Stories of Being and Becoming: Experiences of Hope and Identity-Making in the Worklives of Reintegration Counsellors

by

Keri Diane Flesaker

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Counselling Psychology

Department of Educational Psychology
University of Alberta

Abstract

Working with marginalized individuals allows counsellors to witness the darkest and most beautiful sides of humanity as they support clients in the process of life change. Community-based reintegration counsellors are helping professionals who offer support to individuals who are transitioning from correctional facilities into the community. Through the research puzzle central to this narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), I explored, "What are the experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors?" And, "What stories do they tell about who they hope to be and become in relation to their work with individuals on parole and probation?" Four community-based reintegration counsellors, including myself as a former reintegration counsellor, engaged in the process of narrative inquiry to co-compose narrative accounts and build understanding of our experiences. Narrative inquiry is based in an understanding of experience informed by the work of John Dewey (1938) and grounded upon the view that human beings, both individually and socially, lead storied lives (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). Drawing upon this understanding, I acknowledge that individuals shape their lives through the stories that they tell and the stories that are told about themselves and others. The literature review focuses on narrative conceptions of identity and hope, in line with the theoretical approaches that underpin this inquiry. Narrative understandings of identity, or stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999), emphasize that identity evolves over time, in relationships with oneself, others, and the environment. Narrative identity-making emphasizes the individual as the active composer of identity through experience, in relation to larger social, cultural, institutional and temporal narratives (Clandinin, Steeves, & Caine, 2013; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Using the term *stories*

to live by, Connelly and Clandinin (1999) assert that understanding professional practice in narrative terms cannot be separated from the development of identity. Field texts were co-composed through research conversations, autobiographical writing, the co-creation of visual artifacts, and research journaling. Field texts were analyzed through an ongoing process of reading, rereading, and reflection while wakefully attending to the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The understandings co-composed through this inquiry are discussed in relation to relevant academic literature on caring and compassion, vocational calling, narrative identity-making, hope, compassion fatigue, burnout, self-compassion, and compassion satisfaction. Finally, the manuscript closes with recommendations for professional practice, limitations, and points for readers to consider before drawing understandings into other contexts, including the situated nature of the inquiry.

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Keri Diane Flesaker. The research project, of which this thesis is a part, received research ethics approval from the Faculties of Education, Extension, and Augustana Research Ethics Board, University of Alberta, Project Name "Stories of Being and Becoming: Hope, Meaning, and Identity in the Worklife Accounts of Reintegration Counsellors", No. Pro00020250, on February 15, 2012.

Dedication

I dedicate this manuscript to the incredible participants who shared this journey of discovery and exploration with me. I am humbled by the dedication, honesty, and caring that you bring to your work. You touched my life with your stories. Even though we travel in different directions on our ongoing journeys of being and becoming, I will carry your stories with me.

I also dedicate this manuscript to the professionals working with individuals on parole and probation whose stories remain untold.

Acknowledgements

For Jesus, you are the source of my hope. I could not walk this path without you.

To my supervisor, Dr. Denise Larsen. Thank you for believing in me when I lost belief in myself.

To my Committee members. To Dr. Jean Clandinin, through your time and attention I learned more deeply what it means to be a narrative inquirer. To Dr. Bill Whelton, you were the first person I met in the department and you were present at my final examination. Your presence offers caring and thoughtful bookends to my graduate school experience. To Dr. Vera Caine, Dr. George Buck, and Dr. Sharon Moore, thank you for taking the time to participate in this process with your thoughtful feedback and questions.

To Mike. We made it!! Our wedding vows ended with the phrase, "Are you ready for the ride of your life?" While I know this is not exactly the journey we expected, I could not have done this without you.

To my incredible children, Israel, Lily, and Kash. My life could have been complete without a Ph.D. It could never have been complete without you. My schooling has been a constant part of your entire lives. I cannot wait to begin this new chapter with you.

To my parents, Joe and Karen Ringrose, and my parents-in-law, Fran and Ken Flesaker. Thank you for all your support, encouragement, and belief. I am blessed beyond measure to have you in my life.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

Helping professionals occupy a unique position as they work with clients in a variety of settings, including healthcare, education, social work, and counselling. The helping role allows professionals to witness the darkest and most beautiful sides of humanity. In counselling-oriented helping relationships, professionals can observe first-hand the extraordinary human potential for change. However, counsellors may also experience the frustration of working with clients who remain mired in painful or potentially dangerous life situations. Reintegration counsellors occupy one branch of the helping professions. Specifically, reintegration counsellors work alongside individuals who are transitioning from correctional facilities into the community. In my work with individuals on parole and probation, I was often asked by others, “How do you do that kind of work?” In my understanding, this question highlights perceptions from others regarding the difficulty of this work and the desire to understand how counsellors can continue engaging in it. This narrative inquiry seeks to explore experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work. Four community-based reintegration counsellors, including myself as a former reintegration counsellor, engaged in the process of narrative inquiry to co-compose narrative accounts and build understanding of our experiences.

Narrative inquiry is grounded upon, "a view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 477). Drawing upon this understanding, narrative inquirers acknowledge that individuals shape their lives through the stories that they tell and the stories that are told about themselves and others. Used in this way, story "is a portal through which a person enters

the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful" (p. 477). As a methodology, narrative inquiry is both the study of experience as story and a way of thinking about experience.

Recognizing the intersection of relational, temporal, and place contexts, narrative inquiry occurs in a metaphorical three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative inquiry occurs at the fluid intersection of these contexts, acknowledging the ongoing process of engaging with certain people, at certain times, in certain places. In narrative inquiry, research questions are typically framed around wonders and curiosities (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Whereas “problems carry with them qualities of clear definability and the expectation of solutions”, the term *research puzzle* conveys “more of a sense of a search, a ‘re-search,’ a searching again” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 124). Through the research puzzle central to this inquiry, I seek to explore "What are the experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors?" And, "What stories do they tell about who they hope to be and become in relation to their work with individuals on parole and probation?" In a co-constructive dialogue, the participants and I share the ways we weave together storied threads of experience to compose worklives as community-based reintegration counsellors.

The concept of *worklife* is inspired by career theorist Mark Savickas’s (2002, 2005) ideas that individuals create meaning in their careers by drawing from life experiences and personal qualities to express self-concept and reach personally-meaningful goals. Savickas (2005) writes, “Careers do not unfold, they are constructed as individuals make choices that express their self-concepts and substantiate their goals in the social reality of life” (p. 43). Thus, career is not simply a series of employment

positions occupied from school to retirement; rather, it is an active process of weaving life experiences into a meaningful, contextualized story about oneself in the world: a worklife. To situate these understandings, the participants and I co-composed narrative accounts beginning with the experiences that informed their work with individuals on parole and probation. This allowed the participants and I to co-compose a relational, temporal, and place context (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) in which to locate our narratives. Narrative inquiry, grounded in a Deweyan theory of experience (1938) views experience as, "embodied, always in motion, and shaped and reshaped by continuous interaction among personal, social, institutional, and cultural environments" (Clandinin, Huber, Steeves, & Li, 2011, p. 33). Recognizing that identity-making is a dynamic and contextualized experience, the ongoing process of lived experience needs to be acknowledged. Drawing from a narrative understanding of identity-making, Connelly and Clandinin (1999) assert that understanding professional practice cannot be separated from the development of identity, as these experiential stories represent both personal reflections of an individual's history and social reflections of their contexts. They term this narrative understanding of identity-making *stories to live by* (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) to illuminate the way individuals draw from experience to compose a coherent life narrative (Carr, 1986). Holding to these theoretical understandings, I explored experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work.

Definition of Terms

Previous experiences as a qualitative researcher and a keen interest in language as a practicing psychologist raised my awareness of the importance of communicating my

understanding of certain terms, in relation to this inquiry. Recognizing language as a socially constructed and navigated phenomenon, I acknowledge that words are not value-neutral; instead, language builds understanding by drawing from experience (Botella & Herrero, 2000; Gergen, 1999; Neimeyer, 1995; Potter, 2003). Using language to communicate experience, individuals reference pre-existing personal, cultural and historically-situated experiences to compose meaning. As such, I choose to define several key terms that will be used throughout this inquiry for clarity.

Reintegration Counsellors

In my previous research (Flesaker, 2008), I define reintegration counsellors as helping professionals who offer support to individuals who are transitioning from correctional facilities into the community. Community-based reintegration counsellors include, but are not limited to, social workers, chaplains, psychologists, and program workers working in community settings, like non-profit organizations, rather than in correctional facilities.

