant in the abuse” (Emma:121-6)

Emma’s feelings of complicity are further enhanced by her recollection of her responses to the abuse. These may also play a part in Emma’s worries that her abuser would still believe the game was natural exploration rather than abuse:

“...the other part of feeling guilty is the fact that, some of it was pleasurable and, that’s really hard to, say, when what had happened to you was wrong.” (Emma:126-8)

4.5.4 Vulnerability

“Cos it seems like he’s got this power over me, I haven’t managed to, to shift it yet” (Emma:299)

This theme comprises Emma’s reflections on her vulnerability at the time of the abuse as well as her reflections on vulnerability of children in general. Emma recognises the innate vulnerability of children and therefore her own vulnerability at 7 years old:

“Children didn’t have a voice. Children only have a very small voice now.” (Emma:276)

Emma was younger than her siblings and therefore they were not present on the family visits and could not provide any natural safeguarding protection; once the socialising moved to her house they did so and the abuse stopped. Emma does recognise she became his victim due to proximity, availability and vulnerability:
“I suppose I want to know why me [pause]. I suppose the answer to that is that I was there and I was vulnerable already, so [pause]. So I was just a very easy target.” (Emma:165-6)

Whilst Emma understands her vulnerability at the time of the offences, she struggles to understand her current feelings of vulnerability towards her abuser:

“I don’t know why he’s still got that hold over me.” (Emma:202-3)

4.5.5 Summary

Through the course of her interview the impact of the abuse on Emma was palpable, and reflects in her current vulnerability. Emma desires significant change that would assist her to gain peace from the thoughts of the abuse that she carries with her. Whilst she showed interest in a restorative justice process during her assisted questionnaire, as her discussion in the semi-structured interview progressed she appeared to recognise the vulnerability she still felt, leaving her to focus on what she needed to change before taking part in a process rather than what potential change could occur after taking part.

“I think for some people it would work, it would be really good, if that’s what they needed [pause] I just don’t see myself at the moment being [pause], emotionally strong enough to do it. [pause]. Cos it seems like he’s got this power over me, I haven’t managed to, to shift it yet” (Emma:297-9)

4.6 Clare: Her story through her themes
Clare had previously suffered serious sexual abuse whilst a child, and was receiving counselling services when she suffered a further, non-contact sexual offence by a male she did not know who was accompanying another service user. Clare reported this incident, but did not receive the response she anticipated from the police, or the counselling service provider. In addition, this incident triggered underlying unresolved issues regarding her earlier abuse and her family relationships, causing further harm. Her circle of emotion is reproduced in Appendix W.

During her ISVA assisted questionnaire, Clare identified very strong feelings towards a number of individuals and organisations related to the abusive incident. Clare showed significant levels of interest in a restorative justice process, preferring a face to face meeting with her family members, and showing some interest in doing so with the perpetrator. She also demonstrated strong interest in a restorative process with the police, and in having a conversation through a facilitator with the service provider.

The semi-structured interview took place in a counselling room at the host organisations’ premises, in the presence of Clare’s ISVA. The recording lasted 1 hour 53 minutes in total and she discussed her recent experiences openly, offering a wider view of the service provision she had received and her thoughts for improvement. Whilst she made reference at moments to her previous sexual abuse and its impact, she did not wish to discuss those experiences as part of her interview. In total, 81 themes were identified across her interview (see Appendix X) with 25 of those being identified only once. Her most prevalent themes are expanded upon below.
4.6.1 Loss of faith

“Because, I thought I was safe, every time I came, I was ok, until that happened, and actually, you can’t really say it’s a safe place anymore, really.” (Clare:634-5)

This theme draws together the consummate loss of faith that Clare has suffered in the organisations she turned to for help following the incident. Overall, there is a sense of a cost to Clare through additional stress and anxiety caused by the reporting process, through the multiple interactions with the police, without any balancing reassurance in the police to have done what she felt should have been done:

“But that also goes to show that, I don’t trust it [mmm] I don’t, not at all one iota, and I’ve, to be honest I’ve always said to people, oh, you need to report it... But now I feel like there is no point in reporting things, cos nothing gets dealt with properly.”

(Clare:768-71)

The actions of the service provider also left Clare suffering a loss of faith in the organisation, focusing on their unwillingness to take any action to prevent further offences, such as installing CCTV, leading Clare to feel that the place was not safe for her anymore, and that the organisation was failing in its duty of care towards its clients:\footnote{Clare was unaware at the time of her interview, but preventative measures were being taken by the service provider, who sourced a receptionist for the waiting area. This was communicated to Clare after the interview.}

“But I feel like, [pause] they’re a care organisation, they’re providing a counselling service [mmm] about abuse [pause], so therefore, something should be put in place, no matter what.” (Clare:623-4)
Building on her previous experience, Clare sees no benefit in raising complaints against the organisations concerned, as her loss of faith in the organisations means she does not anticipate an alternative response:

“...if they can’t be arsed to do that and make that little bit of effort, or go that extra mile to make sure that things are ok [mmm] then obviously they’re not going to do anything with my bloody letter are they?” (Clare:772-4)

4.6.2 Wish to prevent

“I’m thinking, how can we make him not do this stuff, but not inflict pain or anger.”

(Clare:486-7)

The theme covers the strong, repeated statements by Clare that her focus is on preventing any further harm, whether to the daughter of the perpetrator or to others, her preference for rehabilitative action than punishment, or her desire to see CCTV or other preventative measures taken at the service provider’s premises:

“And I just think, if they’d have took the time to find him properly and have words, it could have reduced [yeah] the other risks, [yeah] of other people.” (Clare:130-2)

Most striking is Clare’s discussion of the outcomes she would wish to see, her considerations that rehabilitation is her preferred outcome as it reduces the risk for others:

“...if you hit him, punch him, whatever, it’s not going to make much difference... I’d prefer, if something was more positive, [pause] have an interaction, I don’t know, teaching, learning, I don’t know, something to make him not do it again.” (Clare:488-493)
Clare links the taking of preventative action as a successful outcome for her, calling it an achievement, a sense that something positive has been gained as a result of her willingness to report the incident:

“...the fact that it would give him, I don’t know, and like an educational, or, or something [mmm] and if it did work [mmm] [pause] then I’ve achieved something, and I’ve achieved [pause] reduction of other people getting hurt, when they didn’t need to.”

(Claire:500-2)

4.6.3 Failure in service

“It’s very different to say ‘we will find him and we will speak to him’, rather than ‘oh we’ll try and find him, see what happens’. It’s a different expectation, completely altogether, I think. So it’s a big massive let down when that doesn’t happen”

(Claire:187-9)

This theme covers the specific lack of action from organisations following her report, which Clare highlighted as having let her down, stemming directly from having received assurances that certain actions would be taken that were then not, rather than having unreasonable expectations in the first place:

“Because they promised like, when I spoke to them, I asked them to tell my therapist, what had happened, and they didn’t [right] and that really annoyed me. Really annoyed me. Because, I know that my therapist would have phoned me up, because she knows what I’m like” (Claire:572-4)
The combined failure in service that Clare had expected from the organisations concerned was linked directly by Clare to additional stress and anxiety being caused, compounding the initial incident of abuse into a more traumatic event:

“Where, because that wasn’t communicated, I feel like they had a duty of care there, and that, that didn’t happen, [right] and that pissed me off, [yeah] because I went all week waiting, [pause] and, I, I went a bit nutty, to be fair, erm” (Clare:579-81)

As before though, Clare saves her strongest reaction for areas where she feels others have been let down, where risks have not been appropriately addressed:

“I found out, that it took, about a week or a week and a half, until, any kind of safeguarding thing was put in place, [right] or asked, or queried, whatever, so that really fucked me off, massively, [mmm] really made me angry.” (Clare:820-2)

4.6.4 Rippling impact

“...don’t bloody matter what this, what that, it still has an impact, and it has affected me, and you should appreciate that.” (Clare:335-6)

This theme incorporates the wider impact the incident had on Clare through its interaction with other events and reinforcement of previous trauma. In particular, her mother’s reaction to the incident brought back feelings of being dismissed, linked to her earlier abuse, and Clare reacted strongly to the indication that the incident was not sufficiently serious to have caused her the upset she was demonstrating:

---

2 The response was reviewed by the service provider and management advice provided to the member of staff involved.
“...cos before I used to have people, have my family saying, ‘you shouldn’t be feeling like this, you shouldn’t be feeling like that’, where now I’m like, ‘no, I feel like this, because I feel like it, you’ve got to accept it.” (Clare:852-4)

Clare felt the impact of the incident threatened the entire progress she had made over two years of counselling for her earlier abuse, a sense that was heightened through the loss of her counsellor two weeks after the incident. Clare believed this was linked to how the service provider communicated with her counsellor after the incident was reported, despite knowing her counsellor was planning to leave before the incident occurred. This loss was still felt strongly by Clare at the time of her interview, with her emotions linked to this taking her by surprise:

“I said to her, I feel like I’m going to be at the sta..., at the beginning again, like two years ago, and she said, we’ve made really good progress ... I would’ve felt a bit like, stronger, if I had her.” (Clare:691-5)

4.6.5 Summary

Overall, Clare’s response to this incident is intrinsically linked to her earlier abuse and experiences, on which Clare did not wish to be drawn during the interview. Clare wishes her family to understand how her previous abuse impacted upon her reaction to this incident, and she demonstrates her strong sense of engagement in preventing further offences and in improving the services that respond to victims. She retained a strong interest in restorative justice as a method for achieving this, recognising the importance of being able to have her say, and believing that it would restore the power that had been removed from her when the offence was committed:
“...so I think it’s really important that you have these kind of processes, so that if people wanted to say something, they could [mmm] because, [longer pause] like me, I’d be able to live with meself a little bit better. I’ve got things off my chest, don’t need to hold it, I can deal with it and then let it go.” (Clare:883-6)

4.7 Summary

This chapter presented the stories of sexual abuse and recovery as experienced by each participant, and their reflections as to the feelings of justice and recovery that they were seeking. Through the analysis enabled by IPA as an analytical method, each individual voice has been heard, and an understanding of the perspective of each participant has been provided. This prioritisation of each individual voice highlights the character of the journey each participant is undertaking, and the personal challenges they experience years, often decades, after the abuse has occurred. Despite the passing of time, the participants retain links to their abusers, their family members, the institutions or the locations associated with their abuse, and it is their orientation to these current links and a sense of the future change they are seeking that influences their reflections regarding restorative justice processes in their cases.
Chapter Five: Making Sense

This chapter presents the analysis of the participants’ accounts, through combining the themes identified from their interviews. Themes from a minimum of three of the six interviews combine to create cross-themes, which have been grouped together in sections due to their similarity or complementary nature. Extensive quotes are presented to justify the conclusions drawn; where these were presented as part of chapter four, this is indicated by the chapter, section and heading reference in brackets. These sections are combined into three super-ordinate themes; vulnerability, recognition of the act and the impact, and control of the narrative. These are over-arching findings that seek to make sense of the combined accounts of the participants, and enable the theoretical interpretation of the findings of this research study.

Vulnerability represents the combination of the participants’ susceptibility to abuse, the predatory nature of their abuser and the failure of those around the participant to intervene or otherwise protect them from the abuse, or from the further harm that was subsequently caused. In doing so, the role of these facilitators of abuse is identified, and the reflections of the participants on the possibility of conducting a restorative justice process with them are illuminated. The second super-ordinate theme, recognising the act and the impact, discusses the participants’ expressions of their attempts to seek recognition of the sexual abuse they have suffered, whether through the criminal justice system or through disclosure to others. However, even when the act of abuse has been recognised, recognising the impact of the abuse is described by many participants as missing from the justice processes they have experienced, or is the justice outcome that they are seeking. Finally, control of their narrative provides the indications as to what the participants are seeking to achieve through a
restorative justice process. The ability to frame their own experiences, have these heard and privileged over other accounts of their abuse is central to their sense of empowerment in their recovery from their abuse. In doing so, the role of professional knowledge in assisting the participants to craft and understand their own stories is signalled.

5.1 Vulnerability

5.1.1 Susceptibility

This section focuses on the discussion of the participants regarding their own susceptibility to abuse, and their reflections on the reasons they were left vulnerable to abuse. This includes their vulnerability as a result of their age, and their sense of parental neglect. This section therefore represents the elements relating to the participant herself rather than the environment they were in or the behaviour of their abusers.

Vulnerability

This cross-theme highlights the similarities in the reported vulnerabilities of the participants, which in these cases stem back to the age at which they initially suffered abuse. All were children when they were initiated into their abusive relationships; whilst family circumstances left some more vulnerable than others, their age in comparison with their abusers is a key consistent point. The abuse left them further vulnerable, with Sarah and Helen suffering from further abuse by other offenders.
Sarah was a child when she was abused by her parents, meaning her vulnerability in this situation was complete; not just as a child but without any protective factor at all. However, there is an additional vulnerability described by her; her place in the family as the only daughter. Being female placed Sarah in a more vulnerable situation than her brothers, leading her to suffer sexual abuse in addition to the physical abuse they suffered. Sarah’s vulnerability was such that she was then further abused by other members of the family, enhancing her vulnerability:

“I tried all sorts as a child just to fit in, in my own family, look like a boy, pretend I’m a boy, playing like a boy, so I did.” (Sarah:91-2)

“And then, as for me uncle and auntie. They knew I was already an easy target, from me parents, they knew I was already broken” (Sarah:59-60)

Alice was a child within a family that was particularly vulnerable due to the loss of her mother at an early age. Alice recognises the effect on her and her brother of this loss, and how it led to her being open to the abuser when he arrived within the family:

“...he spotted a vulnerable family, my mother had died when we were four years old so my father was trying to raise three children, he was only very young still himself, “ (Alice:159-61)

“...my sister was only two at the time, so his efforts, my father’s efforts went on her, because she was younger [mmm] my brother and I were four, ...so his concentration went on her, which left me and my brother practically fending for ourselves, from, from a very early age. “ (Alice:168-72)
Helen and Emma were children who were targeted by older children, vulnerable as a result of their age and the age difference between them and their abuser. Helen was on the cusp of adolescence, naturally seeking to feel older and more mature than she was. Emma was 7 or 8 years old, and recognises she was simply available to her twelve-year-old abuser at that time:

“'I was quite mature for me age. Er, and then when that happened, I felt even more adult, I felt as if me childhood had gone.' (Helen:102-3)

“I suppose I want to know why me? [pause] I suppose the answer to that is that I was there and I was vulnerable already, so [pause]. So I was just a very easy target.”

(Emma:165-6)

Clare did not wish to discuss her earlier abuse as a child that had brought her into counselling with the service provider, referencing it only to demonstrate the impact of the earlier abuse on her reaction to her recent abuse. Jane described how she had begun her relationship with her abuser when she was 15 years old, when he was 26 years old, and how he had separated her from her family, increasing her vulnerability in a manner recognisable as a domestically abusive relationship:

“He pushed my parents away so that, I only had his family to rely on [pause]. That if I had a problem, that they were the only people I could turn to.” (Jane:195-7)

Age is a consistent factor in the vulnerability of the participants, with early life experiences creating the future vulnerability for those suffering additional abuse in adulthood. Whilst there are other factors present which enhance their vulnerability to abuse, which are discussed below, the age at which they began to suffer abuse is a constant theme through all their stories.
Parental neglect

In addition to their vulnerability due to their age, three of the participants report additional vulnerability as a result of their relationships with their parents, which they felt left them particularly vulnerable to abuse. There are different reasons leading to these feelings of parental neglect, but the link between this and their abuse is made by the participants:

“Me and my brother were targeted, because we didn’t have attention from, from my Dad, so, you know, we instantly got some attention from this person we attached ourselves to him, ... lots of nice positive strokes from this person,” (Alice:172-5)

Alice links her and her brother’s reaction to their abuser to their father’s difficulties in bringing up three small children as a lone parent. She does not suggest that her father did so deliberately or through malice, but as an unfortunate consequence of their circumstances. Helen makes similar comments about her parents’ behaviour towards her, but without any of Alice’s understanding as to why that might be:

“I’m not saying me Mum and Dad were bad parents cos they weren’t. But I never felt loved.” (Helen:91-2)

“And I’ve had no help from anywhere. I mean my anorexia and me bulimia, as a parent now, as I am, I’d know, if my kids had got a problem.” (Helen:206-8)

This view Helen holds of her parents’ behaviour in comparison with her own parenting behaviour is shared by Sarah. Being abused by her parents shows the clear malevolence of their neglect of her, but Sarah’s horror at the extent of it grows as she experiences the parental side of the equation:
“I see pictures of meself from family, ah, weren’t you such a cute child, and then you think, actually, that doesn’t look like me it looks like one of me own, and then it makes it all the more, more, more worse.” (Sarah:335-7)

Whilst not as consistent a factor as age, the role of their parents in their vulnerability is sufficiently present to warrant its collation as a theme, having as it did a significant impact on the participants’ reports of their vulnerability as children.

5.1.2 Facilitation

This section explores the environment the participants describe, the behaviour of those around them and the actions of others that enabled the circumstances within which they became a victim of sexual abuse. It includes the intertwined relationships that created the environment in which the abuse occurred, as well as the participants’ reflections as to the failure of others to intervene and prevent the abuse occurring.

Intertwined relationships

This cross-theme correlates the family relationships that brought the participants into contact with their abusers and assisted to create an environment in which abuse could occur. It also extends to the ongoing relationships post-abuse, which complicate the participants’ recovery or their gaining physical and emotional distance from their abuser. Abuse by a member of the participants’ own family brings its own obvious family link, and its lifelong impact is demonstrated by the continuation of that relationship despite the abuse. Sarah’s family remain her family after her abuse, and the ongoing loss of this is demonstrated through her description of the legacy of the abuse [4.1.1]. Jane’s partner remains the father of her children
irrespective of the abuse he has committed against her and her daughter [4.2.4]. This leaves her with ongoing relationships with the remainder of his family, keeping her tied into family links with the abuser through her children’s wish to maintain a relationship with their parental grandparents:

“I can’t, to me he’s the sperm donor. That’s all he is. He’s not their Dad, he doesn’t deserve to be their Dad. But the kids want to see their grandparents.” (Jane:640-1)

Emma’s abuser was the son of her parents’ friends, a friendship that brought regular contact between Emma and her abuser. Unknown to her at the time but known to both her and her abuser now, her abuser is her cousin, adopted at a young age into their friend’s family, creating an ongoing family link. It is this link that prompted her recollection of the abuse, sparked by her father discussing her abuser, and complicates their ongoing relationship:

“And my Dad just said over Sunday lunch, erm, something about {the abuser}, and all of a sudden it just came into my head and it was like, it opened up, what had gone on,” (Emma:46-8)

“...they’ve taken {the abuser’s} photograph down off the, [pause] off the unit, now, so that’s not so bad when I go visiting.” (Emma:90-1)

Whilst Alice has no ongoing links with her abuser, she has a lifelong link with her brother, who was also abused by the same person. This ties her considerations of her abuse with her brother’s, leading her to diminish her own experiences in comparison with his, and in particular reporting to the police to support him when this was not what she would have personally chosen [4.3.2]. This cross-theme describes how relationships sculpt an environment in which the participant is in close, ongoing contact with their abuser, which not only facilitates
their abuse but complicates their attempts to extract themselves from the abusive environment.

**Failure to protect**

This cross-theme reflects the participants’ belief that others around them were in a position to intervene and stop the abuse they were suffering, or could have been expected to have intervened at an earlier juncture and prevent the abuse occurring to begin with. Alice recounts her father’s inability to safeguard his children. Although she places no blame on him for this, she can see how his actions led to her and her brother suffering abuse:

“...he worked his way into the family, you know, and would offer to babysit and things, my dad was totally naive to it, had no idea at all, absolutely none.” (Alice:166-7)

Helen feels her friend facilitated the abuse she suffered, introducing her to her abuser and then failing to intervene or say anything once the abuse started. Helen gives no accommodation to her friend who was the same age as her, but sees her as being perfectly able to have intervened but have failed to do so [4.4.3].

Sarah recounts how she was the only child removed from the family home by social services, and yet all the children suffered physical abuse. She can recall family members assisting her, and is aware she was removed from the family home more than once, and yet continued to suffer the abuse she did:

“I remember me family, family members hiding me at me, hiding behind, hiding me behind doors to feed me [right]. So if they knew I wasn’t being fed, they knew I was
being treated like utter crap, they, they would have known somethink far worse could have been happening” (Sarah:101-4)

“I was taken at three months, dumped in care for three years, had a happy life apparently [right]. Me mother did two years probation just because she threw me at the wall and broke several ribs, and broken arm, and broken leg, and bruises all over me body. And left me with an auntie to take me hospital” (Sarah:329-33)

Jane learnt that her abuser previously abused his siblings when they were younger, which became known to his parents. She places significant blame on them for failing to tackle this; for keeping quiet about it and not stopping him from gaining opportunities to commit further abuse. Jane identifies the family environment as highly conducive to creating opportunities to conduct abuse and to tolerate its continuance:

“…there is a part of me that blames them for what I’ve been through, because, if they’d have dealt with the initial abuse that happened before I was even with [abuser], that things could have been so much different.” (Jane:244-6)

“I don’t know what it was like for the three of, for the three kids to grow up, I know the Mum was abused as a child by her Dad [abuser’s Mum?], [abuser]’s Mom but every single one of her brothers and sisters were all abused by their Dad and their Mum knew exactly what was going on, but ignored it [sexual abuse?] yes, ignored it.” (Jane:347-50)

Jane recognises this pattern throughout the generations and is determined to break it for her children:

“Yeah, as families go they are possibly one of the most dysfunctional that you could meet, [pause] so it’s the way they are, is very much how I don’t want my family to be,
but their views and their outlook on life, I don’t want them passing on to my children.”