Dewey's Concept of Experience

Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) use of the term, *experience*, draws from John Dewey's (1938) pragmatist philosophy. "Dewey transforms a commonplace term, experience, in our educator's language into an inquiry term" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 2). Dewey's conception of experience acknowledges that individuals are both personal and social, and that these two aspects of life are always intertwined. "People are individuals and need to be understood as such, but they cannot be understood only as individuals. They are always in relation, always in a social context" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 2). Experience arises from the complementary relationship between

two principles: continuity and interaction.

Continuity is a significant aspect of Dewey's (1938) conception of experience, illuminating that:

> experiences grow out of other experiences, and lead to further experiences. Wherever one positions oneself in that continuum-- the imagined now, some imagined past, or some imagined future--each point has a past experiential basis and leads to an experiential future." (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 2)

Interaction refers to the situational influence on one's experience. As such, an individual's present experience involves the interaction between past experiences and the present situation. Within this inquiry, participants are always viewed in-context: with richly-storied histories, present circumstances, and hoped-for futures. Working within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space of relational, temporal, and place axes (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), myself, the participants, and the inquiry are always considered "in the midst" (p. 63) of these intersecting axes. As such, experiences of identity-making continue throughout the inquiry and after the formal narrative inquiry draws to a close.

Thread as a Metaphor

As a narrative inquirer, I understand experience as the material with which we compose our lives. I use the metaphor of a *thread* to highlight the connections between past, present, and future, in the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Through these threads, individuals draw experiences from the past to compose understanding in the present moment. Alternately, from the present moment, a thread of experience could be drawn backwards to create new understandings of past

experiences. For example, from the present moment, I look back into my own stories and weave a narrative where my own experiences of pain and comfort are transformed into the early life of a compassionate psychologist. As such, threads of experience can be woven and rewoven to form understanding, identity, and hopes, among many other possibilities.

Identity-Making

This inquiry is an exploration of experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work. As such, I draw from narrative conceptions of identity and identity-making. Connelly and Clandinin (1999) use the term *stories to live by* to illuminate the way individuals draw from experience to compose a coherent life narrative (Carr, 1986). Connelly and Clandinin assert that understanding professional practice in narrative terms cannot be separated from the development of identity, as these stories of experience represent both personal reflections on an individual's history and social reflections of their contexts. Stories to live by draw from these past and present contexts, shifting with experience over time, in relationships, and across places in an ongoing process of continuous change (Bateson, 1994).

Narrative conceptions of identity acknowledge that identity-making is a fluid, dynamic process (Clandinin, Steeves, & Caine, 2013; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Within the context of the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space, identity shifts over time, across places, and in relationship to others (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Over time, this process of weaving threads of storied experience creates possibilities for "telling and retelling, to ourselves and to others, the story of what we are about and what

we are" (Carr, 1986, p. 97). Within the narrative identity-making process, individuals can compose storylines to weave experiences into meaningful, temporal sequence of events.

Hope

Definitions of hope are typically considered either uni-dimensional or multi-dimensional, depending on the level of complexity used to attempt to describe the experience of hope. Uni-dimensional models tend to emphasize hope within a singular focus, like goal-attainment, whereas multi-dimensional models illuminate the impact of hope on life in various ways (e.g., cognitively, spiritually, and relationally). The understanding of hope I bring to this inquiry is strongly informed by Stephenson's (1991) definition of hope as "a process of anticipation that involves the interaction of thinking, acting, feeling, and relating, and is directed toward a future fulfillment that is personally meaningful" (p. 1459). Stephenson's definition fits most closely with my own experiences of hope, which touch all aspects of life. Reflecting on the experiences that bring me to this inquiry, hope inhabits my thoughts, emotions, actions, relationships, and faith.

Personal Introduction

When considering topics for inquiry, inquirers often choose to pursue research puzzles that they consider meaningful. Devoting several years to an inquiry calls forth extraordinary dedication on the part of the inquirer and offers the possibility of transforming an academic exercise into a journey of discovery. Acknowledging the potential for intimate connections between different aspects of the inquirer's life, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) note that "researchers' personal, private, and professional

lives flow across the boundaries into the research sites" (p. 115). This is my own experience and it drove the composition of my research puzzle for this narrative inquiry.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggest the value of beginning a narrative inquiry with the inquirer's autobiographical orientation to the research puzzle. This inquiry draws deeply from my own experiences and stories as a reintegration counsellor and it is part of the justification behind this inquiry. Through the composition of my own narrative account in Chapter 4,[1] I seek to tell the stories that situate me within and illuminate the intricately woven, mutually-influential relationship between them. Reflecting back on these and other experiences that bring me to this inquiry, I recognize my active involvement in this inquiry. Acknowledging my embeddedness in this process, I will refer to inquirers using feminine pronouns throughout this document.

Context of the Problem

Women and men on parole and probation face multiple barriers to community reintegration, including histories of trauma, addictions, poverty, and a lack of adaptive coping skills, which can make reintegration counselling difficult for both clients and counsellors. Research findings on the impact of long-term exposure to client problems, illnesses, and violence suggest that helping professionals are prone to frustration and emotional exhaustion, major contributors to the development of work-related burnout (Acker, 1999; Ratliff, 1988; Wykes, Stevens, & Everitt, 1997). Tackling the challenges of working with a marginalized population, like individuals on parole and probation, demands high energy and relational commitment from reintegration counsellors. Facing these types of challenges may also potentially threaten counsellor's ability to continue

[1] While many narrative inquiries begin with the inquirer's narrative beginnings, I chose to situate myself in relation to the inquiry in my own narrative account in chapter 4.

working in the field.

Focusing specifically on the field of social work, Schwartz, Tiamiyu, and Dwyer (2007) state that hope is one of the qualities that professionals possess which both bolsters effective practice with clients and protects professionals from burnout. Operating as an orientation to life (Flesaker, 2008; Flesaker & Larsen, 2012; Jevne, 2005; Jevne & Nekolaichuk, 2003), hope may shape how professionals view their work, including how they compose identity and meaning while working within challenging circumstances. To create useful strategies that support counsellors, the ways in which they sustain their ability to work and create hope and identity in relation to their work must first be understood. Recognizing the necessity of maintaining a hopeful orientation to continue working with clients, Jevne and Nekolaichuk argue that, "professionals must find a way of sustaining a hopeful orientation in the presence of those who don't comply with treatment, don't get well, won't take advice, and don't convey a sense of appreciation" (p. 46).

Purpose of the Inquiry

This narrative inquiry is a response to the lack of literature addressing experiences of hope and identity-making in the worklives of reintegration counsellors. It also draws upon my previous experiences in this field. The research puzzle for this inquiry is two-fold. Firstly, what are the experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors? Secondly, what stories do they tell about who they hope to be and become in relation to their work with individuals on parole and probation? The use of the word *hope* in this

question is significant, as I seek to highlight what is both meaningful[2] and sought after by each participant. Together, I utilize these questions to co-compose understandings of hope and identity-making alongside four reintegration counsellors, including myself.

Rationale for the Inquiry

Narrative inquiry as a methodology fits well for exploring experiences of hope and identity-making. With my research puzzle, I seek "to think of the continuity and wholeness of an individual's life experience" with all of its "fragments, enacted in storied moments of time and space, reflected upon and understood in terms of narrative unities and discontinuities" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 17). A number of renowned social science scholars assert that narrative reflects the natural way that individuals bring meaning and understanding to their lived experiences (Bruner, 1990; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Polkinghorne, 1988; Reissman, 1993). Stories of experience tell not only of past actions, but also how individuals ascribe meaning and understanding to those actions over time (Reissman, 1993). As hope and identity are composed in personally-meaningful, relational ways, narrative inquiry fits well to explore these multi-faceted, dynamic, human experiences.

Narrative inquiry offers a powerful opportunity to engage with reintegration counsellors to compose contextualized understanding of identity-making through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work. Engaging in narrative inquiry to compose narrative accounts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) allows access to stories of personal significance or meaning which are commonly associated with conceptualizations of hope (Bruininks & Malle, 2005; Dufault & Martocchio, 1985;

[2] Interpretations of personal significance or meaning are common in definitions and conceptualizations of hope (Bruininks & Malle, 2005; Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; Eliott & Olver, 2002; Farran et al., 1995; Jevne, 2005; Stephenson, 1991).

Eliott & Olver, 2002; Farran, Herth, & Popovich, 1995; Jevne, 2005). Similarly, a number of authors (Bruner, 2005; Carr, 1986; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Polkinghorne, 1991) view identity-formation as a narrative process. Making a case for the use of narratively-informed approaches to explore human lives, Bruner boldly asserts that "I cannot imagine a more important psychological research project than one that addresses itself to the 'development of autobiography'" (p. 695), which explores how our stories shift and influence our lives. Inquiring into the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) acknowledges the dynamic and contextualized process of identity-making for reintegration counsellors. Following a narratively-informed approach to identity-making, I understand that professional practice cannot be separated from the development of identity (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). The participants' stories of experience represent both personal reflections of their history and social reflections of their contexts (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). In total, these arguments suggest that narrative inquiry offers a meaningful way to explore and co-compose understandings of the experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Recognizing the power and constructive qualities of language in shaping understanding (Botella & Herrero, 2000; Neimeyer, 1995), it is important to clarify the understandings that influence my review of the literature on hope and identity-making, in relation to narrative inquiry. As noted in chapter one, a keen interest in language as a practicing psychologist and my previous experience on other qualitative research projects bring an awareness of discourse to my inquiry process. Two principles of discursive analysis remain at the forefront of my thinking as I consider and reconsider my research puzzle. First, discourse analysis posits that language, either text or speech, shapes how individuals perceive the world (Gergen, 1999; Potter, 2003). As a socially constructed and navigated phenomenon, language does not offer neutral descriptions; instead, language builds understanding by drawing from experience. Using language to communicate, individuals reference pre-existing personal, cultural and historically-situated experiences to compose meaning. Second, discourse analysis posits that language is action-oriented (Potter, 2003). Individuals use language in different ways, at different times, to achieve different purposes. Thus, understandings and accounts of experience may change across situations and audiences. Similarly, the conceptualization of a three-dimensional narrative inquiry space acknowledges that individuals exist within temporal, relational, and place dimensions (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), recognizing how motivation and intention, along with social, cultural, and historical understandings interact in meaning-making. Taking these understandings into consideration, the following section explores the richly-storied history and nuanced understandings of the language of hope. Next, hope and identity-making are discussed in relation to one another

and related literature. Recognizing that the topic of *identity* is explored in the academic literature from a variety of theoretical and philosophical perspectives, the literature in this review will focus primarily upon sources related to narrative understandings of identity-making.

A Brief Discursive Exploration of Hope

One of the most common questions I am asked when I tell people that I am a hope researcher is "What is hope?" The term *hope* is used commonly in conversations, but its meanings can be multi-faceted and may sometimes seem elusive. Sometimes, hope is used interchangeably with other terms (e.g., wishing) or grouped with other anticipatory states (e.g., optimism) (Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2004). However, research suggests that as a folk-concept (i.e., everyday usage in North American English), hope possesses distinctive qualities in relation to these other constructs (Bruininks & Malle, 2005). Similarly, differing forms of grammatical usage can also change how individuals perceive and discuss hope (e.g., hoped, hoping, hopefully) (Eliott & Olver, 2002, 2007). Awareness of these subtle differences and nuances are important as I inquire into experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work.

Distinguishing Hope From Related Constructs

Hope is a complex term used in everyday speech, psychological theory, and counselling practice. Drawing from both qualitative and quantitative traditions, researchers explore the similarities and differences between hope and other related constructs, like wishing and optimism. Bruininks and Malle (2005) combine the understandings gained from three studies examining the differences between folk

understandings of hope and other related affective states. Their analysis indicates that in everyday usage, hope is considered a future-oriented emotion with motivational and coping-oriented qualities. Comparing and contrasting hope with related constructs allows for an expanded awareness of the multifaceted nature of hope in both the academic literature and lived experience.

Wishing. Wishing tends to connote both desire and uncertainty. Similarly, desiring positive outcomes while facing uncertainty is a common characteristic of hope (Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; Flesaker, 2008; Flesaker & Larsen, 2012; Nekolaichuk, Jevne, & Maguire, 1999). The author of one of the earliest hope scales defines hope as "a wish or an expectation of fulfillment of needs or aims" (Gottschalk, 1974; Gottschalk, Bechtel, Buchman, & Ray, 2005). However, Bruininks and Malle (2005) find that hope is closely related to, yet distinct from, wishing. Both hope and wishing are associated with little personal control over obtaining the desired outcome. However, hope is characterized by a greater expectation of attaining a positive, personally meaningful outcome despite the odds. According to their analysis, hope requires more personal investment and creates a more active and enduring commitment than wishing. Conceptualizing and applying hope to work with marginalized youth, te Riele (2010) extends this idea, stating that "if our desires were easy to achieve, we would not need to hope; we could simply plan to make them happen" (p. 40). So it seems that while both hoping and wishing share the common elements of desire and uncertainty, hope involves greater personal commitment and investment in the outcome.

Optimism. Optimism is the generalized expectancy that future events will be positive (Scheier & Carver, 1985). As both hope and optimism are positive anticipatory

states, it is understandable that they have been portrayed as similar constructs in academic literature (Gottschalk, 1974; Maier, Peterson, & Schwartz, 2000). However, several studies indicate that hope and optimism are distinct, yet related constructs with positive effects on well-being (Bryant & Cvengros, 2004; Gallagher & Lopez, 2009; Magaletta & Oliver, 1999). Key differences between hope and optimism suggest that hope is typically identified as an *emotion* linked to specific outcomes, whereas optimism is classified as a more-generalized *cognitive set* (Bruininks & Malle, 2005). Optimism also tends to be more related to personal control and the likelihood of achieving the outcome than hope. In short, individuals are optimistic when the outcome is considered likely. However, when the outcome is meaningful, yet uncertain, individuals hope (Bruininks & Malle, 2005).

Hope as a Verb, Noun, and Process

In conversations, hope is employed as a noun, verb, adjective (e.g., hopeful), and adverb (e.g., hopefully) (Eliott & Olver, 2002, 2007; Farran et al., 1995). In two discourse analyses with oncology outpatients about end of life issues, Eliott and Olver find that the majority of participants spontaneously use the word *hope* or a derivative thereof in their interviews. Participants commonly use hope as a noun in two ways. First, hope is referred to as an *objective*, independent entity (e.g., "There's no hope"). In this form, hope is often determined by an outside source, like a doctor, and patients experience little control over it. Alternately, hope is also used as a noun that personally belongs to the participant, a *subjective* stance with regards to hope. For example, one participant speaks about hope as a resource in the fight against cancer. Eliott and Olver (2002, 2007) note that hope is most commonly used as a noun in reference to treatments

or cures, placing agency and responsibility with medical professionals instead of with the patient. However, used as a verb, hope becomes more subjective because *someone* (e.g., the patient) engages in the act of hoping (Eliott & Olver, 2002, 2007). Hoped for objects are determined by the individual (e.g., I hope to see my children tomorrow) and do not require legitimization from outside sources. As a verb, hope also introduces the ideas of meaning, agency, possibility, and positivity. Eliott and Olver (2002) note that when participants use hope as a verb, "the active, positive voices of participants contrast markedly with the absolute solutions demonstrated with the noun version ('if there's no hope, finish it')" (p. 184). They also advocate that "the multiple employment of *hope* suggests that the term cannot be defined simply as an entity to be operationalized and measured but can accommodate a plethora of meanings" (p. 187). This statement highlights the importance of contextual explorations of hope, as hope may have different meanings for different individuals over the course of an inquiry or even within a single conversation. Operating as a verb, hope also has important relational qualities. “Hope functions to value both the desired object, and the one desiring it” (Eliott & Olver, 2007, p. 145). As such, using hope language shares the speaker’s desires and allows the listener to respond. In this way, hoping becomes a social activity enabling articulation by the hoper and affirmation by others, establishing a connection between all. For example, the simple phrase “Let’s hope so” seeks to engage both the hoper and others in a shared action. Finally, noting the regular appearance of hope language at the end of research interviews, Eliott and Olver propose that hope may also function as part of a social closing ritual offering a gesture of genuine good will between parties (e.g., “I hope this has been helpful”).