(Jane:359-62)

This cross-theme goes further than describing a fertile ground for abuse through enhanced vulnerability, and demonstrates the participants’ recognition of the influence of those around their abuse. This explains the anger reported by many of the participants, towards those who facilitated their abuse through their failure to protect the participant, or by failing to intervene once the abuse had begun.

5.1.3 Abusers

This section demonstrates the abusers’ behaviour in relation to the participants, as experienced by them. It considers the techniques abusers used to gain regular and repeated access to the participants, the premeditated and deliberate behaviour they exhibited, and the influence of the power differential they created.

Grooming

This cross-theme describes the process by which the abuser gained access to the participant and maintained that access in order to conduct their sexual abuse of them. This process was not necessary where there were pre-existing close relationships, such as the situations Sarah and Jane were in, nor for the single instance that Clare suffered. They are expanded upon by the other participants, providing their reflections as to how they became victims of sexual abuse in the way that they did.
Alice has a clear understanding of the process by which her abuser gained entry to her home and thereby access to abuse her:

“...he was a lecturer at university, and my father would socialise with the folk club in the university... my father would just have parties and things, and they would come back to our house” (Alice:157-9)

“...then he would offer to babysit and, and things like that, which is how he, he, he placed himself in the position to be alone with us.” (Alice:187-8)

Alice recounts her reaction to the abuse, which potentially offers an explanation as to why she did not suffer the same level of abuse as her brother; a threat to secrecy:

“I remember asking him, are you coming back again, and he’d be yes, and for weeks believing I’d fallen in love with someone, and erm, at eight years old, I’d finally, you know, this is what love was, God it was amazing... he never did come back,” (Alice:198-201)

Helen was in frequent contact with her abuser due to the friendship of their families, an arrangement providing routine contact and regular access. Her abuser was able to initiate abuse by simply initiating privacy and secrecy into their interactions. [4.4.4]. Emma experienced a similar pattern of grooming [4.5.3], playing together when their parents were socialising together, playing games that enabled the abuser to introduce an abusive game, creating safety by drawing on that established pattern. Both Helen and Emma felt complicit in their abuse through this grooming process, feeling they had been co-opted as a participant.

Grooming in these cases does not refer to the initiation of the relationship that brings a victim into the realms of an offender, but the developing of that relationship to enable abuse to
occur. All three participants’ reference some pleasure gained from the abuse, whether physical or emotional, which has assisted to co-opt them into their abuse as apparent participants. This may be as these abusive acts were committed with a veneer of consent, or that they were less physically exploitative. These expressions are absent from the scenarios in which the other participants suffered abuse, suggesting this outcome is linked to the effect of grooming on the participants, or is present in their recollections as apparently consenting actors.

**Predatory behaviour**

This cross-theme explores the participants’ considerations of the predatory behaviour that their abusers demonstrated and that they have come to recognise, which assists them to understand that they were victims of abuse rather than participants in their abuse. The extent to which this is explained is dependent on their circumstances, with Alice leaving it understood but unstated [4.3.4] and with Sarah simply stating that her abusers were predators, with no further explanation felt necessary:

“...me uncle and auntie they just saw me as easy prey, one that was already a victim.”

*(Sarah:64-5)*

Clare gives a detailed description of the behaviour of her abuser, in particular the change in his behaviour after his daughter left them alone, which enables her to know that this was not innocent behaviour that she has misinterpreted, but abusive behaviour conducted for sexual gratification:

“Completely different. He was looking at me in a certain way. He, he was spread out [right] he was rubbing himself, and that’s a completely different thing than the normal, juggle juggle whatever.” *(Clare:416-7)*
Emma sees the premeditation that exists in the preparation of the game as a format for abuse, and the escalating seriousness of the abuse as evidence of the predatory behaviour of her abuser:

“It’s, you know, he’s obviously thought about it, and, decided before I’ve even gone that the next time I go up this is what’s going to happen. That’s quite frightening.” (Emma:175-7)

Jane and Helen see the predatory intent in the patterns of behaviour their abusers demonstrate, with Jane identifying the previous abuse her abuser committed against his siblings as a prelude to the abuse she and her daughter suffered, and Helen identifying the accompanying domestic abuse in her marriage, as indicative of their predatory natures:

“The other person that {abuser} abused first, was his sister. And then went on to abuse {his brother}.” (Jane:292-3)

“And then he, he started knocking me about. Erm. He used to tie me up so’s I couldn’t go out. [pause]. Lock me in the house.” (Helen:251-2)

The predatory behaviour of their abusers is identified and described by the participants, recognising not only their abuser’s intent but the interaction between this and their own vulnerability. This provides the participants with the indication that their abusers targeted them, rather than their vulnerability creating an environment for abuse that otherwise may not have occurred.
Longevity of power relationships

This cross-theme explores the power relationships existing at the time of the abuse, and how power and control are wielded within them. These power relationships continue to influence the participants in their considerations around meeting their abusers in the future. Helen and Jane describe domestic abuse in addition to sexual abuse, with both discussing how their abusers gained power over them, demonstrating coercive and controlling relationships that are recognisable as abusive relationships. Both have ended their relationships and ceased contact, but the ongoing impact of domestic abuse is evident in their interviews [4.2.4]:

“I had this, this loyalty, of him being me husband. Erm. I mean I can remember going to the solicitors and said, why didn’t you inform the police and I says, cos it’s me husband.” (Helen:240-241)

Whilst the power her abusive parents hold over Sarah is clear, its ongoing nature can be seen in her discussions as to how best to adapt a restorative justice process to encourage them to participate. She recognises and prioritises her parents’ methods of communication, providing them with a privileged place from which to speak with her:

“Cos my father used to like writing letters ...I thought that’s probably something that he would do.” (Sarah:489-91)

“...but me mother I think she’d probably feel more comfortable in speaking as well if this person’s there” (Sarah:526-7)

Despite the many years that have passed, the longevity of power relationships is best demonstrated by Alice. She does not believe her confidence with other sex offenders would translate to her own abuser, believing any contact would place her back in the role of the vulnerable child [4.3.3]. This cross-theme demonstrates that despite many years passing, the
power and control within abusive relationships is significant and has longevity, becoming fixed for the participant, and existing longer than the relationship in many instances.

5.1.4 Vulnerability: summary

This super-ordinate theme represents how the participants came into contact with their abusers, and the facilitation of their abuse by others. In doing so, it enables a broader understanding of the social environments in which abuse occurs, and the complexity of sexual abuse. The participants are linked in their susceptibility to abuse as a result of their young age, which for three of the participants was enhanced by feelings of neglect from their parents. These susceptibilities are enhanced by the behaviour of others around them; those that facilitate their abuse. These facilitators need not have played an active part in their abuse, but may have failed to protect them, or increased the impact of the abuse through their subsequent behaviour. They can therefore be considered as those around the participant who held some influence over the abusive situation or event, and the impact of that abuse. The participants were able to identify the predatory behaviour of their abusers, and to discuss their grooming behaviour when it was present. These power relationships, whether they existed prior to the abuse or were created in order to abuse, showed significant longevity. These power relationships were central to participants’ reflections on their willingness and ability to consider a restorative justice process, and are explored further in chapter six.

5.2 Recognising the act and the impact
5.2.1 Acknowledgement of abuse

This section considers how the abuse the participants have suffered has been acknowledged; whether as a crime by the criminal justice system, or accepted by those around the participant as a harmful act against them which is the sole responsibility of the abuser. This section incorporates the participants’ reflections on their experiences of the justice system, and the extent to which they felt they achieved a sense of justice.

Recognising the harm caused

This cross-theme considers how the participants report their abuse, and the harm caused as a result, has been acknowledged by others. The formal acknowledgement of the abuse stems from having the abuse recognised as a crime by the criminal justice system, with Sarah, Jane and Alice in that position. Where that is absent, there are difficulties in the participants accepting, and having others accept, that they have been a victim of crime:

“I think cos [abuser], was still a child himself. So part of me feels guilty cos [pause] I feel like I should have known what was going on was wrong.” (Emma:116-7)

There are differences between Alice and Clare’s experience of reporting to the police. Despite there not being a prosecution in either case, Alice does not give any indication that the abuse she suffered was not considered a crime, albeit she would feel further acknowledgement had there been a successful prosecution. Whereas Clare talks at length about the failure she perceives in the police handling of her report [4.6.3]:

“I’d like that man now to pay, erm, for his behaviour and face up to it.” (Alice:575-6)
Recognition by the criminal justice system that a crime has occurred has not automatically translated into recognition of the harm caused to them. Sarah does not believe that the harm she has suffered has been recognised by others, and in particular by her parents [4.1.1 and 4.1.2]:

“...the term child abuse should be wiped out because yeah the abuse happened in childhood but the abuse doesn’t just stop just because you grow up, it it carries on. And it, it, the mental torture of it is cruel.” (Sarah:87-9)

Jane demonstrates a similar desire for the harm caused to her, and her daughter, to be recognised by her abuser’s family; both recognising the abuse their son committed, and their contributing role [4.2.1]:

“I’d love for them to actually accept what’s gone on, and in some way apologise.” (Jane:344-5)

Overall, acknowledgement that a crime has occurred can be provided by the criminal justice system, providing symbolic validation of the participants’ experiences. Whereas, participants’ seek recognition of the harm caused to them from those around them; an outcome that is not guaranteed by validation of the act, but requires a willingness by others to discuss, explore and understand the impact of the abuse on that individual.

**Experience of justice**

This cross-theme summarises the experiences of the participants in gaining acknowledgement of their crime through the criminal justice system. Helen and Emma have not reported their abuse to the police and therefore have no experience to reflect upon. Alice and Clare have
reported to the police but not seen a prosecution follow, though their reflections on this vary considerably in line with their expectations:

“\textit{I was gobsmacked that he was even identified by the police to be honest, so for it ever to get as far as it did, you know, to me was remarkable,}” (Alice:429-32)

“I think if anything happened again, or anything like that, I feel like what’s the pissing point, there’s no point, I might as well not report it at all” (Clare:101-3)

Clare wished to see her abuser tackled by the police, for him to know she had reported him and was not tolerating his behaviour, but was unsure about supporting a prosecution. She discusses a sense of feeling responsible for any outcome the criminal justice system bestows upon her abuser, a reflection that is all the more startling as she is referring to a person she has no relationship with:

“I’m inflicting that punishment, that he’s going to go to jail, or he’s going to have some form of [pause] punishment, and I, that’s me then, putting that on him, and is that, [pause] like an evil thing to do, that’s not, [pause] that’s not a nice thing to do. So would I be as bad as him?” (Clare:456-9)

Jane did not have to testify in the criminal court but did experience the civil court whereby she had to face her abuser and battle with him on behalf of her children:

“I mean, the kids wanted to change their surname, because they both had his. And, I had to take him to court to get that changed, and I hated it, because he stood there, and was very [pause] smug almost.” (Jane:98-100)
Sarah discusses her experience of the criminal justice system in depth [4.1.4], but whilst successful in acknowledging the crimes she had suffered, she does not describe this as a clear support for her narrative of the crimes and the harm she had suffered [4.1.2]. Whilst the criminal justice system’s acknowledgement of the crimes suffered can be strongly felt in its absence, its achievement does not provide a clear cut, accepted narrative of the impact of the abuse on the individual. It is recognition of the act, not the impact.

5.2.2 Recognising the impact

This section describes the participants’ discussions of the impact their abuse has had on their lives, and the interaction between the harm caused by the abuse and other elements of their lives. This includes the loss of key relationships, experienced by some participants as a result of the abuse. The re-orientation to the abuse described by some participants, and the changing impact of the abuse over time, indicate the life-changing nature of sexual abuse.

Impact as personal tapestry

This cross-theme explores the participants’ considerations as to how the abuse interacts with other events in their life and the myriad of ways they can entwine. This is particularly so when the abuse occurred in childhood and the participants are considering this abuse from the position of adulthood, by which time they have gathered a range of other life experiences. For example, Alice was able to mention the abuse she had suffered during counselling without discussing it in depth, or considering how the abuse may be contributing or confusing these issues:
“But we never went into any detail of it, it was always scratching the surface, [mmm] I kind of minimalised, I totally minimalised it, [right] I was just clearly wasn’t ready to speak about it but. Um, other things came up at the time... I just wasn’t ready, weren’t ready.” (Alice:236-40)

Emma describes her concerns about being unable to separate the deterioration of her relationship with her father from the abuse, unclear whether it is linked to his unwillingness to discuss it with her, or a natural changing of their relationship with time as he becomes older. In this way, the legacy of the abuse complicates considerations that would still present during the normal course of life:

“I don’t (pause) don’t feel we’re as close as we were, when I was a kid. I suppose relationships change over time anyway don’t they, so you have a different, it’s a different role isn’t it... Relationships do change, but it’s just like, closeness, and he’s never asked me about it. And I’m not sure what’s going through his head.” (Emma:61-5)

Clare openly links her reaction to the abuse she describes in her interview with her previous experiences of abuse and her family’s reaction to that earlier abuse, meaning her reaction to this abuse is amplified through those experiences:

“Because some people have been through abuse before, so, like me, I have been abused before, that’s why I was here, so, that triggered off a whole past [mmm] in a massive way” (Clare:230-2)

“...like after it happened, and I went home, and I spoke to my, some of my family members on what happened and of the effects of it, their reaction, [pause] I didn’t like
their reaction [right]. So from that, I have a lot of anger or pissed off or upset, feeling let down,“ (Clare:317-9)

This theme demonstrates that participants do not suffer abuse within a vacuum, but that the abuse, and the impact of that abuse, interweaves with other elements of their life into a personal tapestry. Recognition of the act of abuse is insufficient to recognise the impact of the abuse on the participant, which requires listening to the accounts of the participants, and acknowledging that the impact may vary over time.

Loss

This cross-theme describes a specific element of the impact of their abuse on some of the participants; the subsequent loss of a key relationship. This demonstrates the breadth of impact in these cases, with elements of harm that may not be acknowledged when considering the harm caused by the abuse. Clare shows distress at the loss of her counsellor, who ceased to work at the host organisation shortly after the abusive act, and which Clare links with how this was handled by the service provider. Clare had built a supportive relationship with her counsellor, who she felt was removed from her at the point she required the most support:

“...she was massively affected about that, ... and I think she felt guilty, [pause] and she didn’t need to feel guilty because it’s not her fault, and I said to her it’s not your fault, it’s them for not letting you know.” (Clare:601-4)

“I only had, like, two weeks with her [right] after it had happened [pause], and I knew that, I wouldn’t be speaking to her again.” (Clare:676-8)
Sarah lost her entire family as a result of the abuse [4.1.1], but it is her relationship with her mother that she discusses in detail, highlighting it as the key loss she identifies, to a far greater extent than her considerations of her father or other family members:

“...she should be a mother, that’s what she should have been [mmm] that’s what she was created for, well, that’s, that’s why you was created for, I should say, to be our mother, and she wasn’t.” (Sarah:533-5)

The loss of partners from abuse does not appear to be mourned for the length of time the loss of a family member is, with both Jane and Helen in new relationships that are reported to be free from abuse. However in losing her partner, Jane’s children have lost their father, and her children’s varying knowledge of his abuse influences their feelings on this matter. Jane feels the loss on behalf of her children, and this forms part of the impact upon her of the abuse she has suffered:

“...after {her son} found out what had gone on, he did change his mind as to, well actually Dad’s not that lovely person I thought he was [pause]. Though if you caught him on different days, he’d recall the bad times [mmm] and not so much trying to look for the good [pause]. (Jane:204-7)

This theme demonstrates an element of the impact of abuse, showing how the loss of a key relationship influences the harm experienced by the participants. Where this is a family member that has been an abuser, this loss has long term ramifications that appear to overshadow the loss of other types of relationship, such as that of a partner.
Time and healing

This cross-theme focuses on the participants’ discussion of the changing impact of the abuse through time; the elements that assist their recovery and the setbacks they experience. They do not describe a linear process, suggesting time is not in and of itself a healer. Clare is closest in time to the abuse she has suffered, but still differentiates between her emotions shortly afterwards and those at the time of the interview, when they are neither so immediate nor so raw:

“ At first, at first I was like wary, and I thought no I can’t handle it, can’t handle it. But then, after a few weeks, I was like, no I seriously want to tell him that he shouldn’t be doing that business.” (Clare:364-6)

Emma alone amongst the participants does not describe changing emotions with time, which may be linked to her sudden recollection of events at a much later stage in life. Alice and Helen describe a journey of emotions, phases of reflection and a reorientation of themselves to their abuse through time [4.3.1 and 4.4.3]. For Jane, her reflections on the abuse are represented by the changing ages of her children, and the need to update their understanding in an age appropriate manner:

“I mean we have recently had to tell {her son} what I went through. {Her daughter} isn’t so much wanting him to know what she went through, the fact that he {their father} hurt her in a way that, shouldn’t have been done.” (Jane:202-4)

In particular, there is a reorientation by those participants experiencing sexual abuse as children as they become adults themselves:
“I blame myself, for going back, do you know what I mean [yeah] But then I’m like, I have to keep telling myself, yeah you were 12 he was 18,” (Helen:93-5)

“...to me, as the child, it was this big hairy man with lots of hair and big hairy chest, as an adult, I might see that just as, as a normal man, you know, because, at eight, I didn’t realise people like grow all this hair.” (Alice:362-4)

The most significant reorientation is experienced by Sarah as she becomes a mother herself, seeing the vulnerability of her own children and gaining a further desire to understand why her own mother abused her rather than kept her safe [4.1.1]. In the same way as the impact of abuse must be understood by reference to the individuals’ experiences of it, so must the influence of time on the impact the participants suffer as a result of their abuse. It cannot be said that time heals in a straightforward, linear fashion, but is an additional source of change and challenge.

5.2.3 Recognising the act and the impact: summary

This super-ordinate theme represents the acknowledgement that participants were seeking in two separate elements; an objective recognition of the acts of abuse they had suffered, and a subjective recognition of the harm that had been caused to them by the abuse. The recognition of the act was closely aligned with the criminal justice system’s involvement in the participants’ cases, and the participants’ satisfaction with the success of those interventions, demonstrating a focus on procedural fairness rather than the outcome in their reflections as to whether recognition had been sufficiently obtained. In contrast, recognising the impact of the abuse required an understanding of the participants’ individual experiences, their own
personal tapestry. These included the loss of key relationships, the ongoing anxiety created by outstanding issues and the changing nature of the impact over time. Whilst recognition of the act can be provided by legal authorities, the recognition of the impact requires the engagement of others around the participant, and a willingness to accept the participants’ reflections on the impact of their abuse as they change over time. Through exploring the life-changing nature of sexual abuse it becomes apparent that whilst the harm caused cannot be undone, it can become settled by others’ acceptance and understanding. The influence of these considerations on the choice to take part in a restorative justice process is explored in chapter six.

5.3 Control of their narrative

5.3.1 The power of the narrative

This section demonstrates the empowerment that can flow from a settled and clear narrative of the abuse suffered by the participants, particularly when this was been reinforced by the criminal justice system. A settled narrative can also assist in allowing participants to reach a sense of closure regarding their abuse.

Empowerment

This cross-theme incorporates the participants’ feelings of regaining personal strength and a sense of self determination, in gaining some balance in their lives post abuse. Evident throughout this cross-theme is the contribution that the criminal justice system can provide in victim empowerment; when it works well. Neither Helen nor Emma made any comments that
arose as themes of empowerment or a sense of self determination, and neither have had any interaction with the criminal justice system.

Their involvement with the criminal justice system did not assist Alice or Clare in gaining a sense of empowerment, which Clare believed would be provided by him knowing she was not accepting his behaviour:

“…when they’ve said that they will find him and speak to him, to, you know so, he will know [yeah] that I’ve reported him, and he knows that, he ain’t got away with it [mmm] and that, if that had happened, it it would feel like, [pause] I wouldn’t be as disappointed in meself” (Clare:199-202)

Alice may not have gained a sense of empowerment through reporting, but has through her work with sex offenders as part of the criminal justice system, placing her in a position of authority from which she gains that sense of strength and confidence associated with empowerment:

“I challenge them and getting right down to it, and that sense of making them feel uncomfortable about what, what absolute bullshit they’re coming out with, you know, and getting them to face it. I get satisfaction out of it, makes me a good worker. But I do it in a way that I’m not, angry or venomous with it, I do it in a very professional way” (Alice:475-9)

Both Sarah and Jane demonstrate how much empowerment is possible when the criminal justice system works well, through providing an agreed, unassailable narrative as to what has occurred which successfully challenges their abusers’ accounts. A conviction, whether or not it
is accompanied by an acceptance of guilt removes doubt as to whether the offences occurred, provides clarity of wrong-doing and a settled position from which further discussion emanates. Conviction therefore does not only offer empowerment through the imprisonment of the offender, but through the strength of the position it places the participant in. For Jane, this provides her with the strength to disclose why her children’s father is no longer in their lives, able to be straight forward and honest rather than feeling the need to hedge or hide the reasons why:

“...do you have anything to do with him. I went no, he’s, he’s inside, he’s a rapist. And they’re like, oh, I’m really sorry to hear it, do you see the girl? Purely an innocent question, do you see the girl, and I just turned and went, yeah, every time I look in the mirror.”(Jane:549-51)

Whilst conviction had the side-effect of empowering Jane to disclose to others, Sarah foresaw conviction as a source of empowerment [4.1.2]. Conviction allowed Sarah to feel this, but she also draws a significant sense of empowerment from her performance at court, describing it as achieving the recognition she sought [4.1.4]. The recognition she gained through the emotional impact she had on the jurors [4.1.2] demonstrates the acceptance of her description of events, the prioritising of her narrative of events over others, and the ultimate privileging of her narrative through the convictions. This theme demonstrates how empowerment can flow from the strength of the narrative that is formed through the participants’ engagement with the criminal justice system, when it leads to recognition and validation.

**Closure**
This cross-theme refers to the feelings of peace that have been reached by some of the participants; a sense that the abuse has been dealt with and can be left in the past. Whilst the
processes by which participants reach this sense of peace, and the permanence of it, varies, there is a consistency in their descriptions of reaching a point whereby the abuse or the abuser does not consume their thoughts or dominate their lives, and can be left in the past:

“\textit{I’ve got things of my chest, don’t need to hold it, I can deal with it and then let it go.}”

(Clare:885-6)

Being able to let it go does not stem solely from a conviction, as Sarah highlights [4.1.3]. It may arrive from greater understanding and life moving on, as Jane indicates:

“\textit{...once they’re in prison people think that’s it, it’s done. And that to be honest, that’s what I thought}” (Sarah:291-2)

“\textit{I’ve learnt what love is, and it’s not what I went through}” (Jane:600)

Alice links this sense of leaving events in the past with forgiveness, which she describes as a feeling of acceptance:

“\textit{...so if you’re going to have these thoughts every day, and as much as you try to suppress them, or, put them in a box, they don’t. So my view was, well just, be more comfortable when they do come to you, be more comfortable, and the way you can do that is by forgiving that person, accepting it.}” (Alice:288-91)

Unfortunately for Alice this proved to be a temporary sense of closure, which was disturbed through the process of reporting to the police:

“\textit{...having in my mind forgiven that person, thinking that that’s, I can live like this, this is ok, I can live like that, I get the thoughts, I get some of the, the memories, but that’s ok, cos I’ve learnt where to put them. But then, my brother, speaking with me, and I, I}”
A sense of closure therefore may be achieved but may not be sustained if there remain outstanding issues, outstanding potential for an investigation or ongoing possibilities for the abuse or the abuser to interrupt the participants’ lives, by disrupting their settled internal narrative of events. When the narrative can be settled and remains free from challenge by others, it is demonstrably powerful in assisting a sense of closure.

5.3.2 The challenge to the narrative

This section collates cross-themes whereby participants indicate how their narratives have been challenged. This may be by themselves, through their own minimisation of their abuse, or stem from the disempowerment felt from a lack of self-determination when it comes to the reaction to their abuse. The participants also describe how the need for further information, about their abuser or the circumstances at the time, can challenge their narrative of the abuse.

Minimising their own abuse

This cross-theme describes how the participants have lessened the abuse they have suffered by not recognising it as such; couching it in different language, retaining some blame or in other ways hiding or downgrading the abuse. In doing so, they appear to make it more manageable for themselves, and easier to cope with. However, it also makes it harder for them to recognise the impact the abuse has had on them, harder to take action, and harder to reach a sense of closure.
Jane did not recognise what happened to her as rape, until she began talking about her experiences in counselling which led to her disclosing domestic abuse and repeated serious sexual abuse. This minimisation was necessary for her to be able to continue her relationship with the abuser:

“...the realisation that actually what I went through in the relationship wasn’t right.” (Jane:57)

“I know I didn’t want to listen to when people were going, but, you’re not happy, why are you with him?” (Jane:510-11)

Whilst Jane has moved past this minimisation, at the time of interview Helen still retained this minimisation through incorporating her feelings of complicity to lessen her abuser’s complicity in her abuse, despite her being 12 years old at the time:

“I don’t look at it as rape, cos I allowed it.” (Helen:115-6)

Alice minimised her abuse through her comparison of her experiences with her brother’s [4.3.2], considering herself to be fortunate in her experiences and thereby allowing her to minimise the impact of the abuse on her later emotional difficulties, including during counselling:

“...I kind of minimalised, I totally minimalised it, [right] I was just clearly wasn’t ready to speak about it.” (Alice:237-8)

Counselling and other discussion of their abuse appears to have assisted in lessening this minimisation, which indicates it is an important step in gaining some control over their narrative as to what has occurred. This provides a clearer understanding of their abuser’s
grooming, manipulation and predatory behaviour, lessening their focus on their own behaviour and reactions to the abuse.

Disempowerment

This cross-theme incorporates participants’ descriptions of disempowerment stemming from a lack of self-determination; an inability to make their own decisions or to decide upon the best path or timeline for them. Having others make decisions for them, or force developments upon them, leads to a sense of disempowerment. For Alice, the process of reporting to the police was disempowering, because the process was initiated by her brother, at his request and in line with his journey of recovery rather than hers [4.3.2]. Jane and Helen make similar references to others around them making decisions for them, or appearing to help but having their own agendas which differed from theirs:

“...{the abuser’s brother} he’d come across as very supportive and wanted to help and wanted to be there and, to try and look after me, and make sure I didn’t do anything silly.” (Jane:28-9)

“Mum made me, erm, I think it, was, just er before me breakdown, erm, she made me go to {boyfriend’s parents}, and tell them that I’d had an abortion, cos they didn’t know” (Helen:305-7)

Clare alone describes the offence itself as disempowering, as it challenged her belief that she could speak up when others imposed upon her:

“I’m still angry with myself, that, cos like, I’m such an open person and I like, I usually like to stick up for myself, no matter what [mmm]. So, not being able to, that, the fact
that I just didn’t say anything [mmm], and tell him to fuck off, or, what the fuck are you doing!” (Clare:20-2)

Whereas empowerment encapsulated the strength of the participants’ personal narratives, this cross theme refers to the extent to which the participant feels she has the power of self-determination. The inability to make her own decisions undermines the participants’ efforts to construct and maintain her own narrative of abuse. Circumstances in which the participants’ feelings of self-efficacy and self-determination are undermined by others; whether directly by the abuser or by others considered to be facilitators of the abuse; leads to feelings of disempowerment.

**Need for information**

This cross-theme covers the participants’ need for further information about the crimes they have suffered, which means they do not have a full understanding of events and the circumstances around them. Sarah demonstrates the strongest need for information, to understand not just why her parents abused her as they did, but why others failed to prevent the abuse [4.1.3]:

“If she was hurt, if he made her do it, which is some of the stuff that I’ve heard. Oh, they was, they stood in court going I didn’t do it I didn’t do it weren’t me weren’t me. And now they’re in prison ready for parole? Yeah we did do it but it was his fault.”

(Sarah:394-7)

Helen, Emma and Clare show varying levels of curiosity about their abusers or others around them at the time of abuse. For example, Helen would like to know how her best friend viewed
the abuse and the aftermath and how this altered her view of Helen, and Clare retains a concern that her abuser’s daughter has not been properly safeguarded:

“It’s why he did it. It takes some planning, to make up a game and get somebody to play along, it’s not, it’s not like a spur of the moment [no]” (Emma:174-5)

“I would, I would like to know what she thought of me at the time.” (Helen:192)

“...it’d be lovely if, if I could know if she’s absolutely ok,” (Clare:57-8)

This cross-theme demonstrates the range of information that is sought by the participants, showing the questions and queries that participants still hold regarding their abuse or the circumstances of it. In this way, they represent gaps in their narrative; areas that participants are seeking to strengthen and develop through restorative justice.

5.3.3 Gaining control of the narrative

This section discusses the cross-themes which indicate how the participants have gained control of their narratives, developing their understanding of their experiences through talking about their abuse, and having others acknowledge the harm they have suffered. Some participants have benefitted from professional knowledge of sexual offending, which has further assisted them to gain control over their narrative of abuse.

Talking and healing

This cross-theme references the benefits the participants identify from talking about their abuse, with the appropriate people at the appropriate time. Talking about the abuse appears
to bring them clarity of their narrative; the opportunity to discuss, challenge and settle their own view as to what has occurred. Emma and Clare reference benefits to their recovery from taking part in the research interviews, considering events from different angles or gaining new insights through the discussion:

“It’s ok, but it did open up some, things that I’ve never, ever thought of before.”

(Emma:14)

“I didn’t realise how affected I was when she left [laughing]” (Clare:721)

Alice and Emma comment on the impact they experience through differing levels of discussion of the abuse. Alice contrasted her willingness to speak about the abuse with her brother’s experiences, and the difference this made when they reported the abuse to the police:

“...my brother knew that I’d been involved but I didn’t even speak to him in any great length about it, so [he] had had all these years of counselling, and I’d had nothing, nothing,” (Alice:45-6)

“...after I had the, did the police interview, they brought it all back, and it was all very raw,” (Alice:60)

Emma describes being able to talk about the abuse with her mother but not her father, which she feels has damaged her previously close relationship with her father, but has assisted in healing her relationship with her mother:

“I would just like it if he’d actually just say he believes me. Cos he’s never said that.”

(Emma:88)
“She feels like, she let me down. But actually, if anything has come from being angry towards me Mum, we’ve probably become closer.” (Emma:142-3)

Whilst disclosure and discussion is not a panacea for recovering from abuse, participants identify it as a key part of their recovery or the barriers to doing so. Clare gives a clear description as to why this is the case:

“Where if you can’t deal, if you can’t voice your opinion it’s still there in your head, you’re still angry, you haven’t let it go, and you’ve still got it and got it and got it and it’ll affect you the rest of your life.” (Clare:886-8)

This cross-theme demonstrates how talking about their abuse has assisted the participants, whether by developing their relationships with others, assisting others to understand the act and the impact of the abuse, or through further insights into their abuse becoming apparent. In this way, the participants are developing and maintaining their narratives through talking, gaining empowerment and demonstrating how talking can assist in healing.

**Being heard**

This cross-theme discusses the participants’ desire to speak on their own terms about their abuse and the harm caused to them, with an emphasis on the recognition of their personal narrative of events, not just of the abuse but the effect of that abuse on them. Central to this is for others to acknowledge and accept the narrative that they are describing, and the sense of not being heard that accompanies indications that this is not the case. Jane describes this frustration when discussing any further attempts to speak to her abuser’s family:
“I think the only way it’d, it’d work, or help would be if they’re actually, they were willing. And they were willing to actually, almost shut up and listen, which is, when I’ve sort of tried to speak to them, on my own, they’re not interested in listening, all they seem bothered about is them.” (Jane:216-9)

Clare does not consider the response from the other party to be necessary; she believes being heard is achieved by ensuring that her words are spoken in the manner she chooses. The interpretation that others may place on her words makes it clear for her that to be heard she will need to speak for herself:

“...how do I know that I wanted the, like how I wanted to say this to this person, if they are going to directly use those certain words, because, certain words mean different things to different people.” (Clare:250-2)

Sarah experiences a similar feeling of not being heard when one of her abusers pleads guilty, removing the need for her to testify in that case:

“...you’re the first person to ever be, to stand there and cry because she’s admitted it. I said why, and he said because they’re all relieved, that they don’t have to give evidence, but there you are crying because you’re not on the stand [laughing]” (Sarah:228-31)

With their focus on being heard, the participants in this theme are highlighting the importance of their narrative being unadulterated by others. Whether this is achieved by their words coming directly from them, being heard in an open forum, or simply being listened to, the
consistent factor is that their narrative is not disputed or disrupted by others, just heard as they wish it to be heard.

**Learning the general to understand the specific**

This cross-theme covers the understanding of the offences they have suffered that participants draw from their professional knowledge of safeguarding or sex offending. This appears to provide an additional avenue for developing their narratives of their abuse; providing a firmer base against which to judge their experiences, understand their susceptibility to their abuser, or understand the methods sex offenders use to identify, access and groom their victims.

Emma and Clare work with vulnerable people and both reference safeguarding knowledge linked to this. This manifests in Emma understanding why she was targeted, and Clare understanding the failures in the service she received after her report:

“Put in a position of trust aren’t they [yeah]. [pause] but they reckon, but I suppose with er, every job where they’ve got access to children, that’s where they are isn’t it?”
(Emma:265-6)

“I suppose I want to know why me [pause]. I suppose the answer to that is that I was there and I was vulnerable already, so [pause]. So I was just a very easy target.”
(Emma:165-6)

“I am trained, soon as you have any doubt in your mind, there could be a safeguarding issue, you need to report and act, asap. That’s the whole process. So as far as I was concerned, that was an issue, it needed to be dealt with as soon as possible, and it wasn’t.” (Clare:829-32)
Alice has a significant understanding of sex offenders [4.3.4] and makes a clear link between this and her understanding of her own abuse:

“I work with sex offenders, so maybe I’ve had a lot of my understanding of them from being, not talking to that person directly, but talking to people in that situation, in those circumstances, who think along those lines, that a sex offender thinks, so maybe for me I’ve developed that deeper understanding of what, you know, maybe it is easier for me to give, to forgive, because of that.” (Alice:433-7)

This cross-theme provides an indication that understanding how sex offenders operate in a general sense, how they identify, access and groom vulnerable victims, may assist individuals understand their own abusive experiences and the circumstances that surrounded them; filling in gaps in their knowledge, challenging elements of minimisation, and reducing feelings of complicity. It highlights how professional knowledge can interact with participants’ experiences to create a firmer narrative of their abuse; drawing on relevant aspects to be able to explain what happened to them, how and why.

5.3.4 Gaining control of the narrative: summary

This super-ordinate theme demonstrates the importance placed by participants on developing and maintaining a narrative of their abuse, and having this privileged by others over alternative narratives. Where participants have weaker narratives; whether through minimisation, through lack of information, or not having their narrative accepted by others; they suffer from disempowerment. Where narratives are strengthened; whether through professional knowledge, successful prosecutions or being heard; participants develop feelings
of empowerment. Feeling a sense of strength in their own narrative and having it privileged over other narratives of their abuse, allows the participant to disengage from the narrative development process and move towards the settled, peaceful state that they indicate represents closure. The role of narrative, and the ability of a restorative justice process to provide control of this narrative to the survivor, is explored further in chapter six.

5.4 Summary

This chapter presented the analysis of the participants’ accounts, through the combination of the themes identified into cross-themes, building through sections to create three super-ordinate themes which form the findings of this research study. The participants’ reflections on their vulnerability; the combination of their susceptibility to abuse, the facilitation of their abuse by others, and their recognition of their abusers’ behaviour provides a basis for understanding why the participants reported high levels of emotion towards others surrounding their abuse. Whether participants reported interest in seeking restorative justice processes with others involved in their abuse or not, this super-ordinate theme provides insights as to how such considerations are framed by the participants. The recognition sought by the participants, of the act and of the impact, showed a degree of consistency with their interest in a restorative justice process; those seeking further recognition were also those more open to restorative justice, indicating that restorative justice may be attractive to those seeking recognition of the act and the impact of their abuse. The role of their narrative in their experiences of recovery indicate what participants may be ultimately able to achieve through a restorative justice process; the development, maintenance and privileging of their narrative that may be possible through the processes of restorative justice. The following chapter
discusses these findings in the context of existing literature, and explores how these findings inform considerations of restorative justice when applied to sexual abuse.
Chapter Six: Discussion

This chapter critically analyses the findings of this research study to identify the theoretically transferable conclusions of the research, and their contribution to academic knowledge and professional practice. The first section considers the super-ordinate theme of vulnerability. This demonstrates the complexity of the relationships involved in cases of sexual abuse, and the influence of others around the survivor in facilitating their abuse. The analysis therefore focuses on the role of these facilitators of abuse, and the participants’ reflections regarding restorative justice processes with those they considered have caused them harm, but are not the abuser. In doing so, the ability for such processes to contribute towards addressing power imbalances between the survivor and her abuser are investigated (Jülich, 2006), leading to the conclusion that survivors may choose to conduct a restorative justice process with their facilitators of abuse as part of a staged process. The analysis of this super-ordinate theme addresses the first research objective; whether survivors may seek a restorative justice process with those who have harmed them, other than the abuser.

Recognising the act and the impact is closely linked to the conceptualisation of validation as a justice need required by survivors (Daly, 2014; Herman, 2005; McGlynn et al., 2017). The ability to achieve symbolic validation through the criminal justice system as well as through a restorative justice process is analysed, through a consideration of the role of procedural fairness in providing the recognition sought by survivors. This is compared to the range of restorative justice processes as currently operated, to address the second research objective; determining the type of restorative justice process sought by survivors. The individualised experiences of the survivors, and the ability of a restorative justice process to recognise the
impact the abuse has had in their cases, is highlighted through a consideration of their stages of recovery (Jülich and Bowen, 2015), and the subsequent influence on the timing of a process.

The participants’ reflections as to the level of control they held over their own narrative of abuse was central to their feelings of empowerment and their ability to reach a sense of closure following their abuse. Restorative justice has the ability to privilege a survivor’s narrative by providing them with voice; the ability to speak and be heard, to tell their story (Daly, 2014; Herman, 2005; Jülich, 2006; McGlynn et al., 2017). However, this requires a survivor to have a coherent and settled narrative as to the abuse they have suffered, which differs from the participants’ reflections in this case. For some of the participants, the gaining of professional knowledge has assisted them to develop their narrative of abuse. Other participants seek additional narratives of their abuse, to aid them in developing their own. This process of narrative construction, re-orientation, and re-construction is a common feature of the participants’ journeys towards a sense of justice and healing, and demonstrates voice as a justice process, rather than a justice outcome. Therefore, the measurement of the level of control over their narrative felt by survivors prior to, and following, a restorative justice process is proposed as a method of evaluation. This section addresses the third research objective; as to what survivors are seeking to achieve through a restorative justice process.

6.1: Vulnerability

6.1.1 Complex, triangulated relationships in sexual abuse

The participants in this study reflected upon their emotions towards those involved in their abuse, including their abuser, and the use of restorative justice in addressing those emotions
towards who they felt had harmed them. Through their discussions, the interactions between their susceptibility to abuse and their abuser’s predatory and grooming behaviour were identified. This was interwoven with their reflections as to how others around them acted or reacted, or failed to do so, when they were suffering abuse or in the subsequent aftermath. Conceptualising the harm caused to a survivor as something caused by the abuser within a diatomic relationship, does not incorporate the complexity of the relationships and influences described. These form a complex, triangulated, relationship between numerous parties, whether their involvement was prior to, during or following the abuse.

Many of the factors influencing these relationships are anchored at the time of the abuse, for example, Alice refers to the parental neglect which left her susceptible to a predator, and her fears of reverting to these feelings of powerlessness should she meet her abuser again. Other participants gave examples of the current influences of these relationships, often years after the abuse. Jane’s reflections focused on the behaviour of her abuser’s family, and her attempts to negotiate their ongoing relationship. Emma discussed her current feelings of vulnerability towards her abuser, and her fear that he would return to her life in search of information about his adoption. These triangulated relationships contribute to the participants’ reflections of the power imbalances they feel in comparison to their abusers, adding to any residual influence of the coercive and controlling behaviour used by their abusers in order to perpetrate their abuse.

Curtis-Fawley and Daly (2005) identified that discrete events which do not entail coercion over time may be more appropriate for a restorative justice process than those committed as part of a cycle of abuse, because of the ongoing power imbalances between survivors and abusers. Within this study, only Clare had suffered a discrete abusive act. A safe and successful
restorative justice process requires there to be substantive equality between those taking part (Jülich and Thorburn, 2017), and the participants’ views as to their ability to achieve this infuses many of their accounts of their abuser’s predatory and grooming behaviour. Failing to recognise the control elements underlying the violence, and failing to rectify them, were key criticisms of the use of mediation in domestic abuse cases (Fischer et al., 1992), and similar challenges exist regarding the use of restorative justice in sexual abuse (Koss, 2015). In particular, the role of apology and forgiveness in cycles of abuse (Stubbs, 2007), and the fear of further violence (Hooper and Busch, 1996) represent feminist criticisms of the use of restorative justice which may influence the ability of survivors to overcome these power imbalances, and achieve substantive equality with their abuser within a process. This feminist criticism indicates that these power imbalances between the survivor and the abuser will remain during a restorative justice process, particularly in the cases of intimate partner violence (Hooper and Busch, 1996; Stubbs, 2002).

In this study, the longevity of the power relationships that had been established at the time of the abuse, that is the extent to which the power imbalances were still felt by the participants, was heightened in those cases where the participant had suffered abuse as a child. Alice and Emma, both of whom were about seven or eight years old when they suffered their abuse, identified this and indicated that there remained a power differential in their cases. This was not linked to any ongoing contact with their abuser, any identifiable current means of control, or fears for their safety, but was an ethereal reflection of the previous power imbalances they suffered at the time of the abuse. Similar descriptions could be used regarding intimate partner violence, yet neither Jane nor Helen spoke about their relevant abusers in similar terms. Both had successfully ended their abusive relationships, limited their abuser’s effective control over them, and initiated abuse-free relationships with others. In none of these cases
were the power relationships material or evident in their current experiences, but in the cases of child sexual abuse the power relationship was a source of apprehension, a reflecting back to the powerless state of the child victim irrespective of the subsequent changes in circumstances.

Jülich (2006) identified similar power relationships that continue to exert influence over her participants, all of whom were adult survivors of child sexual abuse. She considers this to be linked to the inherent nature of child sexual abuse, which is power based, usually occurs over an extended period of time, and draws on wider societal delineations of power within relationships. Jülich (2006) distinguishes these ongoing power relationships as the predominant reason why her participants were dismissive of restorative justice, despite having described their justice needs in such a manner as to appear to demonstrate support for such a process. The ability of a restorative justice process to address these power imbalances through empowering the survivor is referenced in some evaluations of the use of restorative justice in sexual abuse cases (Madsen, 2004; Umbreit et al., 2012), and may leave survivors feeling less fearful of suffering further violence (Bazemore and Schiff, 2005). The examples of cases provided by McGlynn et al (2012) indicate how survivors may view a restorative justice process as a method to confront some of these power imbalances, and in doing so feel empowered. However, the power imbalances described within the complex, triangulated relationships identified by the participants in this study, as well as those described within Jülich’s (2006) study, demonstrate that these power imbalances may prevent some survivors from embarking on a journey which may assist in addressing them.