Eliott and Olver's (2002, 2007) research has several important implications for the current inquiry. First, hope has multiple meanings in everyday speech. As reintegration counsellors share their experiences of identity-making through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work, they offer hopes embodying different qualities, drawn from different experiences. For example, in our conversations, Paul, a participant in the current inquiry, shares the idea of hope as an *object* that people can catch or lose, his *belief* that hope is a key ingredient in reintegration work, and his *motivation* to achieve specific hopes. Usage of the word *hope* highlights things that participants find meaningful[3] and central to who they hope to be and become. Second, some usages of the term *hope* are more active than others. Employing an active or empowering usage of hope may be more useful for participants as they seek to foster hope in their own lives and the lives of their clients. Finally, as an inquirer, I must remain wakeful (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) to the ways both participants and I use the word *hope*, including differing usages and understandings, as these nuances illustrate how we perceive and understand hope, especially in the context of identity-making.

A Deweyan-Informed Narrative Conception of Hope

Narrative inquirer and hope researcher, Lenora LeMay (2014), weaves together threads from pedagogical research, multidimensional conceptualizations of hope, Dewey's (1938) theory of experience, and Nunn's (2005) narrative notion of hope to create a narrative conception of hope for education. LeMay inquires into two teachers' experiences with hope-focused practices in curriculum making.

[3] Interpretations of personal significance or meaning are common in definitions and conceptualizations of hope (Bruininks & Malle, 2005; Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; Eliott & Olver, 2002; Farran et al., 1995; Jevne, 2005; Stephenson, 1991).

LeMay (2014) begins by understanding hope and hoping as an experience (Dewey, 1938). Drawing from multi-dimensional definitions about the experience of hope by Farran et al. (1995), Stephenson (1991), and Jevne (1994), she weaves together a Deweyan-informed narrative conception of hope. Farran et al. propose that "hope constitutes an essential experience of the human condition [that] functions as a way of feeling, a way of thinking, a way of behaving, and a way of relating [sic] to oneself and one's world" (p. 6). Similarly, Stephenson describes hope as "a process of anticipation that involves the interaction of thinking, acting, feeling, and relating, and is directed toward a future fulfillment that is personally meaningful" (p. 1459). Finally, combining the qualities of hope, story, and lived experience, Jevne asserts, "It *is* possible to know hope in the eyes of people, to hear it in their stories. It is as if each of us has our own Rubik's cube of hope embedded in the story of our lives" (p. 9).

Nunn (2005) characterizes hope as a notion exemplifying uncertainty, possibility, desirability, and goodness, practiced within an individual's narrative understanding of their history and themselves. "Hope, like all of our social life, is practiced against a background" (Nunn, 2005, p. 72) of actual past, hypothetical future, and fictional experiences. In the context of this background of experience, individuals compose a life narrative of the extended temporal sequence of events or experiences that comprise their lives. Thus, "a human being hopes by creatively using her narrative resources to try out possible states of affairs for narrative fit into her self-narrative" (Nunn, 2005, p. 72). Nunn situates hope as an active process, woven from threads of experiences.

According to LeMay (2014), a Deweyan-informed, narrative conception of hope acknowledges that hope is a fluid, emergent experience, shared in relationships. These

experiences are multi-dimensional, weaving together different aspects of life in the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Reflecting on her experiences with teacher-participants, LeMay notes:

> It seemed, as I looked across Sheila and Carmen's narrative accounts that Sheila and Carmen began to honour and celebrate their way of being with hope as a way of thinking, feeling, acting, and relating in a way that I understood as the courage to be alongside other conceptions of hope. By this I mean that living, telling, retelling, and reliving (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) who they were and were becoming with the Deweyan-informed narrative conception of hope enabled Sheila and Carmen to embrace who they were and were becoming alongside the dominant institutional, cultural, and familial stories of instilling or injecting hope either for salvation or to ensure the attainment of certain outcomes or transformations. (pp. 182-183)

LeMay offers the idea of a Deweyan-informed narrative conception of hope as a potential counterstory (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) to dominant goal setting, critical theory, and faith-based conceptions of hope in education. As a counterstory, a narrative conception of hope offers possibilities to create contextualized understandings of hope, based in experience, that offer novel interpretations and conclusions. She also suggests that a narrative conception of hope can act as a competing story, because, "it did not undermine the other conceptions of hope in education as counterstories sometimes do but enabled them to sharpen their way of being with hope as they lived alongside these other conceptions of hope" (Lindemann Nelson, 1995, p. 199). LeMay proposes that reflecting on hope by attending to life stories may contribute to being and becoming processes,

alongside composing, "a coherent life plan" (p. 35). As such, a Deweyan-informed narrative conception of hope offers possibilities for individuals to engage in personally-meaningful compositions of hope that remain grounded in experience.

Hope and Identity-Making in Narrative Inquiry

The topics of hope and identity-making seem so large at first glance. For me, these are the topics of intense philosophical treatises or a life's worth of research and thought. I question "Where do I even begin with these massive ideas?" and feel overwhelmed and under-equipped for the task. And yet, alongside these larger, socially-informed narratives about who has access to these topics and how they can be explored exist counterstories (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) with the possibility of shifting taken-for-granted understandings. Lindemann Nelson defines a counterstory as "a story that contributes to the moral self-definition of its teller by undermining a dominant story, undoing it and retelling it in such a way as to invite new interpretations and conclusions" (p. 23). Counterstories do not simply subvert a dominant story or replace it with another dominant story, they invite new, personally-meaningful interpretations and conclusions. Instead of remaining mired in my previous narrative about being under-equipped to explore the topics of hope and identity-making, I chose to compose a counterstory through the process of narrative inquiry that is intimate and approachable. Hope and identity–making seem central to life, yet often unnoticed. Each of us eats, sleeps, works, and laughs. How often do we consider the processes of hope(ing), identity-making, and the creation of meaning within these actions? Yet, when I wonder about the centrality of hope and identity-making as part of composing a life, I consider circumstances where hope, a sense of identity or personal meaning are seemingly absent or diminished. In my

understanding, a life without hope or identity would seem a sorrowful and desperate state. In fact, hope and identity-making are common topics that I discuss in my work with clients during therapy. So it is my belief that alongside the mundane and occasionally spectacular experiences of daily living, individuals, including myself, are equipped to explore the topics of hope and identity-making.

Reflecting on the academic literature and my own experiences, the tie that seems to bind the concepts of hope and identity-making is that they are personally meaningful and individually composed, yet interwoven with many other narrative threads. These narrative compositions of hope and identity take place in relation to larger social, cultural, and temporal contexts, including relationships, gender, and career. Many researchers argue that the process through which these concepts unfold in life is narrative (Bruner, 1990, 2004; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; McAdams, 1985, 2001; Sarbin, 1986; Singer, 2004). Narrative offers a way through which human beings compose these experiences of hope and identity, both through dialogues internally with oneself and externally with others. In the following sections, I will discuss these concepts in relation to my own understandings and relevant narratively-informed literature.

Narrative Conceptions of Identity

Identity is a storied life composition,
a story to live by.
Stories to live by
are shaped in places and lived in places.
They live in actions,
in relationship with others,
in language, including silences,
in gaps and vacancies,
incontinuities and discontinuities (Clandinin & Huber, 2002, pp. 161–162)

The field of identity research is vast, filled with different theories and philosophical understandings of what identity is and how identity is formed. This literature review will be limited to narrative conceptions of identity, in line with the theoretical approaches that underpin this inquiry. Narrative understandings of identity, or stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999), emphasize that identity evolves over time, in relationships with oneself, others, and the environment (Steeves, Clandinin, & Caine, 2013). As such, my understanding of identity is situated within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space. Narrative conceptions of identity emphasize the individual as the active composer of identity through experience, in relation to larger social, cultural, institutional and temporal narratives (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Clandinin, Steeves, & Caine, 2013).

Connelly and Clandinin (1999) use narrative inquiry to explore the concept of identity for teachers. Using the term *stories to live by*, they assert that understanding professional practice in narrative terms cannot be separated from the development of identity. "These stories, these narratives of experience, are both personal – reflecting a person's life history – and social – reflecting the milieu, the contexts in which [professionals] live" (p. 2). Individuals compose stories to live by drawing from past and present experiences. As such, these stories shift as individuals compose and recompose their identity over time and across place. Connelly and Clandinin's conception of the relationships between narrative understandings of knowledge, context, and identity offer a central thread within this inquiry around which to explore experiences of hope and identity-making.