6.1.2 The influence of bystanders
This conceptualisation of power imbalances as forming within complex, triangulated relationships indicates that the behaviour of other people around the survivor directly influences the extent of the power imbalance felt by the survivor in comparison with the abuser. This conclusion is supported by Jülich’s (2006) research, whereby she recognises a similar link between the feelings of powerlessness that her participants expressed, and their abuser’s ability to manipulate others around them in order to maintain their controlling position. In particular, her participants’ believed that those who were bystanders to their abuse were not able to challenge their abuser’s manipulation of them, and would therefore continue to align themselves with the abuser rather than with the survivor.

In doing so, Jülich (2006) drew on Herman’s (1997) use of the term bystander, to describe the family and close friends who were present in the lives of the survivors of child sex abuse at the time of the abuse, or were otherwise part of the social environment in which the abuse occurred. As Herman (2015) later wrote, bystanders must choose between colluding with abusers, and confronting them. Abusers offer an easier path to bystanders, asking only that they ignore, forget, or otherwise acquiesce to the abuse, often in a manner that allows the bystander to retain the predictability and consistency of their lived reality (Herman, 2015). By contrast, survivors of abuse demand change, justice and engagement from bystanders; requiring the bystander to not only confront the abuser, but also their understandings of their environment and the harm caused by the abuse committed within it (Herman, 2015). This represents a harder path for a bystander to follow than that offered by abusers. In order for bystanders to align themselves with the survivor, Herman (2015) identifies the influence of the social environment, which must support them in doing so. In this way, the wider community exerts influence over the immediate community’s capacity to confront and challenge abusers. This element may have been heightened in Jülich’s (2006) study, due to her description of restorative justice as incorporating representatives of the community, within a face to face
conferencing model of restorative justice, (Daly, 2016; Sherman et al, 2015). The research definition used in this study represents a wider interpretation of restorative justice that does not necessitate the presence of such representatives. Jülich’s (2006) participants recognise that in their cases, these representatives of the community would comprise the same bystanders that failed to intervene in their abuse, and therefore would continue to fail to challenge the abuser and support the participant. These are similar to criticisms raised when considering the ability of the community to challenge domestic abuse when the wider society often legitimises or condones such abuse (Busch, 2002; Hooper and Busch, 1996). Jülich (2006) seeks to solve this dilemma through moderating the influence of bystanders, by altering the combinations of persons present at a restorative justice process to include professional representatives of survivors of child sexual abuse. Such representatives can utilise their professional knowledge to challenge those bystanders and provide a supportive environment so the survivor can confront the abuser. In doing so, she believes that the ongoing power differentials she identified can be balanced, and a fair restorative justice process can proceed.

Jülich’s (2006) definition of bystanders refers to people around the survivor who must confront or collude with the abuser, and that in her participants’ cases, they were felt to have colluded. Within this study, participants were reflecting on the harm they felt had been caused to them by others around the abuse, whether deliberate, through omission, or through ignorance. This included those who had facilitated their abuse through their maintaining of the relationship between the participant and her abuser, or through failing to protect the participant. In this study, the term facilitators is preferred over Herman’s (2015) term, bystanders, as it encompasses the more active role of the individual that was described by these participants, with more self-determination than suggested by the term bystander. In addition, it incorporates the alternative position; that of safeguarder. Safeguarding, particularly of children, includes protective adults preventing a potential abuser gaining access
to a child and being in a position to commit abuse (HM Government, 2009, 2015), that is, it draws upon the preventative and protective capacity of the community to prevent harm. This is in contrast to the facilitating role the participants’ identified in their descriptions of the behaviour of those with influence over their abuser, the abusive situation, or the reaction to it. In choosing this terminology, it is recognised that within a restorative justice process, the restorative justice practitioner is often referred to as a facilitator; that is a third party facilitator of the process. Care is therefore taken within this discussion to clarify that it is the facilitators of abuse that the term facilitators is used to describe, rather than the third party facilitators of processes.

6.1.3 Restorative justice processes with facilitators of abuse

The participants’ reflections on the facilitators of their abuse were focused on identifying the harm that had been caused, whether by a deliberate act, omission, or a lack of understanding. This reflects the research definition of restorative justice, which focuses on the harm that has been caused, rather than centring upon a criminal offence, with its accompanying restrictions as to the forms of harm that qualify. Considered through this terminology, there exists the opportunity to address misunderstandings as well as deliberate acts, and requires only an acceptance that harm has been caused by the individual, rather than an admission of guilt, or at least an absence of denial (Daly 2005). It should therefore be possible to conduct a restorative justice process between a survivor and a facilitator of abuse, leading to similar outcomes to those anticipated from a process between a survivor and an abuser. Conducting restorative justice processes with consenting offenders has been empirically evidenced to reduce the likelihood of reoffending, particularly in cases of violence (Sherman et al., 2015). This is supported by an evaluation demonstrating the promotion of pro-social behaviour in
offenders as a consistent outcome of restorative justice processes in cases of violence (Van Camp and Wemmers, 2013). It follows that conducting restorative justice processes with facilitators of abuse should also enhance their pro-social behaviour. This may be demonstrated through their increased support for the survivor, their recognition of abusive situations, or their ability to behave differently in future, that is, to behave more like safeguarders than facilitators. This consideration is supported by the similarities between the complex, triangulated relationships described by the participants, and the problem analysis triangle used within problem orientated policing (Clarke and Eck, 2005):

![Problem Analysis Triangle](image)

adapted from Clarke and Eck (2005)

Problem orientated policing draws on research identifying that a potential victim and offender need to interact together in a particular location in order for a crime to occur (Cohen and Felson, 1979; Goldstein, Goldstein and Hill, 1990). Many crime prevention techniques therefore focus on adapting the physical environment in order to make a crime less likely, for example through the introduction of CCTV or door supervisors, which therefore influences the behaviour of potential victims and offenders, and reduces crime (Clarke and Eck, 2005). In this study, the social environment in which the abuse occurred was more relevant to the likelihood of the abuse occurring than its location, which reflects wider assessments as to the influence of location on sexual offences (Hester and Lilley, 2016). Increasing the ability of those who
have previously facilitated abuse to safeguard others in future may adapt the future social environments in which potential victims and offenders interact, assisting the ability of bystanders to confront abusers (Herman, 2005), and preventing sexual abuse (Banyard, Plante and Moynihan, 2004).

The participants in this study indicated their anticipation that a restorative justice process would increase the pro-social behaviour shown by those that facilitated their abuse, whether towards themselves or towards others. Sarah described her desire for an explanation from her mother, and to understand why she behaved as she did. Jane seeks more understanding and acceptance of the abuser’s behaviour from his family, including recognising why she seeks the changes in their relationship she is attempting to achieve. However, she also references the abuser’s family’s acceptance of sexual abuse, and its perpetration through generations of the family, and her wish to prevent similar influences on her children. Clare wishes to engage with organisations, seeking to improve their future response to similar incidents; an outcome reflected in Woessner’s (2017) considerations as to the use of restorative justice between victims of crime and the institutions involved in responding to the victimisation. It may be sufficient for survivors to engage in these processes with their facilitators of their abuse, to seek an enhanced sense of justice and an increase in pro-social behaviour.

However, if a restorative justice process with the facilitators of their abuse can increase the feelings of support the survivor feels from their community, it may assist in overcoming the power imbalances felt between the survivor and the abuser. The conceptualisation of power imbalances as forming within complex, triangulated relationships, and enhanced by the behaviour of facilitators of abuse, has been described above and has been previously recognised by Jülich (2006). A restorative justice process with the facilitators of abuse may re-
balance these power influences in support of the survivor, providing a supportive social environment. Altering the balance of power within the complex, triangulated relationships in this way should minimise the power imbalance experienced by the survivor, and create the necessary strength to progress to a restorative justice process with the abuser. This represents an alternative to Jülich’s (2006) suggestion for solving this dilemma, which is to create this environment through the use of professionals within the restorative justice process. In exercising a staged process, survivors may be able to create the preventative and supportive social environment that was missing when they suffered their abuse, whilst building the sense of allegiance and confidence that would be necessary to overcome the longevity of the power relationships with the abuser.

6.2 Recognising the act and the impact

6.2.1 Recognition and validation

The need for recognition of the act of abuse, and the harm caused as a result, is a reflection of the participants’ vision of the validation they have received, and are seeking, in their cases. Validation is accepted as a justice need for survivors of sexual abuse (Daly, 2014; Herman, 2005; McGlynn et al., 2017). Herman (2005) identified that validation was primarily sought by her participants from their community, whether by formal or informal means. Whilst an admission or acknowledgement from the abuser was sought by most, she found this was neither sufficient nor necessary for a survivor to have a sense of validation, which could also be provided by those closest to them, by those who were bystanders to the abuse, and by legal authorities. These elements are fully reflected in Daly’s (2014) use of the term validation.
as part of her construction of survivors’ justice interests, which she considered represented survivors’ desire to be believed, and to share the burden of the crime and the need for subsequent action with others. This need for recognition was also identified by McGlynn et al. (2017) in their study of survivors’ understandings of justice. Recognition entailed a shared understanding of the abuse and the harm caused, and an expectation of receiving support from those around them. This study’s findings also reflect this need for validation; that the recognition of others, from both their immediate community and wider society, was important to the study’s participants. Recognition, or validation, can therefore be considered to be central to a survivor’s sense of justice, and this study’s findings add to the weight of evidence supporting this proposition.

6.2.2 Validation through the criminal justice system

In this study, the participants’ sense of recognition of the act of abuse was heavily focused on the role of the criminal justice system. In keeping with earlier findings that recognition can be provided by wider society and by legal authorities (Herman, 2005), the criminal justice system provided symbolic validation to the participants when they believed it had adequately recognised the act of abuse they had suffered. Sarah and Jane received this symbolic validation, as their abusers were successfully prosecuted, without any apparent difference as a result of Jane’s abuser admitting his guilt in contrast to Sarah’s abusers not doing so. However, conviction was not the sole measure of the symbolic validation that could be provided by the criminal justice system. Having the police record the act of abuse as a crime, and having confidence in the subsequent investigation, also provided symbolic validation, as in Alice’s case. The absence of this led to additional harm being caused, as was demonstrated by Clare. This reflects wider findings regarding procedural justice (Thibaut and Walker, 1975; Tyler, 1988); that it is the process and quality of the interactions that influence a citizen’s feelings of
fairness, not merely the outcome achieved. Procedural fairness, through the recording and investigating of the reported abuse, demonstrates the validation from authorities that the act occurred and enables access to a range of victim support functions, whether or not a successful prosecution follows.

Whilst a successful prosecution is an important indicator of the value of the criminal justice system, the ability to provide validation in the absence of a conviction undermines the case for replacing the adversarial system with one based on restorative justice (Jordan, 2011). Daly (2005) argues that lowering the threshold for offenders accepting responsibility may lead to more admissions and therefore enhanced validation, a proposition further presented by Johnstone (2011). Johnstone (2011) expands his criticism by arguing that the debt owed to victims of crime is one held by the state, rather than just by the offender. This collective responsibility can be discharged by the community, or by the state, even if the offender is not identified, or not successfully prosecuted. It does however require the validation of the victims’ experiences. Johnstone (2011) considers a collective view to restoration to be consistent with the views of restorative justice proponents, and reflects a victim-orientated approach to addressing the harm caused by crime. This collective responsibility may be addressed through access to victim services and to state compensation (Johnstone, 2011), and through a procedurally fair legal response (Tyler, 1988). Fully implementing and resourcing the last decade’s reform of the state’s response to sexual abuse (Angiolini, 2015) should therefore be expected to enhance the sense of validation experienced by survivors. The symbolic validation from the community can be provided by the criminal justice system, and has the potential for providing recognition of the act of abuse for all those who seek it. However, in this study, all the participants except Alice referenced their need for further recognition, either without accessing the criminal justice system, or in addition to that achieved by doing so, including the recognition of the impact of the abuse they had suffered.
6.2.3 Validation through restorative justice processes

A restorative justice process may assist to provide validation for a survivor of sexual abuse when the symbolic validation of the criminal justice system is not sought by survivors, or has been achieved but felt insufficient. Restorative justice would therefore provide an additional path to justice. Validation through a restorative justice process with the abuser may be achieved through their admission of the harm caused, or at least their lack of denial (Daly, 2005), but may also result from the procedural fairness of a restorative justice process (Van Camp and Wemmers, 2013). In their explorations into the reasons for the consistently high levels of satisfaction with restorative justice processes (Sherman et al. 2015), Van Camp and Wemmers (2013) identified that the procedural elements of a restorative justice process provided recognition to the victims of violent crime that they studied. These procedural elements were valued by their participants, irrespective of the outcome resulting from the restorative justice process. A further sense of symbolic validation may therefore be achieved through a restorative justice process after a successful conviction, or instead of a criminal justice process.

However, Jülich’s (2006) study identified that her participants sought validation directly from those she termed bystanders to the abuse, as well as or instead of from the abuser. She directly quotes a participant who wishes to discuss her brother’s sexual abuse of her with her parents first, to begin by seeking their validation of the harm she has suffered. Herman (2005) recognised similar needs from her participants; to receive validation from their bystanders was at least as important, if not more important, than validation received from the abuser. These validation needs may be achieved through a restorative justice process directly with their
bystanders, or as with some of the participants in this study, with the facilitators of their abuse. Expanding provision in this way would enable a greater number of survivors to access restorative justice processes, and therefore access the validation that they would provide, irrespective of the outcome (Van Camp and Wemmers, 2013). The impact of this can be demonstrated through a consideration as to the type of process that would support the participants’ stated need for further validation.

Sarah seeks a process which allows her to meet her abusers, particularly her mother, and tell her about the harm she has caused her, and obtain an explanation. Such a process could be provided through a post conviction model of restorative justice, if it was available for Sarah to access. Such models have been implemented elsewhere (Umbreit et al., 2012; Miller and Iovanni, 2013), and could be simply adapted to the UK system. Jane also seeks a post-conviction restorative justice process, but with the family of her abuser rather than her abuser himself. An ability to adapt existing models of restorative justice to accommodate facilitators of abuse could achieve this opportunity for Jane. Neither Helen nor Emma have reported their abuse to the police, and neither made any reference to a reform to the criminal justice system, including a diversionary model of restorative justice, that would alter their approach to their cases. Should they wish for a restorative justice process, one would be available through the restorative justice programmes that accommodate self-referrals, and do not require a criminal prosecution, such as those operated in Copenhagen or New Zealand (Jülich et al., 2010; Mercer et al., 2015). Whilst Emma could currently be accommodated by such a programme if it was available to her in the UK, Helen has a focus on the facilitators of her abuse rather than her abuser, and would require the same accommodation that Jane requires in order to be able to proceed. The focus for both Helen and Emma is to have a dialogue, rather than in meeting face to face, supporting the wider consideration of restorative justice as it currently operates
in the UK (Ministry of Justice, 2016). Clare primarily seeks restorative justice processes with institutions, a request that could be accommodated through the use of processes with those perceived to have facilitated the abuse, as also conceptualised by Woessner (2017). Incorporating a range of restorative justice processes within a comprehensive programme, reflects a wider preference for a pragmatic approach to structures to provide the necessary flexibility to enhance survivor choice (Joyce-Wojtas and Keenan 2016; Mercer et al, 2015).

Providing a choice of restorative justice processes for survivors should include the opportunity to access conventional forms of justice through the criminal justice system should the survivor desire this (Joyce-Wojtas and Keenan, 2016). Whilst this is not relevant for those survivors who have accessed the criminal justice system prior to considering a restorative justice process, the ability of survivors such as Helen and Emma to move from a restorative justice process to the criminal justice process is considered by Macaulay (2013). Macaulay (2013) discusses the law commission guidelines in New Zealand, where Project Restore operates (Jülich et al. 2010), and highlights some scenarios in which the restorative justice practitioner may need to over-ride survivor choice and refer the process into the criminal justice system. These should be shared with survivors at an early stage to ensure their full consent, and represents similar limits to confidentiality as applied to researching with counselling clients in the UK (Bond, 2004). Of particular relevance, Macaulay (2013) identifies that the survivor has the same opportunity to halt a restorative justice process as the abuser does, and is able to do so up until the final agreement to restore the harm caused has been reached. That is, until that point, a fair trial remains possible. Once an agreement has been reached, the survivor no longer has the opportunity to seek a criminal justice process (Macaulay, 2013). Such a restriction would also be relevant to restorative justice processes involving facilitators of abuse, and is worthy of further consideration by the survivor if they are considering a staged process, progressing to a
process with the abuser. A process with a facilitator of the abuse may mean that a fair trial cannot proceed, due to the influence over any evidence the facilitator can or may have been able to provide, and as such the consideration of referring the case to the criminal justice system should be prior to any process taking place.

6.2.4 Recognising the impact of the abuse

The super-ordinate theme, recognising the act and the impact, refers not only to the harm caused by the act of abuse, but the impact of the abuse on the participant, often over many years. The various elements of the recognition sought by the participants could be conceptualised by recognising the act of abuse to be life-changing; the loss of key relationships, and the interweaving of the abuse into other life events to create a personal tapestry of impact forming elements that may alter over time. This identifies the impact of the abuse as a variable, present and consuming element for all the participants, often decades after the abusive act itself. McGlynn et al. (2017) refer to survivors’ justice needs as a myriad of varying elements they termed kaleidoscopic justice; a non-linear, shifting view of justice which alters with the survivors’ changing circumstances. In this study a similar kaleidoscopic sense is identified when considering the recognition sought by participants regarding the impact of the abuse they have suffered. Validation of the immediate harm caused by the act of abuse is therefore insufficient to fully validate the experiences of the participants, which requires an appreciation of these changing circumstances, and their varying impact over time. This leads to a consideration as to when a restorative justice process may be most appropriate.

Jülich and Bowen (2015) propose a five stage model of recovery from sexual violence. They draw upon Herman (1997) and Zehr (1990), who have previously proposed three stage models,
combining Herman’s (1997) recognition of the role of bystanders with Zehr’s (1990) recognition of having been victimised, whilst including the findings from Jülich’s (2005) earlier scholarship on the role of Stockholm Syndrome in survivors of child sexual abuse. Jülich and Bowen (2015) indicate the non-linear nature of recovery, accommodating the possibility that survivors may retreat through the stages as well as progress through them. The first three stages; the initial impact; the cessation of sexual abuse but continuance of emotional and psychological abuse; and the beginning of the recovery process; are not considered conducive to a restorative justice process (Jülich and Bowen, 2015). Survivors within these stages may report their experiences to the police, and may achieve successful prosecutions, but the impact of the abuse they have suffered is unlikely to be clear to the survivor (Jülich and Bowen, 2015). These stages reflect the circumstances envisaged by Stubbs (2002) when considering the use of restorative justice in cases of domestic abuse. Jülich and Bowen (2015) identify that a restorative justice process at these stages is unlikely to be successful, as the survivor has not been able to gain psychological distance from the abuser, nor gain a full understanding of their victimisation. However, the participants in this study have all moved through these initial stages, and have an awareness as to the impact of the abuse they have suffered.

Jülich and Bowen’s (2015) fourth stage describes survivors as beginning to free themselves from the power of their abuser, and having a sense of their own victimisation. They may be initiating disclosure to others around them, and incorporating more people into their considerations as to the best way forward. Jülich and Bowen (2015) highlight that these bystanders may cause further harm or hamper the recovery of the survivor, but that disclosure may bring further information forward which assists the survivor. The fifth stage represents the survivor moving to a position whereby she is thriving rather than merely surviving, when
the influence of the abuser is significantly diminished, but the influence of bystanders may still be considerable. Survivors may have developed a clearer idea as to what they are seeking to achieve through a restorative justice process. Jülich and Bowen (2015) consider that a restorative justice process held with a survivor in either of these stages should produce a positive experience, in comparison with the earlier stages.

The participants in this study can be broadly considered to be within stage four of this model, given that all are still accessing support services. This model indicates that the influence of bystanders, or the facilitators of their abuse, may be more persuasive than the influence of the abuser, and that disclosure may produce new information or additional challenges. A restorative justice process with facilitators of abuse at this time may assist survivors to progress to the final stage, where they may have the emotional strength necessary to meet with the abuser should they still require the validation this may provide. Whilst the impact of the abuse may be apparent to the survivor at this stage, this may be clarified through such a process. Overall, a process held at this stage would allow for validation of the survivors’ experiences of the impact of abuse, as well as the act of abuse.

6.3 Control of the narrative

6.3.1 Voice, and the role of narrative

The super-ordinate theme, control of the narrative, is a reflection of the participant’s vision of their voice; that is their ability to tell their story and be heard (Daly, 2014; Herman, 2005; Jülich, 2006; McGlynn et al., 2017). Some degree of absence of voice was reported by all the
participants, though their desire to be heard was predominately focused upon those closest to them, rather than wider society. None indicated a desire for informal justice mechanisms such as those researched by Powell (2015) and Fileborn (2017), preferring structured or safe forums over which they could exercise a greater degree of control. Their accounts reflect the harm that can arise from a lack of voice (Taylor and Norma, 2012), with some participants carrying the burden of their abuse in silence for many years. However, this theme also highlights the empowerment that can flow from a survivor feeling they have a clear and settled narrative as to the abuse they have suffered, assisted by the criminal justice system in Sarah and Jane’s cases, and through the professional knowledge gained by Alice. This raises the possibility that having a settled narrative is required in order to reach a sense of closure, even if that narrative is not shared, or not heard by others. This theme demonstrated how challenges to the participant’s narrative, whether through self-minimisation, a lack of self-determination, or the need for further information, limits the participant’s ability to gain this empowerment. However, in order to gain control over their narrative, the role of talking and being heard was identified, bringing additional clarity to the survivor’s understanding of her narrative of abuse through disclosure and discussion with others. The role of professional knowledge was also identified, assisting Alice, Emma and Clare to strengthen their narratives through their knowledge of sexual offending and vulnerability. This theme therefore presents a detailed examination of the components and influences affecting the participants’ ability to achieve a sense of voice, which is a key justice need for survivors (Daly, 2014; Herman, 2005; McGlynn et al., 2017). The privileging of a survivor’s narrative in a restorative justice process, in being able to tell their story and be heard and recognised by others, is understood as contributing to the high levels of satisfaction reported by those taking part (Bazemore and Green, 2007), and this study supports this interpretation.
When discussing the justice need of survivors of sexual abuse to have a sense of voice (Daly, 2014; Herman, 2005; Jülich, 2006; McGlynn et al., 2017), there is an apparent assumption that the survivor knows their story and would be able to recount it, if only provided with a safe forum for doing so. Koss (2000) recognises that a survivor’s narrative may come under challenge from the court system, which may lead to self-blame or minimisation, in contrast with survivors’ experiences in restorative justice processes. This still retains the sense that there is an inherent survivor story, which is only challenged by an adversarial legal system or unsympathetic bystanders. This study identifies that the participants’ narratives were often not fully formed, had altered over time as they re-orientated to their abuse, or required extra information in order to flesh out the circumstances or the role of others. The development of the participants’ narratives of abuse over time is apparent through all of their accounts. There were examples provided by participants as to how their narrative had been contested by others, for example within a court room, or had been re-constructed over the years as they gained some distance from the abuser and the abuse. This re-orientation was clearest for those participants experiencing abuse as a child, as the gaining of adulthood provided additional insight into their vulnerability as children. In addition, the participants’ narratives were developed through new memories being uncovered, new information being discovered by participants as they disclosed their abuse, or through gaining alternative views of their existing narratives through counselling. This study presents this process of narrative construction, challenge, re-orientation, and re-construction as a common feature of these participants’ personal journeys to achieve a sense of justice, and therefore conceptualises voice as a justice process rather than a justice outcome.

Seeking to gain additional control of their narrative, through its development and ultimate privileging, is demonstrated through this study as the journey survivors envisage when considering a restorative justice process in their cases. The ability of restorative justice to
enhance a survivor’s narrative through the narratives of others is identified by Mercer et al. (2015) as a consistent purpose for survivors seeking a process. Whilst survivors may be seeking to be heard, receive an apology or an explanation, confront their abuser in a planned and supported process, or ask questions (Mercer et al, 2015), each of these motivations involve the re-orientation and reconstruction of their own narrative through the addition of another. Whilst this refers to a restorative justice process with the abuser, this conceptualisation also informs the desires expressed by participants to engage in restorative justice processes with the facilitators of their abuse. As a survivor gains control over her narrative, any gaps in her knowledge can be identified and she can seek to fill them through a restorative justice process. However, there are also indications that narratives may become even stronger as a result of the discussion, through a further process of co-construction. For example, Helen’s narrative of her grooming and abuse by her first abuser may be developed through discussion with her best friend, which may alter her current narrative that her friend was fully aware of her abuse and failed to protect her. These possibilities for strengthening their narrative may not be apparent prior to a process, and without such a discussion, the contribution a facilitator of abuse may be able to make, may not be fully judged. Conducting this as part of a restorative justice process creates a safer environment for any de-construction and re-construction of the narrative than other types of discussion, due to its professional management and the need for harm to be acknowledged prior to proceeding.

6.3.2 Developing their narrative through professional knowledge

The role of professional knowledge in constructing their personal narratives of abuse was identified in a number of the participants’ reflections, enabling them to understand general narratives of sexual abuse and to use these to assist them in drafting their personal narrative of sexual abuse. This process was demonstrated most strongly by Alice, whose knowledge of
sex offender methods has enhanced her understanding of the grooming process her abuser used with her family, and to understand the reasons she was victimised. Alice’s control over her narrative of abuse is as strong as that demonstrated by Sarah and Jane, who have achieved successful convictions, indicating how powerful professional knowledge may be in assisting with the construction of their narrative. The process by which sexual abuse is perpetrated is generally poorly understood (Joyce-Wojtas and Kennan, 2016). The acceptance of rape myths, widely held attitudes towards rape, including how it happens and who it happens to (Lonsway and Fitzgerald, 1994), are believed to be held by juries. This influences assessments as to the likelihood of a case being successfully prosecuted and therefore progressing court, with its accompanying publicity, creating a reinforcing circle which further propagates such myths (Munro and Kelly, 2009). Whilst some rape myths, such as rapes being committed outdoors by strangers, are losing their influence, others such as expecting resistance or swift reporting to the police remain pervasive (Hohl and Stanko, 2015).

This prevalence and persuasiveness of rape myths (Hohl and Stanko, 2015; Lonsway and Fitzgerald, 1994) demonstrates the challenges for survivors experiencing sexual abuse which does not fit within these narrow constructions, and for their immediate community in knowing and understanding them. Without a known and accepted narrative to explain their experience, it is left to the individual to undergo a tortuous journey in crafting their own narratives of abuse as survivors, and to have these recognised by members of their immediate community. Such knowledge of sexual abuse narratives is held and easily accessed by academics and professionals (Brown and Walklate, 2012) and this study indicates that sharing these with survivors themselves would assist to develop their narratives of abuse. The opportunity to incorporate these general understandings into their personal narrative, co-constructing their narratives and gaining additional control over them prior to undertaking a restorative justice process may place the survivor in an increased position of strength. Jülich (2006) indicates
some thoughts towards this position; she recommended incorporating professional knowledge and expertise into a restorative justice process through the presence of professionals at a process, as a method for increasing the acceptance of a survivor’s story and the level of recognition and support subsequently shown. The availability of general knowledge of sexual abuse, and the incorporation of this knowledge into a survivor’s narrative of abuse, may provide some of the outcomes they are seeking if they are unable or unwilling to progress to a process. Should survivors wish to understand why they were targeted for abuse, how they were groomed and why others failed to protect them, this may arise from understanding general narratives of abuse, as demonstrated by Alice, and be sufficient for them at that time. It may also form the first aspect of a staged restorative justice process, developing and strengthening the survivor’s narrative before progressing to a restorative justice process with a facilitator of their abuse. A staged process such as this would provide a range of opportunities for a survivor to develop her narrative of abuse and gain additional control over it, which is necessary if their narrative is to be privileged over others.

6.3.3 Control of the narrative as a measurement of success

The level of control that a survivor feels over her narrative of abuse should, therefore, be expected to increase across the course of a restorative justice process, or series of staged processes. A method of measuring the level of control perceived by the survivor could therefore be developed, which could be assessed prior to, and following, a restorative justice process in order to evaluate its effectiveness. The availability of evaluative tools to measure survivors’ experiences of restorative justice in a consistent, comparable and comprehensive manner will assist the accumulation of academic knowledge in the area (Daly, 2014). Sherman et al. (2015) identified that there is a greater consistency in the measurement of outcomes
from restorative justice processes for offenders, than for victims, and were able only to identify satisfaction with the process as comparable across the studies in their systematic review. Daly (2014) argues that procedural fairness measures, such as satisfaction, or psychological measures, such as reported levels of stress or anxiety, do not measure the justice outcomes that are created by a restorative justice process, which should be measured against survivors’ justice needs. An example of the current difficulty of evaluating restorative justice processes is provided by Jülich and Landon’s (2017) evaluation of the justice outcomes of Project Restore, using satisfaction measures, psychological measures, and assessing against five justice needs; participation, voice, validation, vindication and offender accountability (Daly, 2014). They assessed this through surveys of survivors accessing their service; ascertaining the outcomes survivors were seeking through a process, and reporting on the extent to which survivors reported they had been fulfilled. These outcomes were then assigned to the most appropriate justice need. Jülich and Landon (2017) reflect on the under-representation of voice as a justice need sought by survivors approaching their service. They conclude this reflects an assumption that voice was an inherent purpose of the process, rather than a stated outcome of the process. This study, in identifying voice as the development, control and privileging of the survivor’s narrative, and as a justice process rather than a justice outcome, supports this belief. Voice should therefore be measured prior to and following a process, rather than an assessment as to the survivor’s stated motivations, and their belief as to whether it has been fulfilled, as in Jülich and Landon’s (2017) assessment. This could be achieved through measuring the reported level of control of their narrative felt by a survivor.

Whilst Daly’s (2014) proposal to measure restorative justice processes by their ability to provide justice outcomes, rather than their therapeutic outcomes, has been observed by Jülich and Landon (2017), the definition of restorative justice used for this study reflects the belief
that justice should be healing (Zehr, 2005). Specifically, it states that the process aims to increase the sense of justice felt by the person harmed, and to assist them to heal. Measuring a survivor’s level of control over their narrative will evaluate whether an increased sense of justice has been achieved, and will also measure the extent to which this assists them to heal.

The participants’ reflections, which combine to demonstrate the role of their personal narrative of abuse in their sense of justice, also refer to their progress through their journey towards recovery. Where their narrative is strong and privileged, that is their narrative is accepted by others, the participants indicate that they feel empowered as a result. Where their narrative is challenged, or they minimise their experiences themselves, this is associated with feeling a lack of self-determination, and is experienced as disempowering. The participants’ reflections as to their gaining a sense of closure, whereby a feeling of peace is achieved and the abuse is not all consuming and present in their lives, is considered as being achieved through their settling of their narrative of abuse. Gaining control over their narrative could therefore be expected to assist them in their journey towards healing.

This conceptualisation of the control over the narrative as an assessment as to the healing that has been experienced, is reflected in the language used by Jülich and Bowen (2015) when describing their stages of recovery, and the ultimate goal of transcending to the fifth stage. They state, “it is hoped that the journey of recovery would eventually enable the sexual violence to become a part of victims’ life histories, as they increasingly gain control over their lives” (Jülich and Bowen, 2015, p. 101). This shows similarities with the ability to settle their narratives of abuse by gaining control of them, as identified in this study. In the above discussion regarding timing of restorative justice processes, the participants in this study were broadly represented as occupying stage four, having progressed in their recovery but retaining a need for further healing, as demonstrated by their accessing of counselling and support.
services. This broad representation minimises many variations between the participants, and within their journeys of recovery. For example, Jane demonstrates the psychological distance from her abuser represented by the fifth stage, along with the accompanying acceptance that the harm caused cannot be restored, but does not demonstrate the accompanying recovery expected, as she cannot privilege her narrative of abuse over her abuser’s parents’ narrative, when attempting to address access to her children. Alice believed she had reached the final stage of her recovery, having reached a position of peace, and yet she had not disclosed her abuse to others. This element is incorporated into the fourth stage, and Alice’s disclosure to the police led to her reverting to this earlier stage of recovery, despite the level of control she believed she held over her narrative, and the resulting psychological distance she believed she had achieved. The other participants have demonstrated through their reflections that their abusers, and their facilitators of their abuse, retain an influence over their perspectives of their victimisation, preventing them from gaining the psychological distance represented by the fifth stage. Jülich and Bowen (2015) identify the role of dialogue, through disclosure of their abuse, as assisting to produce this psychological distance, through the gaining of additional information and additional perspectives, and therefore progressing to stage five. This resonates with Mercer et al.’s (2015) identification that the motivation of survivors to seek a restorative justice process is to gain an additional narrative of their abuse. Gaining control of their narrative therefore represents a measure of the healing achieved through a restorative justice process, as well as a measure of a key justice process.

### 6.4 Summary

This chapter integrated the findings of this study with the existing literature in order to identify the theoretically transferable conclusions reached through this analysis, and address the
research objectives laid out in chapter one. The influence of facilitators of abuse infused the participants’ accounts of their abuse, which combined with their own susceptibility to abuse, and the behaviour of their abuser, to form complex, triangulated relationships. Facilitators of abuse therefore influence the feelings of powerlessness felt by survivors. A restorative justice process with facilitators of their abuse was considered by many of the participants, and the ability of such a process to enhance the pro-social behaviour of facilitators of abuse, and reduce the power imbalances between the survivor and the abuser were explored. This led to the proposal that restorative justice processes with facilitators of abuse may be sufficient for a survivor, or may form part of a staged process prior to a process with their abuser.

Recognition of the act and the impact of the abuse represented the participants’ need for validation of their experiences. Symbolic validation could be provided by the criminal justice system, but this was not always sought, or achieved. The ability of a restorative justice process with a facilitator of abuse, to provide further validation through procedural fairness, was identified. The range of circumstances of the participants considering a restorative justice process identified that a variety of processes should be available to enhance survivor choice. Recognition of the impact of abuse was closely linked to the timing of a process, demonstrating that timing was as important as the type of process in enabling survivors to seek additional paths to justice.

The stated outcomes sought through restorative justice varied according to the participants’ individual circumstances, but the understanding of their motivation was enhanced through a consideration of their narrative of abuse as representing their sense of voice. The development of the participants’ narrative of abuse was displayed through their accounts of construction, re-orientation, and re-construction, and therefore the gaining control of their
narrative is considered a justice process, rather than a justice outcome. Some participants had
developed their narratives through the gaining of professional knowledge of sexual abuse. The
provision of such knowledge to survivors will assist them to develop their personal narratives
of abuse, and gain additional control over them. The ability to measure the level of control a
survivor feels over their narrative of abuse would provide an assessment of their sense of
justice, and the progress towards healing, that had been achieved through a restorative justice
process.
Chapter Seven: Conclusion

This thesis has expanded the understanding of the perspectives of survivors of sexual abuse, and analysed their reflections on the potential outcomes they anticipated arising from a restorative justice process, in order to determine the theoretical conclusions of the research which inform the future development of a restorative justice programme for survivors. This has been achieved through a definition of restorative justice that prioritises survivor choice and the need for the harm caused to be acknowledged, ensuring that considerations of restorative justice differ from those of mediation or other group therapies. The collaborative nature of the research process has infused the design and conduct of the research, achieving the stated desire to conduct the research through a feminist approach and assisting to ensure its ethical conduct. The feminist approach to the research has been enhanced through the application of an IPA methodology, privileging the voices of the survivors participating in the study whilst enabling the interpretation of their stories through reference to the researcher’s professional and academic knowledge and experience. In doing so, this thesis presents authoritative findings, informs the design of a restorative justice programme, and identifies its original contribution to the academic and professional knowledge.

7.1 Informing the design of restorative justice programmes

This study identified that survivors experience sexual abuse within complex, triangulated relationships, and that harm is caused to a survivor by those who facilitate their abuse, as well as the abuser. A desire to conduct restorative justice processes with those considered to be facilitators of abuse has been identified, and can be made available to survivors of sexual
abuse, either as a single process or as a staged process prior to commencing one with the
abuser. A range of processes should be available to reflect the survivor’s interactions with the
criminal justice system, although the timing of a process in relation to the survivor’s recovery
has greater relevance than the type of process they wish to undertake. Gaining control over
their narrative of abuse is envisaged by survivors as the justice process they anticipate as a
result of a restorative justice process, and the provision of professional and academic
knowledge of sexual abuse can assist this. It may therefore be considered as a first stage, prior
to undertaking a process with a facilitator of abuse or an abuser. The level of control felt by a
survivor over their narrative of abuse may be measured to evaluate the process, in terms of
the sense of justice it provides and the contribution towards healing that should follow.

These findings lead to a design of a restorative justice programme that focuses on the recovery
and the justice needs of the survivor, providing survivors with staged options for engaging with
a restorative justice process:

Stage 1: Provision of general narratives of sexual abuse

Stage 2: Restorative justice processes with facilitators of their abuse

Stage 3: Restorative justice process with their abuser

Operating a staged process of restorative justice enhances survivor choice, and heightens the
ability of a survivor to consider the appropriate option for their circumstances, assisted by
professional support. In particular, the impact of these choices for the survivors’ ability to refer
into the criminal justice system will need to be clear. The evaluation of the programme
through the measurement of the level of control over their narrative will provide additional
information to inform survivors’ choices.
7.2 Original contribution and the significance of the research

This thesis began with a consideration of the principles of restorative justice through the debate regarding its definition. Defining the limits of restorative justice, and providing clarity as to the processes that are incorporated into the definition is of central importance if a comprehensive body of knowledge is to be created and the evidence base for restorative justice processes expanded. The researcher has evidenced her conceptual considerations of restorative justice, incorporated the specific challenges of sexual abuse, and in doing so has presented her own definition of restorative justice. The voice of the participants has been enhanced throughout this study, ensuring their personal stories are heard, and their individualised experience of sexual abuse is highlighted.

This thesis presents the case for including facilitators of abuse within a restorative justice programme. The conceptual basis for doing so is demonstrated through the debate regarding definition, and this study has identified a desire from some participants to be able to conduct such processes. The benefits of incorporating facilitators of abuse into future programmes are asserted: the potential justice outcomes available for survivors without the need to interact with their abuser, the ability of their immediate community to provide support to the survivor, and producing a more challenging environment for further offending. In doing so, this thesis develops the debate regarding the use of restorative justice in sexual abuse, rejecting the dichotomised approach to restorative justice in comparison to the criminal justice system, and presenting additional paths to justice for survivors to choose. In extending the approach in this way, a future programme would increase the range of referrals received, and improve the conversion of referrals into processes, greatly enhancing the impact the programme can offer.
survivors and their immediate community, as well as expanding the empirical evidence available as a result.

This thesis also presents the gaining of control over their narrative of abuse as a justice process for survivors of sexual abuse. The ability of a restorative justice process to assist survivors of sexual abuse to gain control of their narrative, as a route to a sense of justice, empowerment and healing is asserted by this thesis as being the central purpose of undertaking a process. The contribution of professional and academic knowledge in achieving this is also identified, and the case for its inclusion into a comprehensive restorative justice programme is presented. Through this conceptualisation, the justice process of restorative justice becomes specific, measurable and comparable between cases, assisting to develop the evidence base for a restorative justice programme in sexual abuse. This thesis therefore makes an original and significant contribution to the academic literature and the development of professional practice, fulfilling the requirements of a professional doctoral study.

7.3 Recommendations

This thesis concludes with recommendations for further policy development and academic research.

- Practitioners and academics should collaborate to identify the key elements of their professional knowledge of sex offending, and develop a method to share this with survivors considering a restorative justice process. For example, this could take the form of an awareness session, providing information about vulnerability, safeguarding,
grooming, rape myths, and justice options. The impact of doing so on the survivors’ level of control over their narratives should be assessed.

- The opportunity to conduct a restorative justice process as an alternative to the criminal justice system should be available, so that all survivors are incorporated into the programme, whether they wish to report to the police and regardless of the outcome of any criminal justice process. The programme should be cognisant of the benefits available through the criminal justice system, and should support survivors to choose to report their abuse should the survivor determine this to be their preferred path to justice.

- The identification of a survivor’s facilitators of abuse, through their circle of emotion or similar assessment tool, should be conducted during the survivor’s considerations of a restorative justice process in their case. The opportunity to engage in restorative justice processes with these facilitators of abuse should be available, whether as a staged process leading towards a process with their abuser, or as an additional path towards gaining control of their narrative.

- An ability to assess the extent to which a survivor considers that they have control of their narrative should be developed, to provide a metric for evaluating the contribution made by a restorative justice process. This assessment should be conducted at each stage of the process, to ascertain the relative contribution of each step.

- A similar exploration of male survivors’ experiences should be conducted, to consider whether their gendered experience, within the same cultural environment, raises
different justice needs to those identified from female survivors’ experiences considered here. Similarly, an examination of survivors’ experiences within other ethnicities and cultures would identify the comparable elements which could be considered universal to the experience of surviving sexual abuse.
References


Labaree, R. V. (2002). The risk of ‘going observationalist’: negotiating the hidden dilemmas of being an insider participant observer. *Qualitative Research, 2*(1), 97 -122.


Dear Ms Crisp,

I am writing to formally request permission to undertake a collaborative research project with [host organisation], provisionally titled Designing a Victim-Centred Restorative Process for Use in Sexual Abuse Cases in the UK.

I have attached the following documentation for your perusal and information:

- Research proposal
- Ethical narrative
Questionnaire, including participant information sheets
Interview schedules, including participant information sheets
ISVA briefing sheet

Should you be willing to provide authority for the research to be hosted by [host organisation], I would request to meet formally with your Chief Operating Officer and ISVAs in order to provide a briefing as to their role in the research.

Subsequent to this briefing, the ISVAs would begin approaching their clients to request they take part in this research, in line with the ethical guidelines outlined in the attached documents. If clients are willing, the ISVAs will arrange a separate appointment for the questionnaire to be completed. It is anticipated that these appointments will be for an hour, although the full time may not be used. It is not possible to state how many questionnaires will be completed, but 60 is a reasonable estimate. As previously discussed, the initial data analysis of these questionnaires will be made available for [host organisation]’s use at the very earliest opportunity.

Those participants willing to proceed will be interviewed by myself, which I would like to be able to offer to do at [host organisation]’s premises as this will enable the participant to be in familiar surroundings. I would also like to offer the opportunity to have their counsellor or ISVA present for reassurance. I anticipate each interview will require a two hour appointment, although it may not take this long. It is not possible to state how many interviews will be completed but 20 is a reasonable estimate.