Narrative conceptions of identity acknowledge that identity-making is a fluid, dynamic process (Clandinin, Steeves, & Caine, 2013; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Within the context of the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space, identity shifts over time, across contexts, and in relationship to others (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The questions of being, becoming, and hope found in my research puzzle acknowledge the uncertainty and fluidity of the identity-making process. As hope is often paired with uncertainty (Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; Flesaker, 2008; Flesaker & Larsen, 2012; Nekolaichuk et al., 1999), it acknowledges the tentative, unfolding process that individuals engage in as they compose their identity. Over time, this process of weaving threads of storied experience creates possibilities for "telling and retelling, to ourselves and to others, the story of what we are about and what we are" (Carr, 1986, p. 97).

Narrative psychologist Jerome Bruner (2004) questions the idea of an *essential* self, pondering “surely, if our selves were just there, we’d have no need to tell ourselves about them” (p. 3). Individuals story themselves in relation to families, workplaces, spiritual communities, and the larger world. Josselson (1996b) uses a longitudinal study to study how women create identity from college to middle adulthood. She concludes that women’s identity development is ongoing, balancing needs for self-assertion with needs for relationships. Individuals form identity in interactions with others, by posing questions and gathering responses. When seeking to answer the question, “Who am I?”, individuals tend to reference factual information (e.g., age, job, marital status), personal constructs (e.g., outgoing, shy, funny), perceived perceptions of others (e.g., co-workers see me as hardworking), and even desired, future selves (e.g., I wish I was more confident) (Botella & Gámiz, 2012). Through these stories, in relation with the situation,

individuals present themselves and interpret events by drawing from previous experiences and their understandings of the world.

Telling others about oneself is a complex act that depends not only on one's perception of self, but also one's perceptions of others' expectations (Bruner, 2004). Individuals continually compose and recompose understandings of themselves to meet the needs of different situations, incorporating the remembered past and anticipated future with the present situation (Bruner, 2004; Crites, 1971). Although self-narratives may be based on biographical details, individuals go beyond these to select, share, and withhold aspects of their experience (Bruner, 2004; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; McAdams & Janis, 2005). Singer (2004) sums these ideas up succinctly, stating: "To understand the identity formation process is to understand how individuals craft narratives from experiences, tell these stories internally and to others, and ultimately apply these stories to knowledge of self, other and the world in general" (p. 438). Therefore, although individuals craft their own self-narratives, they do so in relation with numerous temporal, contextual, and relational influences.

In the field of psychology, other narrative researchers build understandings of identity-making by examining identity narratives, rather than through a Deweyan-informed approach to narrative inquiry. Identity narratives are internalized and evolving life stories that integrate the reconstructed past and imagined future to provide life with unity and purpose (McAdams, 2001). These theories propose that individuals understand their lives and their worlds through stories (McAdams & Janis, 2005). These approaches understand narrative identity as a process that develops across the lifespan (Baddeley & Singer, 2007; Singer, 2004). Children develop autobiographical memory through parent-

child joint reminiscing about the shared past (Nelson & Fivush, 2000). However, children are typically unable to integrate autobiographical memories into a comprehensive life story until mid-adolescence (Habermas & Bluck, 2000). Using the metaphor of a story, McAdams's (1985) life-story theory of identity-formation suggests that human identity shares the structure of an inner story, complete with setting, scenes, character, plot, and themes. While deemphasizing the role of lived experience in identity-making, these approaches also recognize the centrality of telling and being told stories about oneself and one's place in the world in identity-making.

Identity in relation to hope. To date, little exploration has been done regarding the relationships between hope and identity, though research suggests this to be an important connection. Reviewing hope research across a number of disciplines, Eliott (2005) concludes that, "hope does seem to be part of who we deem ourselves to be" (p. 38). She further links hope to identity, stating "as we wish to know about ourselves, so we wish to know about hope" (p. 38). Similarly, Jevne (2005) argues against "efforts to standardize the meaning of hope [which] places at risk the rich understandings available from individuals about their own lives" (p. 269). In her discussion of hope as an orientation to life, Jevne acknowledges that individuals create their own experiences of hope. In this way, it is the *person* who *composes* a life, hopeful or otherwise.

Emerging psychological research on client accounts of hope offers new understandings of the relationship between hope and identity. For example, therapeutic interventions in early counselling sessions that facilitate positive reflection by clients on their identity are frequently reported by clients as hopeful moments (Larsen & Stege, 2012). Understanding one's identity and personal potential seems to offer hopeful ways

for clients to engage with the world. “These aspects of identity contributed to a sense of purpose and self-worth, offering an anchor to self during difficult times” (Larsen & Stege, 2012, p. 48), including explorations of who clients hope to be and become. Further, research on the lived experience of hope for patients hospitalized after a suicide attempt also offers a connection between hope, agency, and self-worth (Herrestad & Biong, 2010). The authors discuss how patients may share *indefinite hopes*, non-specific hopes without attribution of agency or timelines, to avoid losing hope or status. For example, one participant shares a hope that economic issues would “sort themselves out” (p. 6), without reference to personal agency or plans. Without ways to evaluate whether hopes manifest, “it is possible that the expressions of indefinite hopes are reflecting such mental moves to escape an interpretation of oneself as a failure and to preserve a feeling of self-worth” (p. 8). These studies offer emerging understandings of the relationships between hope and identity.

Meaning in relation to hope. Examining historical perspectives on hope, Eliott (2005) remarks upon the powerful connections between hope and meaning. She writes that “hope is conceived as able to change lives: either through some link between psyche and soma affecting physical well-being, or by the imparting of meaning or purpose to human existence” (p. 38). Regardless of how meaning is measured in empirical studies, it manifests robust correlations with hope in cross-sectional studies (Cheavens, Feldman, Gum, Michael, & Snyder, 2006; Feldman & Snyder, 2005; Mascaro & Rosen, 2005, 2006). Often, hope is linked to outcomes and events that are considered personally meaningful. In her review of the construct of hope, Stephenson (1991) defines hope as “a process of anticipation that involves the interaction of thinking, acting, feeling, and

relating, and is directed toward a future fulfillment that is *personally meaningful*" (italics added, p. 1459). Interpretations of personal significance or meaning are common in definitions and conceptualizations of hope (Bruininks & Malle, 2005; Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; Eliott & Olver, 2002; Farran et al., 1995; Jevne 2005). Similarly, folk conceptions of hope are associated with actions to pursue outcomes that are considered important and worthy of personal investment, even if these outcomes are considered uncertain (Bruininks & Malle, 2005). Finally, in a cross-cultural study of hope, individuals hope for outcomes or events they appraise as both personally or socially acceptable and important (Averill, Catlin, & Chon, 1990). In essence, individuals hope for outcomes they consider meaningful, with more deeply meaningful outcomes potentially inspiring deeper hope.

Narrative conceptions of identity-making and meaning-making. Through individual and larger socio-cultural narratives, individuals situate themselves and are situated by others in relation to the world. "All stories are embedded within social, cultural, institutional, and family narratives that shape, and are shaped by, individuals' stories to live by (Clandinin, 2010). These stories highlight aspects of the world and influence the ways individuals compose meaning within them. At different times, these personal and societal narratives may be congruent or divergent, challenging the individual's sense of unity and purpose. Narrative therapists and researchers, Michael White and David Epston (1990) posit that dominant stories become commonly accepted and can exert power due to social or individual acceptance. White and Epston define dominant stories as stories told by others that "allow insufficient space for the performance of the person's preferred stories" (p. 14). However, these stories may only

represent a narrow perspective on individuals or situations. For example, in Chandra, Paul, and Brenna's narrative accounts in this inquiry, I identify several potential dominant stories regarding social expectations for reintegration counsellors, including a strong emphasis on selflessness and expectations regarding burnout. Although these stories may be accepted and influential in meaning-making and identity processes, they are not the only possible stories. Counterstories (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) offer additional threads which may exist alongside or in opposition to dominant stories, illuminating other personally-meaningful aspects of experience. Through the ongoing composition of narratives, individuals continue negotiating meaningful ideas, actions, and outcomes in response to the interplay between individual and societal narratives.

Personal Reflections on Hope and Identity-Making

In my experience as an inquirer, the concepts of pragmatism, hope, identity-making, and meaning-making operate within my own inquiry process. With respect to pragmatism, Dewey's (1938) concepts of continuity and interaction are evident within the development of my research puzzle: What are the experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors? And, what stories do they tell about who they hope to be and become in relation to their work with individuals on parole and probation? This two-part research puzzle stems from a number of my experiences with which I compose my values, passions, and practices. If, by chance, I did not work at a women's shelter, which also acts as a community residence for women on parole and probation, I would not likely be curious about the worklives of reintegration counsellors. During my master's research on experiences of hope for reintegration professionals working with women on parole and probation (Flesaker, 2008), my curiosity bloomed about the unshared stories

which were alluded to but left unsaid during research interviews. Today, I integrate past and present experiences into the decision-making processes, which contribute to the development of this inquiry process.