The final analysis will be available to [host organisation] at the earliest opportunity for their use in funding bids or awareness raising activity. I will also make use of the analysis in order to publish journals and present at conferences as well as in submission for part of a Professional Doctorate in Criminal Justice. I anticipate that [host organisation] wishes to be openly associated with this research in order to properly benefit from its dissemination, but please inform me if you would wish [host organisation] to contribute anonymously.

If there are any other questions or queries you may have, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours

Angela Marinari
Dear Angela,

Thank you for your letter sent 14th June to formally request permission to undertake a collaborative research project with [host organisation] provisionally titled a ‘Victim – centred Restorative Process for Use in Sexual Abuse Cases in the UK’.

This letter is formal confirmation from the Board of Directors that we welcome and support this research proposal which has been fully discussed with and by the Board.

Yours sincerely

Dr Jenny Crisp
Chair of Board of Directors
[host organisation]
Appendix B: Host organisation’s confidentiality policy

Confidentiality Policy

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Aims
3. Policy
   • Definitions
   • Principles
   • Confidentiality Within The Service
   • Executive Committee
   • Confidentiality Undertaking
   • Referrals
   • Other Agencies
   • Personnel Information
   • Responsibilities
   • Information Storage
   • Organisational Confidentiality
4. Supporting Policies

1. Introduction

[host organisation] has a responsibility to protect the confidentiality of staff, volunteers and clients. The purpose of the confidentiality policy is to ensure that confidential information is not disclosed to unauthorised persons and is handled and dealt with sensitively.

[host organisation] has a counselling service that is accredited by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and abides by its Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy.

Confidentiality is an important part of the therapeutic relationship. Given the nature of the service i.e. focusing on sexual abuse and the ways our clients cope with abuse, we need to act professionally at all times and keep the best interests of our clients central to any decision making and action.

This document sets out the policy of [host organisation] that staff and volunteers must follow. Other policies and procedures exist to support and clarify this document. These are listed at the end.

1. Aims

To ensure that appropriate standards of confidentiality are understood and adhered to throughout the service
Confidentiality Policy

3. Policy

Definitions

Confidential information includes:

- Personal and private information relating to clients/staff/volunteers.
- Personal and private information relating to referrals and potential clients/staff/volunteers.
- Information relating to policies and procedures and financial activities of [host organisation].
- Such other information as the Board of Trustees may require to be treated as confidential.

Principles

Confidentiality is central to the trust between counsellor and client and to the therapeutic relationship. [host organisation] works in the best interests of the client at all times. It seeks to promote their well-being which includes providing continued support. Any disclosures should be undertaken in ways that best protects the client’s trust and wherever possible the client’s consent will be obtained. However, where there is judged to be significant risk of significant harm (to the client or others) and disclosure will make a difference, then it must be considered. The client will be kept informed wherever possible, at all stages. Correct handling of private, personal and sensitive information is of central importance to [host organisation].

Confidentiality Within The Service

- Personal information relating to definitions above will be treated as confidential within the service. All clients must be made aware that it will be essential that the Services Manager may be informed of such information on a “need to know” basis. Any client, who asks a counsellor to keep information to themselves, will be reminded by the counsellor that they may need to inform their supervisor, and the Services Manager who is responsible to the Chief Officer and the Board of Trustees.

- Any counsellor who is unsure as to whether personal information they have been given should be divulged further should seek the advice of the Services Manager. There may be occasions when a member of [host organisation] will be given information about a client which has not been requested (e.g. at a place of work or by a friend). The receiver of this information must not divulge their knowledge of the client. They must also be aware that to pass on information to the counsellor concerned could impart information that the client has not disclosed. This must be treated on a “need to know” basis as described above.

Confidentiality Agreement

All staff and volunteers will be obliged to sign a confidentiality undertaking that they will abide by the terms of this policy.
Breach of this policy will lead to Disciplinary Procedures

Confidentiality Policy

Responsibilities

- All concerned with [host organisation] should exercise extreme caution in the disclosure of confidential information.
- All concerned with [host organisation] should under no circumstances give information of any kind to other individuals/organisations about a clients’ whereabouts, their counsellor or their appointment times/days, without prior discussion with the Services Manager or Chief Officer.
- All concerned with [host organisation] shall take personal responsibility for abiding by this policy.

Referrals

Information provided by any referring agency will be treated as confidential under the terms of this policy.

Other Agencies

- [host organisation] may work and liaise with other agencies, statutory and voluntary, in providing counselling and support to clients. This may necessitate the disclosure of confidential information on a “need to know” basis only after consultation and the permission of the client. Wherever possible/appropriate this permission will be in writing.
- Other agencies should be informed of [host organisation]’s Confidentiality Policy. Copies will be made available on request. In turn, partner agencies will be expected to provide [host organisation] with a copy of their confidentiality policy.
- If unsure about the disclosure of confidential information to other agencies staff and volunteers should check with the Services Manager.

Personnel Information

- Personnel records will be kept in a locked filing cabinet.
- Personnel records may only be accessed by:
  - Chief Officer
  - Service Manager
  - Individuals to their own records (access via Chief Officer).

Information Storage

- Personal information is stored on computers and paper. All confidential information is kept in locked cabinets with access only for authorised staff/volunteers.
- Any tapes recorded for supervision sessions or to facilitate the work with clients will be kept locked at the centre or given to the client. See taping guidelines.
- Clients should have access to their personal records upon request.
- Counsellors notes are the property of [host organisation] and the client identity must be protected. If clients request access to such notes this should be discussed with the
Service Manager – third party confidentiality needs must be considered before disclosure.
• Client information stored on computer is anonymous and for statistical purposes, monitoring and funding. Confidentiality Policy

Board of Trustees

• Personal information relating to clients will not normally be discussed at Board meetings.
• Exceptions to this may include:
  ○ Where information relating to a client has, or may have, a direct bearing on policy.
  ○ In any case where it is necessary for the Board of Trustees to arbitrate, e.g. grievance/complaints procedure.
  ○ Issues of responsibility to the wider community and/or the legal process.

Organisational Confidentiality

Policies and procedures which have been agreed by the Board of Trustees will be accessible to other agencies on a “need to know” basis. It may be necessary to inform other agencies of policies and procedures in order to ensure the efficient management of [host organisation]. The Chief Officer will have the responsibility of agreeing to the disclosure of policy information.

Supporting Policies

The following documents will provide further information when identifying confidentiality issues and deciding how to respond.

• Child Protection
• Safeguarding
• Suicide & Self Harm
• Conflict of Interest
• Equal Opportunities
• Guidelines for taping client sessions
• Risk Assessment
• Supervision
• Recruitment and Selection
• Record Keeping

July 2012
Appendix C: Ethical approval and confirmation

Angela Marinari
Professional Doctorate ICJS
University of Portsmouth

**REC reference number: 13/14:31**
**Please quote this number on all correspondence.**

10th July 2014

Dear Angela,

**Full Title of Study:** Designing a Victim-Centred Restorative Process for use in Sexual Abuse Cases in the UK.

**Documents reviewed:** Confidentiality policy Consent Form Ethics self-assessment Interview Schedule Letters Proposal Questionnaire

The Committee has carefully considered the documentation and a favourable ethical opinion is issued with the requirement that you address your response to Ethical Issues (5) regarding informed consent. It is the view of the Committee that individuals who are unable to give informed consent must not participate in the research as it contravenes the Mental Capacity Act. Special considerations apply with regard to research with participants who can not give informed consent. Please contact the Chair of the Committee, Dr. Jane Winstone, if you would like to discuss this further.

Kind regards,

FHSS FREC Chair Jane Winstone

Members participating in the review:

- David Carpenter
- Sukh Hamilton
- Richard Hitchcock
- Geoff Wade
- Jane Winstone
Form UPR16: Research Ethics Review Checklist

Postgraduate Research Student Information: Angela Marinari

Department: ICJS

Student ID: 511197

First supervisor: Dr Jacki Tapley

Start date (progression date for Prof Doc Students): October 2013

Study mode and route: Part-time, Professional Doctorate.


Thesis word count: 49.959

UKRIO Finished Research Checklist:

a) Have all of your research and findings been reported accurately, honestly and within a reasonable time frame? YES

b) Have all contributions to knowledge been acknowledged? YES

c) Have you complied with all agreements relating to intellectual property, publication and authorship? YES

d) Has your research data been retained in a secure and accessible form and will it remain so for the required duration? YES

e) Does your research comply with all legal, ethical, and contractual requirements? YES

Candidate Statement:

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

Ethical review number: 13/14:31

Signed Date
Appendix D: Participant consent form

Informed Consent

This form is a declaration of consent to participate in the below research:

“Designing a victim-centred restorative process for use in sexual abuse cases in the UK”
Research conducted by Angela Marinari, Director of [host organisation], as part of the award of Professional Doctorate in Criminal Justice, University of Portsmouth, hosted by [host organisation] Inc.

A copy of this consent form signed by the participant will be retained by [host organisation], and a signed copy will be provided to the participant should they wish for one. A code will be allocated to the participant, and the accompanying coded consent form will be provided to the researcher.

Name of participant:
Code allocated:

I confirm that I have read and understood the attached information. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Signature:

Upon completion of the research for which I am participating, I consent to the retention and further use of my data in research conducted by the researcher in line with the ethical guidelines of the British Society of Criminology and the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy

Signature:

OR

Upon completion of the research for which I am participating, I wish for the return of / destruction of my questionnaire (delete as appropriate)

Signature:

For completion by the ISVA:

I confirm that I have obtained informed consent prior to completing the questionnaire with the participant, and that I will accurately represent this consent to the researcher.

Signature:

Date:
Appendix E: ISVA led questionnaire

Case information:

The below information will assist in understanding the circumstances in which a restorative justice process may be most relevant, and where it may be inappropriate. If there is more than one abuser, please consider the primary person involved, or complete an additional sheet for a second abuser.

Gender:

Age: 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65-74, 75+

Please indicate the length of time since your incident, or the last incident if part of a series:

Did the incident, or one of the incidents if part of a series, occur whilst you were under the age of 18?

Prior to the incident, or during the incidents if part of a series, how well did you know the abuser?

- Unknown to me
- Acquainted but close
- Colleague
- Professional relationship
- Close acquaintance or friend
- Distant family member
- Close family member
- Partner at the time of the incident
- Ex-partner at the time of the incident
- Other, please state:

Since the incident, or last if part of a series of incidents, what level of contact have you had with the abuser?

- None
- Limited and unannounced
- Limited but known of in advance
- Regular, with my agreement
- Regular, without my agreement
- Close contact
- Other, please state:

Have you reported your incident to the police?
If so, what justice response did you receive?

Case not investigated at my request
Case not investigated but I wanted it to be investigated
Investigated but no further action taken
Investigated and an out of court disposal given (e.g. caution)
Case remains under investigation
Charged and pleaded guilty at court
Charged and convicted after pleading not guilty
Charged and acquitted at court
Case remains in the court process
Other, please state:

If you have reported the incident or series of incidents to the police, how did it change the level of contact you have with the abuser?

If you have not reported to the police, or declined to support an investigation, is this related to how well you knew your abuser prior to the incident or series of incidents?

If you have not reported to the police, or declined to support an investigation, is this related to the level of contact you have / expect to have with your abuser?

Please add any additional comments below:
Circle of emotion:

Use this space to consider the people involved with your case with whom you feel an emotion towards. Please state who the person is (e.g. abuser, family member, professional), what the emotion is (e.g. anger, guilt, sadness), and the strength of that emotion (1 the least, 10 the strongest). Further space is provided on the following page should you wish to expand on or explain further your choice.
Further Information Sheet:

It is not necessary to add any further details to your choices unless you wish to. Please use this sheet to expand upon any aspect of the Circle if you would like to explain or clarify your choices above. An additional sheet with more space is also available should you wish to use it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person:</th>
<th>Emotion:</th>
<th>Score:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Further Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person:</td>
<td>Emotion:</td>
<td>Score:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person:</td>
<td>Emotion:</td>
<td>Score:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person:</td>
<td>Emotion:</td>
<td>Score:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person:</td>
<td>Emotion:</td>
<td>Score:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person:</td>
<td>Emotion:</td>
<td>Score:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further Information sheet:

Provided to enable further information to be provided, if you would like to make use of it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person:</th>
<th>Emotion:</th>
<th>Score:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Further Information
Practical Support

Please now consider the person with whom you identified the strongest emotion. We wish to understand what practical steps could be taken to assist with managing, accepting or overcoming those emotions. Some ideas that have been used in restorative justice are provided below, but please take this opportunity to highlight any other steps that have not been included that you think would be of benefit. Additional sheets are provided should you wish to complete this part with more than one of the persons you identified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person:</th>
<th>Emotion:</th>
<th>Score:</th>
<th>Practical Step:</th>
<th>Level of Interest (1-10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Write a letter:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Have a conversation through a facilitator:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Have a face-to-face meeting in the presence of a facilitator:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Have a face-to-face meeting in the presence of a facilitator and other people known to you (e.g. family members):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Have a face-to-face meeting in the presence of a facilitator and other people not known to you (e.g. community representatives):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Have a face-to-face meeting in the presence of a facilitator and other people, both known and unknown to you:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional steps, or further information:
Additional person sheet:

Please use this sheet if you wish to discuss your choices in relation to more than one person identified using the Circle. You may use as many as you would like to.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person:</th>
<th>Emotion:</th>
<th>Score:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practical Step:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Level of Interest (1-10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a letter:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a conversation through a facilitator:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a face-to-face meeting in the presence of a facilitator:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a face-to-face meeting in the presence of a facilitator and other people known to you (e.g. family members):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a face-to-face meeting in the presence of a facilitator and other people not known to you (e.g. community representatives):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a face-to-face meeting in the presence of a facilitator and other people, both known and unknown to you:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional steps, or further information:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F: ISVA briefing note

Briefing Sheet – ISVAS

This sheet is provided in support of the questionnaires, to assist and inform in the delivery of them. Some comments may appear to be common sense or usual practice, but their inclusion here is for completeness, and to demonstrate the robustness of the process to any stakeholders. Professional judgement is key to the ethical conduct of this research, and any queries or concerns should be raised, no matter how minor.

Selection of participants.

The aim is to offer the questionnaire to the majority of ISVA clients, via their ISVA, at a time and in a way which does not impact upon the service [host organisation] is providing to the client, which remains paramount throughout. The ISVA is ideally and uniquely placed to make a judgement call as to whether the client is emotionally resilient enough to take part in the research, and there is no obligation to approach a client. The ISVA’s professional judgement on the timing of the approach is trusted, and there is no pressure to conduct a minimum number nor conduct them within a minimum timeframe. ISVA clients have been chosen because the nature of the relationship differs from that between counsellor and client, and for this reason it should not be conducted with a client to whom you are also providing counselling services. A client does not need to be positive or open minded about restorative justice to take part, and providing they consent, all views are equally valid and should be encouraged.

Informed consent

It is imperative that those taking part in this research understand what they are agreeing to, and do so freely and without influence. They can chose not to take part, or chose only to allow [host organisation] access to their information. If this questionnaire is used by [host organisation] to gather information separately to the research project then the consent form need not be completed, and [host organisation] should ensure they have consent in line with their policy on internal research with clients. Participants can withdraw from the project at any time. However, once their information is available to you it may influence your views of the themes emerging over the course of the questionnaires, and once it is available to the researcher it may influence her interpretation of the results, even if withdrawn. This is a difficult concept to explain clearly, but can be summarised as ‘it’s hard to forget what you know’. If the participant shows any indication of concern or unwillingness to take part, then please allow the client time to consider prior to completing the questionnaire. Any specific queries can also be raised with the researcher, and should be done prior to completion.

Confidentiality

The confidentiality approach outlined in the questionnaire is lifted from [host organisation]’s confidentiality policy, which is considered best practice in line with the BACP ethical guidelines. In this way, clients have clarity over confidentiality and no parties need to worry about which confidentiality policy applies under which circumstances. The disclosure of any information that leads you to believe you may need to implement the provisions under this policy must cause the research to halt, and need to be referred to the services manager.

Completing the questionnaire
The questionnaire has been designed to be completed by the participant with the ISVA’s assistance, and the participant should be as involved as possible in choosing the nature and wording of their response. It is entirely appropriate for the participant to complete the questionnaire themselves, with the occasional prompt from the ISVA, likewise it is appropriate for the ISVA to agree a form of words and to write the answers themselves. This may be preferred by the participant as it reflects the processes used by [host organisation] to gather other information as part of the service it provides. However the participant chooses to complete the questionnaire, care should be taken to ensure the responses are those of the participant, rather than the interpretation of the ISVA. Lengthy conversations may ensue but do not need to be captured in their entirety; in such circumstances consider a referral for an interview. Care must also be taken to ensure the participant remembers that their responses form part of a research project rather than a clinical interview, as a discussion may lead the participant to disclose information to their ISVA which they would not wish to disclose to the researcher. If there is any doubt as to whether the participant has provided answers which expand beyond the research and into clinical activity, they should be prompted to consider whether they wish to include that information, or withdraw their consent to be considered as part of the research project.

Case information

Only information central to the research project has been requested. The gender, age and length of time since the abuse is relevant for establishing which groups of victim-survivors state they would most benefit, or would most like to be involved in such a process. The relationship between the victim-survivor and the abuser, both before and after the offence, is key, as it will assist to understand how those underlying relationships affect people’s desire for such a process. ISVA clients are by their nature more likely to be involved in the criminal justice process that victim-survivors in general, but these questions assist in understanding the relationship between normal justice processes and a desire for restorative justice processes.

If a participant is unsure as to which answer fits their circumstances best, then please state it in the other box. Do not worry about keeping answers neat and tidy, as long as they are legible feel free to write in the margins etc.

If there is more than one abuser, consider the primary abuser. If they are separate events, or the participant wishes to cover more than one, use an additional set of sheets.

Circle of emotion

This diagram is adapted from the Circle of Support used with clients. There is no need to consider six people, just consider those most appropriate to the participant. If a participant wishes to discuss more than six a second sheet can be used. The abuser should be one of the persons considered; other prompts may be family members who supported / did not support, those the participant disclosed to, someone who failed to believe the participant or failed to safeguard them, or police officers / CPS lawyers / other professionals. There may be very positive emotions associated with some of these individuals, and positive emotions do not necessary eliminate the individual from further consideration, but the restorative justice process does focus on some harm that has occurred between the participants and how it can be overcome. There may be a range of emotions towards a single individual, and more than one circle can be used for each person, considering the emotions separately. Choosing the strongest emotions would be most appropriate if there are a number that are aimed at an individual, or to prevent taking excessive amount of time over the questionnaire.
Further information sheet

This is provided simply to capture any additional comments or clarification the participant wishes to make – it is not necessary to include anything, nor to cover every person and emotion discussed. Two versions are provided – a larger space to go into greater detail about a single person, or a number of smaller boxes to add small amounts of detail. Do not feel you need to capture the entirety of the conversation on the form – the in depth interviews are designed to explore this detail and it may be more appropriate to select the participant for interview. Alternatively, those conversations will inform your views when you are interviewed.

Practical Support

This section considers the predominant methods by which restorative justice can be delivered. They are by no means the only steps that can be taken, so please retain openness as to alternatives that are suggested by the client. A range of 1-10 has been provided to enable an indication of level of interest, with 1 being no interest whatsoever, and 10 being a determination to do it immediately. There are no restrictions on what may or not be discussed during a meeting, and possibilities include: describing the offence and the effect it has had, hearing an explanation from the other person, asking questions, making practical arrangements e.g. agreeing not to frequent a particular area or attend particular events. The steps are not designed to replace or replicate legal or civil matters which are and should be handled by a legally trained person. If practical steps are suggested by a client that can already be accessed by them, it is appropriate to offer this support after the questionnaire has been completed. The further information space is provided to allow for clarifications or conditions on the interest e.g. I’d be interested in meeting face to face but only if they get convicted at the trial. If time allows or it is particularly pertinent, this part can be completed for more than one person. Please do not attempt to capture an entire conversation; participants with strong views or levels of interest should be considered for referral for an in depth interview.

Referral for Support

It is anticipated that the subject matter may cause some clients to become upset and for some this will be a therapeutic process, but where distress, defined as excessively angry, distraught or shocked, is shown as a result of taking part in this research it needs to be taken seriously. If the client indicates distress at the process or their involvement in the questionnaire then the process should be halted. Consider any immediate steps that should be taken to minimise the distress. Steps taken should be outlined on the form provided, and the situation highlighted to the Services Manager for further review. Such an event will initiate a review of the process, questionnaire and preparatory information provided to clients and no further research should be completed without the Services Manager’s agreement.

Withdrawal of consent

Even though a client may have provided consent before completing the questionnaire, the process or content may mean they reconsider. Clients indicating less than full agreement for their information to be considered should be invited to withdraw their consent. Clients can withdraw their consent for their information to be used as part of the University of Portsmouth research while allowing [host organisation] to retain and use the information, and in such a scenario no information regarding this client will be available to the researcher.

Inclusion in further research
This flow chart is provided to assist in selecting those clients who wish to have further involvement in the study, or who are likely to inform the research. ISVAs should use their professional judgement in deciding whether a client is at a suitable stage and has sufficient emotional resilience to be approached to participate. Clients do not need to make an immediate decision, and can chose to opt in or out at any time. Clients should be reminded that their choice has no influence on the support that [host organisation] will provide now or in the future. Those clients wishing to take part can chose an appointment time and place, although it is expected that most interviews will be conducted at [host organisation] due to it being a safe and familiar environment. It is anticipated that between 12 and 20 interviews will be conducted with clients, but any client who fulfils the criteria or who indicates a strong wish to be involved should be offered the opportunity to take part.

What happens now?

There is a sheet provided which covers the usual questions participants may have after the research process. If any other questions are raised, either immediately or in the future, which you cannot answer please pass them immediately to the researcher, who will respond swiftly. Please thank the client for being willing to take part, and thank you for having assisted the process; this research could not be conducted without your support and professional experience in this area.
Appendix G: Framework for selection of participants

FOR ISVA USE: Please use this sheet to consider next steps for your client, in collaboration with them.

| Client indicates distress as a result of completing this questionnaire. |
| Complete information sheet 1 – referral for support |
| Client has halted involvement in the questionnaire, or in any other way indicates they no longer wishes to take part in the research |
| Complete information sheet 2 – withdrawal of consent |
| Client has completed the questionnaire but now only wishes it to be made available for Savana’s use. |
| Client has strong feelings about the area of research, has written considerable additional comments, or proactively indicates a wish to have further involvement. |
| Complete information sheet 3 – further research request. Provide ‘What happens now’ information sheet |
| Client has shown a strong interest in one or more of the practical steps considered, (7+) including one suggested by the client if relevant to the topic area. |
| Client has indicated a strong level of emotion towards any individual (7+) coupled with some interest in one or more of the practical steps considered or suggested if relevant. |
| Client has made comments that indicate to the ISVA that their further involvement in the research would be beneficial to the client or the research, including a strong negative response. |
| All other clients |
| Provide ‘What happens now’ information sheet |
Appendix H: Participant letters

Professor Stephen Savage  BA (Hons) PhD FRSA
Director
Dr Phil Clements  BA CertEd Med EdD FHEA
Head of Department

Angela Marinari
Institute of Criminal Justice Studies
Ravelin House
Ravelin Park
Museum Road
Portsmouth
PO1 2QQ
United Kingdom
T: +44 (0)23 9284 3926
F: +44 (0)23 9284 3971
M: +44 (0)7775 540051
E: icj00412@myport.ac.uk

Dear participant

Thank you for being willing to consider involvement in this research project. This document provides information on the purpose of this research, the use to which it will be put, your right to anonymity and considerations of your consent to be involved. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions if you would like further information or clarification.

[host organisation] is working in collaboration with the University of Portsmouth to research the need and desirability for restorative justice processes to be available in cases of sexual abuse. Restorative justice processes take a number of forms, and this research seeks to establish who may wish to undertake such a process, the person with whom victim-survivors would wish to enter a process with (it need not be the abuser), and the form of that process. Such a process would not be suitable for all, and information as to why it would not be appropriate or beneficial is just as important as information as to why it would.

The research focuses upon the experiences of those who have survived sexual abuse, and aims to discover what actions victim-survivors may wish to take in order to make their voice heard, to attempt to heal the harm caused to them. This research seeks to enhance the views of victim-survivors, and ensure their preferences and needs are incorporated into any future process. I appreciate that you may not identify with the term ‘victim-survivor’, but this term is used here as it is standard terminology within academic discussion of this area.

The research will take the form of questionnaires for those accessing ISVA services at [host organisation], and some in depth interviews with the researcher, who is also a Director at [host organisation]. Taking part in the questionnaire does not mean you must take part in any subsequent interview, and your decisions regarding involvement will in no way alter the service that you receive from [host organisation]. Should you consent to take part, the information will be used as part of a Professional Doctorate in Criminal Justice and to further our professional practice in this area. It is possible to provide this information solely for [host organisation].
organisation]’s use, and should you wish to do this please highlight this to your ISVA. The final research project will be available from [host organisation] on request, once it is completed.

Attached is a questionnaire which seeks to gather baseline data to answer the above questions, which is designed to be completed with your ISVA. It will ask you to provide some basic details of your case, consider the persons towards whom you hold strong emotions and ask you to grade these emotions. It will then ask you to consider some of the practical steps that restorative justice may be able to provide, and ask for your views on them. It is not necessary to complete all parts of the questionnaire should you not wish to do so. Dependent on the relevance of the subject area to your case, and your willingness to provide additional information, the questionnaire will take between ten to thirty minutes to complete. The time taken over the questionnaire does not reflect the value of the information you provide, and all information will assist in the exploration of this area.

Your ISVA has considered your circumstances and has only offered this questionnaire when they consider it to be appropriate to do so, but please do not complete this questionnaire if you do not feel able to discuss the areas outlined above. If at any point during the process of completing the questionnaire you feel you cannot go on with this interview, please halt and inform your ISVA. Additional support is available from [host organisation] should you require it.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Your anonymity will be protected throughout this process. Should you consent to your involvement in the research, you will be allocated a Client Code which will be used to reference your information. The signed consent sheet will be retained by [host organisation] and not made available to the researcher, who will only have access to the ‘double blind’ consent sheet attached. Extreme care will be taken to ensure that any identifying details of your case are not apparent in any use of the information you provide. The final research will allocate pseudonyms for ease of reading, but this will be made clear to the reader. [host organisation] wishes to associate itself with this research, and therefore will be named within the final research and its use by [host organisation] and the researcher in developing practice and awareness raising in this area. It will therefore be known to be conducted with clients from [host organisation]. As [host organisation] have approximately 1500 clients accessing counselling services, ISVA services and crisis support each year, the risk of being identified with this research is considered to be low. However, if you have any concerns in relation to this, please discuss them with your ISVA or the researcher or decline to be involved.

Should you consent to your questionnaire being used as part of the research, it will be provided to the researcher. It will be kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher’s home, and used solely for the purpose of the research. It will not be shared with any other parties, but must be made available should those overseeing the research, both those from [host organisation] and from the University of Portsmouth, wish to ensure that the process is being carried out properly and fairly. Anyone viewing the material for these purposes has the same ethical responsibilities towards your confidentiality as the researcher and [host organisation] do. At any stage you have the right to request the return of your questionnaire, and for any of the information you have provided to be removed from the research. If you consent to your questionnaire being retained for use in future research projects, operating under the same ethical guidelines, then it will be retained by the researcher. Should you not consent to its retention, it will be destroyed or returned to you once the research project is completed. Once
the researcher is aware of your responses then they cannot be forgotten, and this knowledge may assist in developing the researcher’s views of the topic area even if you withdraw from the research. However, no details of your case will be used should you not consent to its use.

Once the questionnaires have been completed, it is intended that the ISVAs are interviewed by the researcher to explore themes they have identified over the course of assisting with the questionnaires. They will not be discussing details of the case, but their broad impressions as a result of their discussions with a number of clients. It is not realistic that they will be able to eliminate some of their discussions when considering these broad themes, and therefore it is important that you are aware that if you complete this questionnaire just for [host organisation]’s use, or withdraw your consent to take part at a later stage, then some aspects of your questionnaire may still inform the ISVAs views of the research area. As your ISVA is involved in providing wider services, it is possible that your ISVA may disclose personal information unrelated to your questionnaire. Your ISVA is experienced in advocating on your behalf without breaching your confidentiality, and any inadvertent disclosure will not be used as part of the research. If you are not comfortable with this then please indicate this to your ISVA.

Your questionnaire is being conducted by the ISVA in line with [host organisation]’s confidentiality policy, in order to avoid any confusion over what information you provide may need to be disclosed by the ISVA or the researcher. It is important to note that, should it be judged that there is a significant risk of significant harm (to yourself or others) and disclosure will make a difference, then it must be considered. A copy of [host organisation]’s confidentiality policy is available on request.

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should raise this with your ISVA in the first instance. If you wish, or if your concern has not been addressed, please ask to speak to a senior member of staff at [host organisation], or contact the researcher who will do their best to answer your questions, on 07775 540051. If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, you can do this by contacting the researcher’s supervisor, Dr Jacki Tapley, on 01202 536714, or in writing to the Head of Department, as detailed at the top of this letter.

Thank you again for your time in considering taking part in this research project.

Angela Marinari
University of Portsmouth
Dear participant

Thank you for giving your time and participating in this research. Your responses to the questionnaire are highly valuable and will form the basis for the research project and for [host organisation]’s further practice in this area.

In support of the questionnaire, I wish to be able to conduct a number of one to one interviews with clients. This interview will re-visit your questionnaire, and will discuss each individual in question, exploring the emotions involved and considering what harm has been caused to you by that person, if relevant. The interview will then focus on some practical restorative justice applications that may be adapted to your case, and discuss your feelings about taking part in them, what benefits you would be seeking, and what your worries would be. It is not necessary to complete all parts of this for each individual, or consider every individual you have identified within your circle. It is anticipated that this interview will take approximately an hour, but may take longer if we wish to discuss some elements in greater detail or discuss a number of people. These interviews will enable key themes to be identified which will underpin both the research and any subsequent process [host organisation] seeks to develop. There is absolutely no obligation to take part, and your involvement or otherwise will have no influence over the services you access from [host organisation].

Should you wish to take part, I will meet you at a time and place which suits you, which may be [host organisation] or may be a place closer to where you live or work. The ISVAs have my availability and can organise an appointment with you should you wish to meet with me, either to conduct the interview or to discuss this in more detail. If you wish to, you can have your ISVA present during our meetings to offer you support.

I wish to audio-record the interviews, as this allows me to analyse the detail of what we discuss, and leads to stronger more robust research. The audio recordings will be stored securely and you have the same range of options for the use of this material as were presented in relation to this questionnaire. It is not necessary for me to know who you are, and the interviews will be allocated your Client Code to maintain your anonymity. The
confidentiality procedure explained in the questionnaire information sheet will also apply to the interviews.

It is not necessary to decide now, and even if you agree to a meeting you may cancel at any time. Your ISVA will not have provided you with this option if they did not feel it appropriate in your case, but you should consider whether discussing the topics outlined above would be distressing to you and include this in your judgement as to whether you wish to take part. If you are willing to take part or wish to meet to discuss this further, please indicate this to your ISVA.

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should raise this with your ISVA in the first instance. If you wish, or if your concern has not been addressed, please ask to speak to a senior member of staff at [host organisation], or contact the researcher who will do their best to answer your questions, on 07775 540051. If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, you can do this by contacting the researcher’s supervisor, Dr Jacki Tapley, on 01202 536714, or in writing to the Head of Department, as detailed at the top of this letter.

Thank you again for your time in considering this request

Angela Marinari

University of Portsmouth
Appendix I: Final participant letter

Professor Stephen Savage  BA (Hons) PhD FRSA
Director

Dr Phil Clements  BA CertEd Med EdD FHEA
Head of Department

Dear participant

Thank you for taking part in this research. Your responses are highly valuable in exploring this area of research, and in developing new services at [host organisation]. The below covers some common questions you may have, either now or in the future, but you can always raise any queries or concerns with your ISVA.

What will happen now to my interview?

If you continue to consent to your interview being retained by the researcher, it will be electronically transferred to the researcher’s computer and the original recording deleted from the digital recorder. Your interview will then be transcribed, and you are welcome to request a copy of this transcript. Any printed copies will be kept within a locked cabinet at the researcher’s home. All this information will be retained until the completion of the research. On completion, the interviews will be deleted or retained for further use in other research, dependent upon the consent you have provided. You have the right to change your consent at any time – please inform your ISVA or the researcher of your wish to alter your choice and you may renew your consent form to reflect your decision.

What use will [host organisation] make of the information I have provided?

[host organisation] are considering developing a restorative justice service for its clients. Your information may be used to inform this development, to assess the potential demand for such a service, or as part of justification for funding applications. [host organisation] may also wish to draw on your information in support of campaigning or training material as part of its development of this process. Your anonymity and confidentiality will be respected by [host organisation] throughout any use of your information. You should discuss any concerns you may have about this potential use with your ISVA.

How will the information be used by the researcher?
Your recorded interview and subsequent transcripts will be stored using the Client Code that has been allocated to you. Your responses will then be analysed alongside others completing the interviews and alongside the questionnaires, allowing for patterns to be identified which assist in understanding under what circumstances someone may wish to take part in a restorative justice process, with whom and with what benefits or potential risks. The researcher’s analysis will be written as part of a thesis for submission to the University of Portsmouth for the award of a Professional Doctorate in Criminal Justice. The analysis will also be disseminated through conference presentations and journal articles aimed at sharing this knowledge with other academics and practitioners. All use of the analysis will be available in hard or electronic formats from [host organisation], and you can request copies of such at any time. Your anonymity and confidentiality will be respected throughout any dissemination of the research analysis.

I feel ok now, but what if I feel upset about this later?

We recognise that it can be difficult to talk about issues such as the topic in this questionnaire. This may have led you to acknowledge feelings you hadn’t considered before, or see the issue in a different light. Your ISVA is highly experienced in providing both practical and emotional support, and you should not hesitate to tell them if you have any concerns or difficulties, either now or in the future, as a result of taking part in this questionnaire. [host organisation] provides or can access a range of services, and will organise additional support for you at your request.

What if I change my mind?

If you change your mind about taking part in this research then let your ISVA know. She has a ‘withdrawal of consent’ form which you can sign which will remove your information from the research project, or from [host organisation]’s use, dependent upon your wishes. Whilst we cannot forget what we already know, we can remove references to your information and prevent any future use of it. If you change your mind at a later date, you can withdraw your consent at any time. Your involvement in this research is only with your express agreement, and we understand that the topics discussed are sensitive and that your view of the research may change over time. Your choice to withdraw your consent will not influence the services you receive from [host organisation] in any way.

What if I’m not happy?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should ask to speak to a senior member of staff at [host organisation], or contact the researcher who will do their best to answer your questions, on 07775 540051. If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, you can do this by contacting the researcher’s supervisor, Dr Jacki Tapley, on 01202 536714, or in writing to the Head of Department, as detailed at the top of this letter. You may also complain to [host organisation] in line with their complaints policy, a copy of which is available on request.

Do I have to keep this paperwork?

We recognise that you may not wish to keep this paperwork in your possession, so you may request that your ISVA places it in your personal file for safekeeping for you. You may access this information, or request a replacement copy, at any time. If we keep it for you, we will
secure it to the same high standards we apply to all other information [host organisation] hold about you.

Thank you again for your time and support for this research.

Angela Marinari
University of Portsmouth
Appendix J: Semi-structured interview schedule

Interview Schedule:

Confirm the circle of emotion from the questionnaire is the correct one.

Q1. I’d like to talk about your answers here in more depth. Please start by telling me how you felt about doing it?
   P. Had you thought about these people in this way before?
   P. Were you surprised by any of your answers?

Q2. Have you had any further thoughts since completing it?
   P. Any alterations / additions you would now make?
   P. Additional copy of circle available if wish to make alterations / additions
   P. What makes you think that?

Q3. I’d like to discuss each individual in turn. Who would you like to begin with?
   P. Would you like to begin with an easy one?
   P. Is there anyone you don’t want to discuss?

If discussing an offender:

Q4. Did you know this person before they hurt you?
   P. How did you feel about them beforehand?
   P. Do you still feel this way despite what they’ve done?

Q5. How do you feel about this person now?
   P. Have you felt that way since it happened?
   P. How has that changed over time?

Q6. How have those feelings affected you?
   P. How has that changed over time?
   P. What impact has that had on you?

Q7. Would you like to feel differently about this person?
P. How would that help you?

Q8. In an ideal world, would you like tell this person how you feel?
P. What would you say?
P. How would this help you?
P. Have you already had the opportunity to do this?
P. How did you feel about it?

Q9. In an ideal world, would you like to ask this person any questions?
P. What would you want to ask?
P. How would this help you?
P. What if you got an answer you didn’t like?
P. Have you already had the opportunity to do this?
P. How did you feel about this?

Q10. In an ideal world, would you want to hear an apology from this person?
P. Why is that?
P. Have you already had an apology?
P. How did you feel about this?

Q.11 Referring to the practical support section of the questionnaire – would you still agree with your choices/ratings?
P. Would you like to complete it now for this person?
P. Why has this changed?
P. What attracts you to that option?
P. What don’t you like about that idea?
P. Would you find it particularly difficult to meet face to face?

Q12. If it went well, what benefit do you think it would bring for you?
P. How would it change the way you feel?
P. How do you think it would help you move on?
P. How could we help you gain those benefits?

Q13. If it went badly, how would that make you feel?
P. What would be the impact of that?
P. How could we prevent that happening?
P. How could we help you cope with that?

Q16. Would you consider the possible benefits to be worth that risk?
P. Why is that?
P. What impact has that had on you?

Q22. Would you like to feel differently about this person?
P. How would that help you?

Q23. In an ideal world, would you like tell this person how you feel?
P. What would you say?
P. How would this help you?
P. Have you already had the opportunity to do this?
P. How did you feel about it?

Q24. In an ideal world, would you like to ask this person any questions?
P. What would you want to ask?
P. How would this help you?
P. What if you got an answer you didn't like?
P. Have you already had the opportunity to do this?
P. How did you feel about this?

Q25. In an ideal world, would you want to hear an apology from this person?
P. Why is that?
P. Have you already had an apology?
P. How did you feel about this?

Q26 Referring to the practical support section of the questionnaire – would you still agree with your choices/ratings?
P. Would you like to complete this now for this person?
P. Why has this changed?
P. What attracts you to that option?
P. What don’t you like about that idea?
P. Would you find it particularly difficult to meet face to face?
Q27. If it went well, what benefit do you think it would bring for you?
P. How would it change the way you feel?
P. How do you think it would help you move on?
P. How could we help you gain those benefits?

Q28. If it went badly, how would that make you feel?
P. What would be the impact of that?
P. How could we prevent that happening?
P. How could we help you cope with that?

Q29. Would you consider the possible benefits to be worth that risk?
P. Why is that?

Q30 How else could we help you?
P. (If support is already available) Would you like me to mention this to your ISVA?

Q31 Anything else you’d like to mention about this person?
P. Anything else you’d like to add about anything?
## Appendix K: Example of theming from text and notes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line number</th>
<th>Original transcript</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>547-551</td>
<td>Some of us, we could have been in exactly the same situation we just would make a different decision at that critical moment, and that decision at that critical moment, some people make the wrong one at that time, which can set them off on a lifetime of hell. Some of us are fortunate enough just to have made a different decision and we went that way, and it’s that simple, it’s that simple.</td>
<td>An explanation as to why, a recognition of similarity with offenders, born from personal and professional experience.</td>
<td>Understanding sex offenders, journey of recovery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
So I think being in the job has given me that deeper understanding of people, which probably makes it easier perhaps for me to forgive my abuser, because I have that level of understanding of, of you know, just bad decision making along the way somewhere. Unless you’re clearly a psychopath which is slightly different but then, again, there’s a reason behind it, there’s always a reason behind something, so, you know, so it’s probably helped that way round [mmm] erm, of gaining a, certainly I’ve become more empathic as I’ve been in the job that I’ve been doing now.

Linking forgiveness to that insight and understanding.

Linking understanding, empathy and underlying reasons / decisions – ‘probably’ linked to forgiveness – either a concept she has not considered before or demonstrates a lack of belief in the concept – de-coupling her forgiveness / journey from his.

Using forgive in the present tense, as if it remains current. No strong or clear indication in the text that this is not the case.

Linking understanding with forgiveness.

Linking understanding sex offenders, journey of recovery, forgiveness.
Yeah, and and, that’s difficult cos like I said earlier, it’ll be interesting to see, cos I am going through counselling now, and barely scratched the surface in terms of the sexual abuse, and I don’t know if that’s because I think I’ve done it to death in my own head, is there anything left for me to say, or whether I’ve still, protecting myself from anything,

Indeed, I’m not sure what feelings that supposed to bring up, I’m not quite sure, I’m confused with it, hence why I’m in counselling, so am I supposed to be getting upset and reliving it, and putting it all out and then back in, I don’t know what I’m supposed to be doing with it,

Uncertainty, lack of foresight linked to reporting / counselling / uncovering. The difference between talking to yourself and talking to someone else, unsure what would bring forward, what should be brought forward.

Dealing with the impact of reporting to the police, reliving the detail.

Aware of need for counselling but not what the outcome will be, unsure what the process should contribute to the journey.

Layers of harm. Vulnerability, journey of recovery, phases of reflection,
I’m aware that it’s still part, it still part of [Alice’s] life experiences, it hasn’t gone away, but it’d be interesting to see whether I do actually go back to functioning, pick up where I was before all of this, or whether I will feel more at peace and more content and more freer, um, from it all after, I don’t know, I don’t know

Where I would, what I would have liked to have done I suppose was to see, justice, in terms of him, um, um paying for his crime [mmm] of whatever method or where him, having to face the fact, regardless of whether he believes it or not, that he committed a crime.

That’s not going to happen, post that? I’d never even thought of it. That was, me being selfish, saying I would have liked to have seen justice, you know. Um, and that’s it, I’d like that man now to pay, erm, for his behaviour and face up to it.

Raising the question – about returning to how she was pre-report, or progressing to a new normal.

First time she refers to herself in the third person

Journey of recovery, phases of reflection,

Use of the word ‘crime’ twice in swift succession – part of the accountability, not just an acceptance that it happened, but accepting it as a crime.

Recognition of harm,

Experience of justice, recognition of harm

Complete comment, no qualification. Referencing as a confrontation between individuals rather than a public interest factor.
And it’s just not, and that would have been enough for me just to have seen, a conviction. I wouldn’t. That was all that I would have, it wouldn’t have mattered, restorative justice all of that, felt I’d done in my own head, um, but, I would have liked to have seen that, at least he didn’t get away with it.