Summary of Literature Review

Considering the topics of hope and identity-making in relation to worklife, I am reminded of the question that adults commonly ask children: "*What* do you hope to be when you grow up?" This question often unleashes career-driven aspirations like "veterinarian, ballerina or pilot". Less often are people asked "*Who* do you hope to be?" I wonder how children would be subtly guided through different ways of thinking if the emphasis was placed on *who* rather than *what*. The question "Who do you hope to be and become?" touches on both identity and meaning-making through the lens of hope. Not only does it reference identity with the question *who*, but it also highlights meaning as individuals share the qualities, with which, they seek to compose their lives. Using narrative inquiry, this research puzzle is explored in the following chapters through the experiences of four current and former reintegration counsellors, including myself.

Chapter 3: Methodology

But in order to make you understand, to tell you my life, I must tell you a story.

Virginia Woolf

Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) proposed that engaging in narrative inquiry presented "a series of choices, inspired by purposes that are shaped by past experiences, undertaken over time, and will trace the consequences of these choices in the whole of an individual or community's lived experience" (p. 40). As an inquirer, the justification of choice and particular use of research methods reflected my assumptions about reality (Crotty, 1998), including the experiences that shaped these choices and purposes. Engaging in the research process from conceptualization to written document, inquirers must continually question and clarify their worldviews (Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The following sections outline the ontology, epistemology, research methodology, and methods I brought to narrative inquiry. McLeod (2001) described the qualitative researcher as a bricoleur, a handywoman or a Jill of all trades who used the knowledge and skills gained through experience to craft a "complex, dense, reflexive, collage-like creation" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 6). Similarly, I utilized the artisan metaphor of a weaver drawing together storied threads to create a richly-hued, multifaceted project. To understand this inquiry, it is vital to understand how who I am as an inquirer, including the experiences that informed my inquiry process, shaped this inquiry.

Ontology: Acknowledging the Threads of Being and Becoming

Questions of ontology were central to this inquiry, as ontology related to understandings of being, becoming, and perceptions of reality. The term *ontology* "embodies a certain way of understanding *what is*" (Crotty, 1998, p. 10; italics in

original). Situating narrative inquiry in a Deweyan-informed (1938) ontology of experience, Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) explored the ontological borderlands and contact points between narrative inquiry and alternative philosophical positions. Central to their understanding of the ontological and epistemological foundations of narrative inquiry was its grounding in Dewey's theory of experience.

Dewey (1938) offered the perspective that lived experience was the beginning point for understanding the world. Narrative inquiry "privileges individual lived experiences as a source of insights useful not only to the person himself or herself but also to the wider field of social science generally" (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 49). Narrative inquiry begins with a basic respect for everyday lived experience. Rather than simply legitimizing individual experience, narrative inquiry also offers opportunities to explore the social, cultural, and institutional narratives within which experiences are formed, communicated, and put into action (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). For the participants in the current inquiry, these larger narratives wove alongside to inform, challenge, and support their own narratives. In chapters four to eight, I reference the instances where the participants or I noted points of connection between the narrative accounts and these larger social, cultural, or institutional narratives.

Focusing on lived experience within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) of temporality, relationality, and place, provided a way to approach the situated lives of reintegration counsellors. This inquiry sought to explore experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work. Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) clarified how a Deweyan-informed understanding of experience took central place in the

way narrative inquirers approached the composition of situated understandings within the three-dimensional inquiry space:

> The first commonplace, temporality, attends to Dewey's notion of continuity in experience—that is, that every experience both takes up something from the present moment and carries it into future….The second commonplace, sociality, points toward a simultaneous concern with both personal and social conditions.... The third commonplace, place or sequence of places, draws attention to the centrality of place, that is, to the specific concrete, physical and topological boundaries of place where the inquiry and events take place. (pp. 69–70)

Expanding upon narrative inquiry's foundation in a Deweyan-informed theory of experience, Clandinin and Rosiek proposed that individuals shape their lives by interpreting their past, present, and future in terms of stories told about themselves and others. Referencing Connelly and Clandinin (2006), they built upon this idea, stating "story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is *interpreted* and made *personally meaningful*" (p. 375; italics added). Individuals experienced life and created meaning through multiple layers of stories. Layers of being existed alongside layers of personally and socially-informed, storied meaning-making. Noting that borderlands existed even within the community of narrative inquirers, the theoretical map that Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) constructed allowed inquirers to locate themselves within the field of narrative inquiry. Differing foci of inquiry, modes of inquiry, and influence from differing scholarly literature added to the "multiple influences that overlap and shade into one another… contributing to the richness and complexity of narrative inquiry" (Clandinin & Rosiek,

2007, p. 68). I recognized and acknowledged narrative inquiry's foundation in an ontology of experience. However, I also noted that the approach I took to narrative inquiry was strongly informed by my own experiences of reading, conversation, reflection, training in counselling psychology, and alternate forms of qualitative research. Failing to recognize these significant influences on the understandings I bring as a narrative inquirer and a practicing psychologist would have left my own storied experience as a narrative inquirer unacknowledged. I sought to acknowledge and remain wakeful (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) to the experiences and understandings I brought to and composed throughout this inquiry process.

Epistemology: Acknowledging the Threads About How We Know What We Know

Epistemology is "a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know" (Crotty, 1998, p. 3). Epistemology guided what I viewed as *knowledge* and the status that knowledge held. Epistemologically, narrative inquiry is rooted in a Deweyan-informed theory of experience (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). As a relational methodology, narrative inquiry involved the participants and I actively co-composing understandings, rather than simply waiting to discover pre-existing caches of knowledge. Acknowledging this dynamic, multi-perspectival stance, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) wrote "in narrative thinking, interpretations of events can always be otherwise" (p. 31). As such, grounding the co-composition of knowledge in experience situated in certain places, at certain times, with certain people, recognized that prior experiences informed the questions asked, the answers given, and the interpretation of experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). These contexts were acknowledged as meaningful because

understanding in the inquiry process was always composed within the three-dimensional inquiry space.

Narrative Inquiry: A Relational Methodology

A methodological framework acts as "the research design that shapes our choice and use of particular methods and links them to the desired outcomes" (Crotty, 1998, p. 7). As a methodology, narrative inquiry brought "theoretical ideas about the nature of human life as lived to bear on educational experiences as lived" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p. 3). Exploring my research puzzle through narrative inquiry shaped my approach to co-composing and interpreting field texts, narrative inquiry's term for data. For example, research conversations, one form of field texts, acknowledged the collaborative process of exchanging ideas and building understanding (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) that led to a "contextually bound and mutually created story" (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 696). I chose the word *conversation* intentionally, because it fit with the relational emphasis of this inquiry. *Conversation* implicitly acknowledged the experience of meeting and dialogue between the participant and myself, whereas, *interview* tended to connote one individual questioning and obtaining information from another (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin & Huber, 2010).

Making sense of experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work involved attending to the "metaphorical *three-dimensional narrative inquiry space*" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50; italics in original). Interactions between personal and social forces occurred on one-axis. On a second axis, the past, present, and future created a sense of temporal continuity. The third axis represented the place or context of the inquiry. The

current narrative inquiry occurred at the intersection of these axes: with certain people, at a certain time, in a certain place. However, this intersection did not remain fixed. As time proceeded, individuals and social structures interacted and situational contexts changed, acknowledging that myself, the participants, and the inquiry existed in-process.

Similarly, it is my understanding that hope also operated within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space: temporal, relational, and place. As previously discussed, hope has been commonly understood as a multi-dimensional (Larsen, Edey, & LeMay, 2007) composition of both individual perceptions and social interactions (Bruininks & Malle, 2005; Eliott & Olver, 2002; Farran et al., 1995) My work, along with other counselling researchers (Larsen & Stege, 2010a, 2010b, 2012), was influenced by Stephenson's (1991) conceptualization of hope as a process that involved thinking, acting, feeling, and relating, directed towards personally meaningful outcomes. Personal and social experiences, like family history, spirituality, or educational opportunities influenced participants as they composed hope and identity. Interpersonal relationships (Benzein, Saveman, & Norberg, 2000; Cutcliffe, 1997, 2004; Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; Farran et al., 1995; Larsen et al., 2007; Morse & Doberneck, 1995; Nekolaichuk et al., 1999) and spiritual connectedness (Benzein et al., 2000; Farran et al., 1995; Gaskin & Forté, 1995; Nekolaichuk et al., 1999) have been identified as common relational characteristics of hope. Similarly, temporal qualities, like a future-orientation, have also been commonly identified in conceptualizations of hope (Benzein et al., 2000; Cutcliffe, 1997; Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; Dufrane & Leclair, 1984; Gaskin & Forté, 1995; Stephenson, 1991). In previous research with reintegration counsellors (Flesaker, 2008; Flesaker & Larsen, 2012), participants defined hope using both personal/social (e.g.

relationships, spirituality) and temporal (e.g., past, present, and future-oriented) terms. Contextually, as participants shared their stories of hope and identity-making they considered and interpreted a multitude of complex factors to communicate their understandings. Capturing the breadth of life touched by hope, Jevne (2005) summarized that hope crossed "goal and soul, doing and being, process and outcome, state and trait" (p. 266), echoing the findings of three decades of qualitative hope research (Eliott, 2005).

Bruner and Narrative Meaning-Making

Another influential voice in the use of narrative approaches to create understanding was psychologist and researcher, Jerome Bruner. While I engaged with Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) approach to narrative inquiry, rather than following a methodology informed by Bruner's (1990, 2004, 2005) approach to narrative research and analysis, I acknowledged that his work remained influential in narrative research, especially in the field of psychology. Bruner (1986) wrote about two modes of thought that individuals used to interpret and understand their world and their experiences: paradigmatic and narrative:

> The *paradigmatic* or logico-scientific one, attempts to fulfill the ideal of a formalized mathematical system of description and explanation. It employs categorization or conceptualization and the operations by which categories are established, instantiated, idealized, and related to one another to form a system (p. 12, emphasis added).

The paradigmatic mode followed the model of empirical science and was concerned with categorization. Conversely, the *narrative* mode of knowing was concerned with the meaning individuals ascribed to their experience through stories. These stories

represented how individuals explained what they wanted and how they would achieve it. Each mode of thought had significant strengths. The paradigmatic mode offered the power of prediction by setting up and testing hypotheses. In contrast, the narrative mode organized the complex and often ambiguous world of human intention and action into a meaningful, coherent structure. As such, narrative offered "not a record of what happened (which is in any case a nonexistent record) but rather a continuing interpretation and reinterpretation of experience" (Bruner, 1986, pp. 691–692) or a way of exploring "life making" (p. 692). Bruner's categorization of thinking has been influential in qualitative inquiry approaches, including narrative inquiry. His voice continued to acknowledge and add depth to the understanding of the importance of narrative approaches to build situated knowledge, especially in the field of psychology.

Temporality in Relation to the Inquiry Process

Temporality played a significant role when inquiring into experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work. These understandings drew from the past, while simultaneously looking forward into the future from the present moment. Speaking of the narrative quality of human experience, Crites (1971) wrote that while only the present existed, it existed in “tensed modalities” (p. 301), which joined the past to the present and anticipated future. In the co-composition of field texts, participants, including myself, reflected upon the past and imagined the future from the present moment. The present context influenced what was remembered from the past or hoped for from the future. Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) writings encouraged me to remain aware that both the participants and I were always situated in a particular moment, temporally, relationally,

and in place. Writing about narrative, self, and life coherence, Carr (1986) emphasized that while individuals could step back to reflect upon their experiences, they could never fully step out for a disconnected, externally-objective view of the situation. Identity and hope were not fixed, objective constructs, rather they shifted and changed in relation to experience over time.

Exploring stories of being and becoming in relation to reintegration work involved inquiring into unfolding processes. Crites (1971) noted that while "anticipatory stories are very thin and vague as compared with the dense, sharp detail of the chronicle of memory" (p. 302), they helped to orient individuals to future possibilities. Participants composed hope and identity through these past, present, and future-oriented stories. Honoring this understanding, I sought to remain wakeful (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) to the influence of temporality throughout the inquiry process.

The "I" in Inquirer

As a narrative inquirer, as in other forms of qualitative research, I acted as a bricoleur or artisan, through whom all information regarding the inquiry, (e.g., research conversations, observations) was interpreted (McLeod, 2001) and co-composed alongside participants. Narrative researcher, Margot Ely (2007) asserted that "creating is exactly what we are doing" (p. 574), as a finished narrative account was far from a verbatim reproduction of the participant's account with its "bumps, hesitations, silences, repetitions, loops, and wanderings" (p. 574).

Inquiring within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), I acknowledged the situated and relational context of this inquiry. Rather than meeting as blank slates, both the participants and myself were "in the midst"

(p. 63) of living out our stories. My own research interests and hopes for this inquiry were composed around storied threads that drew from my early experiences as a student and a reintegration counsellor, alongside my aspirations as a researcher and a psychologist. They were the creations of a lifetime of experience that informed who I hope to be and become. While these hopes were broader than my career aspirations, they directly informed my work because so much of my time and energy were invested in my work. Like Maxine Greene (1995) who wrote about childhood influences and the role of context in the development of self, I did not emerge "spiderlike… spun [from] a web solely from the stuff of my own being" (p. 74). My own stories of hope and identity-making were interwoven with a lifetime of experience. As such, my own narrative account of being and becoming was an essential piece of this inquiry.

Reflexive Practice

To wakefully represent participant stories, narrative inquirers must engage in reflexive practice to cultivate self-awareness, political/cultural consciousness, and the inquirer's awareness of her perspective (Patton, 2002). Reflexivity involved continually questioning myself and my understandings, because "all understanding is self-understanding" (Schwandt, 1997, p. xvi). Self-knowledge added depth as I co-composed and interpreted field texts, interim texts, and final research texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). My perspective shaped what I observed, deemed noteworthy, and dismissed (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Self-knowledge and self-reflection were necessary to remain wakeful to aspects of the interpretation that I brought to the inquiry, those from the 'object' of observation (e.g., the participant), and which resulted from the interaction between the two (Josselson, 2007). Throughout the inquiry, I sought to remain wakeful to

possible tensions (Clandinin, Murphy, Huber, & Murray Orr, 2010) between my storied history and the participants' stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Practicing reflexively, I endeavored to acknowledge and mediate my impact on the inquiry, while simultaneously understanding my own story in relation to the participants. Finally, it is important to emphasize that narrative inquiry is a study of the experiences of the inquirer and the participants, as well as the experience of engaging in the inquiry process (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Finding the Storytellers: Participant Selection and Recruitment

While some narrative inquirers (Huber & Whelan, 1999) name the individuals taking part in their inquiry *co-researchers*, I intentionally chose the term *participants*. Several factors influenced this decision, including my anticipation of the participants' level of involvement in the inquiry and my beliefs regarding the responsibilities attached to the researcher role. First, in my understanding, being a co-researcher involved more extensive involvement in the inquiry than I anticipated from the participants. During my master's thesis research (Flesaker, 2008), participants had little additional time to review interpretations or findings despite my attempts to involve them in the study. In the current inquiry, a basic level of participation (e.g., at least two research conversations and willingness to review narrative accounts) was part of the eligibility criteria. Without this level of participation, I did not feel it was possible to engage in a narrative inquiry honoring Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) relational co-composition of narrative accounts. Second, by taking on the role of *researcher*, I consciously and intentionally assumed certain responsibilities to myself, the participants, my supervisor(s), the university, and the larger community. These responsibilities included ethical and

organizational considerations, plus the time and energy devoted to reading, writing, and reflecting upon the inquiry process. These responsibilities were not undertaken lightly and comprised part of the lengthy requirements to earn a doctoral degree. Engaging in narrative inquiry presented an incredible learning opportunity. However, the inquiry process also offered the potential to cause harm or simply waste time, energy, and resources. As the inquirer answerable for this inquiry, I consciously and conscientiously undertook those responsibilities.

Participant Sampling and Selection

Participants were selected using purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002) to gain insight into the experiences of a specific population. Patton wrote, "The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting *information-rich cases* for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry" [italics in original] (p. 230). In this inquiry, in-depth exploration of experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work offered rich insights and understanding, rather than empirical generalization (Patton, 2002).