And that’s not going to happen, so he has got away with it. So, um, but there we go, it’s, it is what it is, so I don’t know. I don’t don’t know.
## Appendix L: Representation of cross-themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cross theme</th>
<th>Sarah</th>
<th>Jane</th>
<th>Alice</th>
<th>Helen</th>
<th>Emma</th>
<th>Clare</th>
<th>Coverage</th>
<th>First draft</th>
<th>Coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closure</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Closure 5.3.1.2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disempowerment</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Disempowerment – 5.3.2.2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Empowerment 5.3.1.1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of justice</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Experience of justice 5.2.1.2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to protect or prevent</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Failure to protect 5.1.2.2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grooming</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Grooming 5.1.3.1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intertwined relationships</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Intertwined relationships 5.1.2.1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journey of emotion</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Time and healing 5.2.2.3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of closure</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Need for information* 5.3.2.4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Loss 5.2.2.2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimisation</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Minimising their own abuse – 5.3.2.1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power and control</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Longevity of power relationships 5.1.3.3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking/therapy</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Talking and healing 5.3.3.1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restorative justice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Restorative Justice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vulnerability-5.1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim voice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Being heard 5.3.3.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secrecy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Secrecy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation/information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Need for information* 5.3.2.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neglect/rejection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parental neglect 5.1.1.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognising the harm caused</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Recognising the harm caused 5.2.1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self protection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compounding events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Impact as a personal tapestry 5.2.2.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Learning the general to understand the specific 5.3.3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predatory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Predatory behaviour 5.1.3.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

249
Appendix M: Sarah’s circle of emotion

Person: Father
Emotion: Anger

Person: Mother
Emotion: Anger

Sarah
## Appendix N: Sarah’s themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Legacy</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Lifelong impact of abuse through mental trauma and loss of family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sense of justice</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Feelings towards the justice outcomes, and the differences between the various cases, and its impact on feeling that justice has been done.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Need for explanation</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Wanting there to be a reason as to why she was abused, and why others allowed it to happen, and to be told what that is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Experience of justice</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Descriptions of the court processes, the rejection of special measures and the interactions with the courts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Failure to protect</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Anger towards family members and social care who knew, or should have known, about the abuse and did not stop it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Recognition of harm</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Understanding the damage caused, placing the crimes committed against her in their true place in the crime hierarchy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Openly associating self with the crimes, loss of the person she would otherwise have been. Re-orientating to the abuse as she became a mother herself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Power and control</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Power exerted through resistance, control through the ability to withdraw and withhold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Relationship with abusers</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Close knowledge of abusers, complete loss of family through abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Strength through being heard, being believed, and obtaining convictions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Lack of closure</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Inability to move on as have no explanation, therefore no peace, remains active.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Vulnerability</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Age and desire for parental love, before family arrangements and previous victimisation added to vulnerability leading to serial abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Victim voice</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Wanting to speak and be heard, only partially provided by court due to its constraints on what can be said. Removing interpretations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Gender difference</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Only girl in the family, therefore only one suffering sexual abuse at the hands of many.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Closure</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mitigation for some offenders allowing events to move into the past, explained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Hierarchy of harm</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Querying the relative attention provided to the abuse she has suffered, prison sentences replicating a hierarchy, as do public outcries re deaths of children from child abuse.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Journey of emotion</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Changing emotional state through the years, changing as perspective changed to adult and mother, hope for the future to be different, to continue the journey.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Hidden in full view</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feelings that the abuse was not secret, but that elements were visible and seen by family / social workers etc, and yet not stopped or prevented.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Hierarchy of victims</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some victims receive more attention / sympathy / support than others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Abuse of power</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The humiliation and unpredictability that accompanied her parents power over her whilst abusing her.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Perceived acceptance of abuse</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The knowledge others had of some of the abuse she suffered, and their failure to intervene.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Repeat victimisation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parental abuse leaving her vulnerable for further abuse by other family members.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Powerlessness</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vulnerability of being a child, wanting parental love and attention.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstration of understanding of the shame associated with being a victim of sexual abuse, not intruding on her cousin's testimony.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Belief</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling believed due to unanimous guilty verdict, but many family members needing to hear confessions in order to believe.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Abuse of position</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uncle and aunt foster parents, took advantage to become abusers themselves.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Misogyny</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treated differently as female, attempts to de-feminise, not protected.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Victim blaming</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scapegoated for putting parents in prison, for being placed into care, taking the blame for the abuse.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wishing her parents to show some recognition, some emotional reaction to the significance of the crimes they have been convicted of.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix O: Jane’s circle of emotion

Person: Abuser
Emotion: Anger / Annoyance

Person: Abuser’s Parents
Emotion: Negative

Person: Abuser’s brother
Emotion: Anger

Person: Former best friend
Emotion: Frustration
## Appendix P: Jane’s themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Avoidance</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Not tackling abuse when first perpetrated leading to serial victims and escalation. Continuing to minimise and failing to accept and address.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Negotiating relationships</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Family relationships mean ongoing contact and arrangements with abuser’s family, that change over time and need maintaining.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(ongoing) impact of abuse</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Loss of key family member, multiple levels of harm caused by abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ongoing link to abuser</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Having children with her abuser creates a lifelong link to him and his family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Power v vulnerability (vul v power)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Children as a source of vulnerability in requiring a relationship, but also a source of power in negotiating those relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Patterns of behaviour</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Knowledge of serial offending, multiple victims and family reactions enabling understanding of current behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Power of disclosure</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Strength through a willingness for ongoing disclosure, ability to shock without emotional reaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Protecting the abuser</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Prioritising the abuser’s experience post-disclosure, leading to a failure to safeguard and prevent further offences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Secretive</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Family wish to prevent disclosure and maintain the taboo regarding abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Power and control</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Examples of domestic abuse running through the family's relationships - isolation and financial control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Victim voice</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Her attempts to get the abuser’s family to hear her and her daughter, and her attempts to speak out and challenge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Not recognising the abuse, not talking about it and generally hiding it, leading to its repeat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Lack of closure</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Unpredictable emotional reactions triggered, sometimes by small things, and having to manage the changing impact on her children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Impact of others</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The abuser’s family making the situation harder for her, breaching trust and distress caused by maintaining a relationship.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Experience of justice</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No criminal case but a civil one, and uncertainty about release from prison. No negative discussion of CJS.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Information leakage</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passing of details about her and her children to the abuser via his family, raising a concern about future safety.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Judgement</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attitude towards abuser’s brother’s unwillingness to report his own abuse and support her daughter’s case.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Journey of emotion</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Variations in emotional reaction, improvements for leaving relationship and changing emotions re children and the loss of their father.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Loss</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The impact on the children of no longer having their father in their life, particularly for her son who has limited understanding.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Shared experience</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognition of others’ abusive relationships and desire to share her own insights, linked with recognition they will be unsuccessful.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Closure</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No further gains to be made through discussion in counselling.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Failure to protect</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blaming abuser’s family for not taking preventative action when abuse was first disclosed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Lack of trust</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suspicious re contact family have with abuser, see patterns in their deceit.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Normalisation of abuse</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abuse normalised and therefore not recognised as abuse until began discussing in counselling.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Support v control</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attempts to influence and manipulate whilst appearing to wish to help.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Victim blaming</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Isolating the victim from the family rather than the abuser.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>External intervention</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role of social services as a voice to intervene or validate on her disagreements with the family.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Abuse prior to maturity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Impact of daughter suffering abuse prior to adolescence.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Extent of abuse</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Length of time she suffered abuse and the impact of her identity, abused through formative adult years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Hierarchy of harms</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Prioritising the family's experiences above those that have been abused.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Inability to ignore</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Disclosure to child minder providing legal requirement to report - forced action to be taken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Indicators of abuser</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Visible elements of an abusive relationship that serve to indicate worse underlying abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Minimisation of abuse</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not recognising the extent of the abuse and the suffering caused.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Normality</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Her family returning to a sense of harmony and abuse-free existence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Protection from harm</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Protecting her children by demonstrating a healthy relationship and limiting exposure to unhealthy ones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Recognition of harm</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Having the abuse and its impact acknowledged and accepted by the family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Transference of blame</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Shifting of responsibility from the abuser to those who facilitated it or failed to prevent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Vulnerability</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Additional elements that increase vulnerability - age and disability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix Q: Alice’s circle of emotion

Person: Abuser at the time
Emotion: Desire

Person: Abuser now
Emotion: Sadness

Person: Alice

Person: Emotion:

Person: Emotion:

Person: Emotion:
### Appendix R: Alice’s themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Journey of recovery</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>A lifelong journey, through different phases of dealing with the abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Shared experience/ different journey</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Sharing some elements of her abuse with her brother, but to a different extent and impact, and the complications this introduces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rejection of RJ</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>No personal benefit to be gained through RJ, and a dismissal of its relevance for sexual offences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sex offenders are different</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>The professional belief that sex offenders are unlike other offenders, and that offending is caused by a deep seated fault rather than being a choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Confidence and strength drawn from her ability to manage sex offenders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Vulnerability</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Age difference and family relationships creating initial vulnerability, feeling that this vulnerability is 'fixed' and would return upon contact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Experience of justice</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Reporting to police and the impact of the police interview, coupled with the decision post ID process to discontinue the case. No day in court but hypothetical reflections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Impact of abuse</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>The changing reactions to the abuse through phases of her life, and her considerations of its impact on her ability to form close personal relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Phases of reflection</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Moving through different periods of reflection, anger, denial, forgiveness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Talking and justice</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Counselling, or other forms of talking about the abuse, eases the process of reporting and gaining justice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Knowledge of sex offenders</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Professional experience of sex offenders means knowing how they operate, why and in what manner they perpetrate their abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Letting go of anger, being at peace with events, not a gift to the offender but to herself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Closure</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>A mixture of acceptance and forgiveness, less consuming and not so easily triggered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Memory distortion</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Changes to memory caused by the perception of a child becoming the recollection an adult with passing time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Failure to/of safeguard(ing)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Father being vulnerable to be grooming and providing access to his children through naivety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Understanding of sex offenders providing understanding as to why she was abused.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Grooming</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Methods by which the abuser gained the trust of her family and therefore gained access to abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Denial of impact</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>The belief she held for years that she had not been affected by the abuse, and that she had properly dealt with the issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Access</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Interactions between her family and the abuser that provided him with the opportunity to abuse and keep it secret.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Mitigation of blame</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Understanding of sex offenders methods meaning she does not place any blame for the abuse on her father’s failure to protect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Minimisation of impact of abuse</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>The abuse as only one life event, and the discussion of others in preference of the abuse during counselling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>False sense of closure</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Believing that the abuse had been dealt with and therefore unprepared for the experience of reporting to the police and the subsequent emotional impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Relationship with offender</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No relationship with the offender, therefore retaining the power relationships that existed when the abuse occurred.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Power and control</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Being a child and therefore highly vulnerable, and feeling stuck in that power relationship with the abuser, despite the passing of time and changing of context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Perception of abuse</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>How she considered her abuse in light of her brother’s experiences and reactions to abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Secrecy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Not having disclosed to her wider family despite involvement in the police investigation, due to her brother’s dominance of the situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The process of understanding and therefore forgiving her abuser his behaviour and making her peace with it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The professional capacity to identify and challenge sex offenders to assist with their rehabilitation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Humanisation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The appreciation that sex offenders are humans and have many good and bad qualities, not defining someone by their sex offending.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Recognition of harm</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The labelling of the abuse as a crime, a legal definition rather than a moral one, and having it recognised by the abuser as such.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Lack of closure</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Unable to reach a peace with her father re the abuse due to the perceived harm in disclosure and discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Building the abuse into her personality and character, a source of strength or of emotional distance dependent on perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Minimising anger through minimising blame</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Understanding sex offenders and their methods, not seeing her own treatment as bespoke to her but as part of a wider context, assisting with acceptance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Disempowerment/disempowering</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A lack of control over events, whether her choice to report to the police or the benefit she stands to gain from RJ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Journey of reflection</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Her passage through various phases of considering the abuse in comparison with her brother's abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Fear of exposure</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A query as to whether I3s reaction to the abuse contributed towards the abuse against her stopping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Lack of knowledge</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Information gap regarding what happened to her brother and how the abuse ended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Mitigating impact</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lessening the effect on her father that would come from wider disclosure of the abuse.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix S: Helen’s circle of emotion

Person: Best friend
Emotion: Annoyed

Person: Boyfriend
Emotion: Anger and sadness

Person: Abuser
Emotion: Anger

Person: Dad
Emotion: Angry

Person: Husband
Emotion: Love
### Appendix T: Helen’s themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Vulnerability</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Vulnerable due to age difference and parental neglect, later compounded by previous abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Impact of abuse</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Abuse affecting subsequent sexual activity, separated from emotion, engaged in without thought or connection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Re-orientating</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Reconsidering events from childhood through adult eyes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Grooming</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>The family relationship, proximity and age difference, how the abuser maintained access and secrecy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Alternative forms of abuse</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Being pushed into having an abortion at 16, and then later being made to disclose and be shamed for it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Feelings of complicity</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Not physically struggling and returning to abuser, leading to feelings that she was complicit in her abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Repeat victimisation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Abused repeatedly and serially, to the extent that the abusers form the timeframe of her life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Intertwined relationships</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>The links between her and her abuser that bring them together, maintaining access and secrecy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Feelings of neglect</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Seeking the emotional relationship and feeling of being loved that she does not feel she received from her parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Queries regarding how others viewed her, the abuse and her later reaction to it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Awareness of abuse</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reconsidering events from childhood through adult eyes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Phases of abuse</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>A timeline of her life through her different abusive experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Rejection of RJ</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rejection of the idea of any possible benefit from RJ, and an active unwillingness to meet with any party.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Component</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Rejection</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>The emotional rejection felt by her, particularly others reactions to her abortion or disclosure of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Objectification</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>The sexualisation and possessiveness of her husband and other men in her life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Power and control</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>The violence, isolation and humiliation used to maintain power and control within an abusive relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Perception of others</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Wishing to understand how others viewed her at the time, and external validation of her behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Graduation of offence</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Moving from an understanding that the behaviour was wrong, to recognising it as being significant abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>No ongoing relationship</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>A severing of all relationships with abusers and those around it - first through marriage then through hospitalisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Escape</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Escaping a violent marriage through an attempt to take her own life leading to hospitalisation, a new relationship and safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Differentiation between abusers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Highlighting the differences between her abusers, predominately through reference to her relationship to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Perception of abuse</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Unwillingness to recognise the nature of the abuse as rape when she views herself as complicit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Facilitation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Introduction to abuser and not reporting the abuse making best friend a facilitator of it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix U: Emma’s circle of emotion

Person: Mother
Emotion: Anger

Person: Dad
Emotion: Frustration

Person: Abuser’s Dad
Emotion: Anger

Person: Abuser
Emotion: Guilt
### Appendix V: Emma’s themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Intertwined relationships</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>The close family relationship between I5 and her abuser, which enabled the abuse and causes ongoing concerns re contact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Talking as/and therapy</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Gaining some sort of peace through discussion of the abuse, not carrying it all in her head.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Grooming</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>The age difference and family arrangements that provided access, along with the game the abuser invented as a means to conduct and escalate the abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vulnerability</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Her understanding of her own vulnerability, proximity and availability, and how this led to her being abused.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Compounding events</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>The difficulty separating different events from each other, and untangling the effect of the sexual abuse from these other events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Describing her current emotions, linked with potential for contact, due to ongoing link.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>RJ</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>RJ as a positive move for some people, but not her at that time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Breach in relationship</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>The gap in her relationship with her father brought about through a lack of discussion of the abuse following disclosure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Changing perspectives</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Others re-interpreting events in light of the disclosure, changing societal views and knowledge, adding support to her disclosures but raising the query as to why it was not therefore prevented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Misogyny</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Openly sexist behaviour of abuser’s father, leading her to feel vulnerable and unable to answer back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Understanding sex offenders</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Knowledge gained through counselling and professional practice regarding methods of sex offenders, including how they gain access to children and place themselves in a position of trust.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reflections on completing the questionnaire, sparking new insights to be discussed in counselling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Avoiding discussion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Father not talking about the abuse with her, leaving her unsure as to how he feels about it and a breach in their relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Recollection</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Abuser's name sparking a recollection of the abuse significant time after they had occurred, becoming part of a deterioration in her mental health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Disclosure</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Not directly telling anyone due to feelings of guilt, hospitalised and passive, indirect disclosure due to treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Premeditation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Elements of pre-planning undertaken by the abuser to create a structure and escalation process, reinforcing the abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Seeking change</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wishing to change how she feels about the abuser, feel less fear and anxiety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Safeguarding</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Changing family circumstances that provided safeguarding arrangements which brought the abuse to an end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Impact of abuse</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Long term suffering as a result of the abuse, including significant mental health breakdown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Need for information</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Wanting to understand why she was chosen for the abuse, and why he went about it the way he did.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Acknowledgement</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Recognition that the abuse occurred and was instigated by him, important for her to be able to give that to her family.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix W: Clare’s circle of emotion

Person: Police
Emotion: Anger

Person: Clare

Person: Perpetrator’s daughter
Emotion: Worried

Person: Service provider
Emotion: Upset

Person: Me
Emotion: Anger

Person: Perpetrator
Emotion: Hate
## Appendix X: Clare’s themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Loss of faith</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Loss of confidence, belief and trust in the organisations that should have supported her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Wish to prevent</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Aiming to prevent further offences occurring rather than receive retribution for the offences committed against her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Failure in service</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>The frustrations felt when service provision that was offered was then not delivered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rippling impact / ripple impact</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>The additional trauma caused by this incident interacting with previous abuse, and the effect on other areas of her life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Victim voice</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Having the opportunity to have her voice heard, whether in court or through RJ, giving back her voice when it was taken away during the abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Stemming from having her voice heard, and being able to respond to the abusive incident, an ability to obtain redress and restore balance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>The preference for face to face correspondance, the social elements of communication. The ability to show emotions and push her point home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Barriers to change</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>The circumstances and previous experiences that lead her to believe that change is not possible, causing a lack of hope and a subsequent lack of action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Disempowerment</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Others controlling her response, her choices, and constraining her ability to bring about a positive outcome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Outstanding questions</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Information that she would like to be able to gain, but has not as yet and has no current means by which to gather it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Professional knowledge</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>The impact of her choice of profession on her understanding of safeguarding, sex offending, communication and vulnerability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sense of loss</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>The loss of support and sense of safety that occurred as a result of losing her counsellor, which she links directly to the fallout from the incident and occurred shortly after.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Self-protection</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Taking steps to minimise exposure to further trauma, stress and anxiety, by limiting her involvement in matters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Her descriptions of her responses, an inability to sleep, stop thinking about it, becoming all consuming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Vulnerability</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Vulnerability stemming from previous abuse, presence at service provider and feeling outnumbered / over-powered by police.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Sense of achievement</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Seeking a positive outcome from the incident, some prevention activity or other benefit that may provide something good as a result.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Talking therapy</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>The demonstrable benefits of receiving counselling, and discussing the issues relating to the trauma in an aim to lower them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Methods of communication</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Preferred ways of interacting with organisations that she feels have failed in their service to her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Reflections on the process of conducting the interview, as well as insights gained during the interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Setting of expectations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>The service provision statements that were made to her that led her to anticipate they would be honoured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Trigger effect / impact</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>The interplay between this incident and previous abuse, the re-awakening of feelings and self doubt as a result.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Assumption of safety</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Belief held by all that incident would not happen on the premises, and the belief it would not happen again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Judging reaction</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Others deciding whether her emotional responses are proportionate or not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Positive re RJ</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Optimistic about the outcomes that could be achieved through RJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>False equivalence</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Drawing of a direct comparison between the abuse and the reporting and potential punishment of the abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Lines of responsibility</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ensuring liability for safeguarding remains appropriately allocated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Closure</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>The dealing of issues so that they are not easily triggered, no longer causing anxiety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Bespoke service</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>Highlighting the need for services to be personalised to the individual receiving them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Emotional journey</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Changing patterns of emotions over time, settling in initial stages and then altered by events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Privacy</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>The right for all parties to not share information, or to have information treated with sensitivity by all parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Understanding</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Training assisting to overcome lack of personal experience in understanding the impact of abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Fair representation</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Wanting to ensure her words, tones and emotions are conveyed by others in a manner true to her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Wish to confront</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Wanting to tell the abuser he was wrong, and about the impact he has had.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Self-doubt</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>A protective measure, reinforced by others sceptism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Inability to change</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Mixture of experiences about individuals capacity to change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Willingness to attempt change</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Wanting to attempt rehabilitation regardless of odds due to re-offending risk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Professional boundaries</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Arrangements to maintain distance with counsellor once no longer receiving services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Change as risk</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Awareness that any interaction to alter matters will have consequences, negative as well as positive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Multiple battles</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>A feeling of having limited strength but having to fight on numerous fronts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Wider reflection</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Prompted to consider the broader implications of the incident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Settled by information</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Easing of anxiety linked to learning more about the other parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Lack of closure</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Worries being managed down, rather than removed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Importance of closure</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>The need to work through issues and deal with them, rather than allowing them to become future triggers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Transference</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Attributing own feelings or interpretations onto others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Importance of belief</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Others showing belief helps stop the cycle of self doubt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Need for information</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Numerous questions that cannot be solved by her alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Predatory behaviour</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The behavioural elements that enable her to know there was an abusive intent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Feelings of responsibility</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Feeling that she is inflicting the outcome by choosing to make a complaint / go to court.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Support for RJ</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Seeking change rather than punishment, positive about achieving something and trying a different approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Proactive prevention</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Support for genuine, tough preventative measures, complete with monitoring activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Divergent experiences</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Conflicting insights between current incident and previous abuse, focusing on rehabilitation possibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Broken promises</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Actions promised by others, but then not delivered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Confidentiality complications</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Concerns re breaching confidentiality by passing information for safeguarding / investigation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Victim choice</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Recognising that others may make different decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Pessimistic re outcomes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Relationship leading to a belief that only negative outcomes will result.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Learnt strategies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Preparation for the repeat of past events to increase confidence in dealing with them in future.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>