In this inquiry, there were three requirements for participant inclusion. First, to participate in the study, reintegration counsellors needed experience working with individuals on parole and probation. This was the primary inclusion criteria, as the inquiry sought to explore experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work. Second, participants were required to have at least four years of experience working with

individuals on parole and probation. Volunteer, part-time, and full-time experience (> 15 hours/week) was accepted. My previous experience in this field suggested that staff turnover was high. I hoped that counsellors who remained in this field for at least four years had more experience to draw from as they shared their stories. The final criterion for participation was willingness to participate in at least two, potentially more, interviews and several reviews of the research conversation transcripts and co-composed narrative accounts. Three reintegration counsellors participated in this inquiry. In addition, I also participated through autobiographical narrative inquiry into my experiences as a reintegration counsellor. Sharing my own experiences added my voice as a former reintegration counsellor, while simultaneously illuminating the experiences that I drew from as an inquirer.

Participant Recruitment

Prior to recruiting participants for this study, I obtained approval from the University of Alberta's Research Ethics Board (REB 1). Participants were recruited by contacting agencies in a large Western Canadian city that offered community-based, reintegration support services to individuals on parole and probation. After introducing myself and the inquiry to the director of each organization, we discussed the possibility of approaching staff who met the inquiry's criteria. I chose to contact the directors to initiate a trustworthy, respectful inquiry relationship with each organization, rather than directors learning secondhand that a researcher was contacting employees. Then, I contacted appropriate staff members, introduced myself and the inquiry, and discussed potential participation. Agency directors were not informed about whether their staff members ultimately chose to participate. Interested participants were sent an information

letter outlining the inquiry (see Appendix A).

Being in the Field and Composing Field Texts

Worklife narrative accounts were composed using in-depth, semi-structured research conversations, autobiographical writing, co-constructed visual timelines, and identity webs, and my research journal. Multiple methods of field text composition offered clarity, complexity, and assistance with interpretation due to the differing viewpoints from which they were composed. Whereas the term *data* connoted objective representation, field texts were understood to be interpretive, "because they are created, neither found nor discovered" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 92). Recognizing the co-composed, situated nature of these methods, they were congruent with narrative inquiry as a relational methodology.

Research Conversations

Research conversations have been a widely used method for creating field texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Research conversations offered a remarkable opportunity to engage in a collaborative process of exchanging ideas and building understanding that led to a "contextually bound and mutually created story" (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 696). How I responded to participants, both verbally and non-verbally, asked questions, and followed certain lines of inquiry shaped how and what participants shared (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). In this way, "what may appear as an objective tape recording of a structured interview is already an interpretive and contextualized text" (p. 94). Hence, research conversations were a collaborative process where field texts were actively co-composed.

The research conversations exemplified the co-composition of knowledge and

meaning that took place during the inquiry process. The participants and I met in a quiet, private location of their choosing. After outlining the inquiry, the participant's rights, my responsibilities as an inquirer, and answering any questions, participants signed an informed consent form. Consent was revisited in subsequent meetings. During each research conversation, the participant and I conversed back and forth, asked questions, clarified understandings, and attempted to verbalize complex experiences. Following each conversation, I wrote field notes allowing me to explore and question my observations, emerging understandings, and research practices. Research conversations were recorded and later transcribed.

In the first research conversation, participants were asked to tell stories about their worklife history with individuals on parole and probation. In the second research conversation, participants were posed the questions, "Who do you hope to be and who do you hope to become in relation to your work with individuals on parole and probation?" Participants were free to tell their stories in whatever ways made sense to them, however guiding questions were utilized to focus the conversation and the exploration of participant accounts (see Appendix B). I also followed each participant's lead and used exploratory questions and prompts to deepen understandings of participant experiences. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) advised, I followed where the participant's experience took us. In subsequent conversations, the participant and I reviewed drafts of narrative accounts and clarified emerging understandings and interpretations. Through these conversations, we co-composed contextually-situated narrative accounts of reintegration counsellor's experiences of identity-making through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work.

Additional Field Texts

My own hopes of being and becoming in relation to reintegration counselling were composed through autobiographical writing. This writing took a variety of forms, including narrative, poetry, and metaphor, some of which I began during my master's research (Flesaker, 2008). Naively, I thought autobiographical writing would be the easiest part of the inquiry process. As I *lived* my own story, I assumed I would know how to *write* my own story. However, it took two years of pondering, false starts, and stilted writing attempts before I was able to weave together the threads of my own narrative into an account that resonated with my experience. Engaging in the process of autobiographical narrative inquiry taught me about the intricacy of transforming lived experience into written form for communication with others.

During research conversations, the participants and I also co-composed visual worklife timelines to use as a reference point. The participants signed an additional consent form to allow use of the co-composed visual artifacts (see Appendix C). The timeline offered a map to orient the participant and I as we shared stories, especially as we referred back and forth from past to present and future. This timeline was inspired by Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) use of *annals and chronicles* as a way to sequence events around a topic of interest and provide a framework as I co-composed narrative accounts.

In our preliminary conversations, each participant shared some hesitancy about how to approach the question, "Who do you hope to be and become?" As I reflected upon ways to inquire into this question in an approachable manner, I was reminded of the work I did with clients to create identity webs. Often in therapy, clients shared their big

questions regarding existential meaning and identity. To help clients situate questions of identity into their lived experience, we co-created identity webs (see Appendix D), visual representations of meaningful aspects of themselves. Typically, clients shared these meaningful aspects of identity through their life stories. Encouraging both the participant and I to take a non-judgmental, generative approach to naming aspects of who they hope to be and become, participants engaged easily in co-composing an identity web that situated this seemly large, existential question in the context of their life experience.

As an additional field text, I maintained a research journal that allowed me to record field notes and reflect on emerging understandings throughout the course of the inquiry. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) contend that the inquirer's journal documents both the situation and the situational meanings shaped in the participant-inquirer relationship. Similarly, McLeod (2001) also advocated for the use of research journals to "capture personal and intuitive dimensions of the process of 'meaning-making' as they occur" (p. 133). My research journal served several purposes. In the initial stages of the inquiry, I used the journal to explore different ideas, questions, and approaches to address these questions. As I read articles related to narrative inquiry, hope, and identity-making, I documented and explored interesting ideas. Later, I intentionally set aside time after every research conversation and participant meeting to write about my experiences, including observations and wonderings. My research journal offered an opportunity to practice reflexively, examining not only *what* was accomplished, but also *how* it was accomplished. Finally, during the writing process, I used my research journal to ponder potential understandings, connections, and interpretations that I composed from the texts.

From Field Texts to Research Texts

Interim texts were situated between field texts and final research texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) and were written in different forms (e.g., chronological accounts, poems). Steeves (2000) offered a particularly interesting interim text example. Inquiring into teacher and principal stories to live by, Steeves created point-form chronicles to summarize field texts for review by participants. I used this format to allow participants to review significant points from research conversations, including any which may have been misconstrued or forgotten (see Appendix E). Additionally, Steeves noted that this format allowed participants to make revisions without fear of hurting the inquirer's feelings. This became a salient point as one participant requested the removal of several topics from our research conversations after reading the summary and reflecting on the potential impact of her comments. This format was also helpful, as it allowed participants to engage in co-composition at a very early stage in the inquiry.

Moving from field texts to research texts could be one of the most difficult transitions in a narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). As in qualitative research, the composition, analysis, and interpretation of understanding were not mutually exclusive activities (McLeod, 2001). Instead, interpretations evolved over the course of the inquiry. Field texts (e.g., journal entries, transcripts) tended to be descriptive and close to the experience. Interim research texts were written as a starting point to begin pulling together narrative threads to weave a pattern from the field texts. These interim texts were intentionally tentative and open for revision through the ongoing process of negotiation with participants. Through reading, writing, reflection, and consultation with participants, narrative accounts were co-composed with wakeful acknowledgment of the three-dimensional inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

During the interpretive process I moved back and forth between perspectives on the field texts. Utilizing the three-dimensional inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), I inquired inward and outward, backward and forward, and situated in place. For example, I looked inward to reflect upon my interpretations of field texts and outward to inquire into the social and cultural influences which may have shaped my interpretive process. Similarly, I looked backward to past experiences, forward to hopes or expectations, and into the present circumstances. I acknowledged that my interpretations of participant narrative accounts of being and becoming were filtered through my own situated understandings. These understandings included, but were not limited to, my beliefs in the importance of hope, individuals' ability to change and grow, and the transformative power of relationships. Through my research journal, discussions with my supervisor, conversations with my colleagues, and continued readings, I endeavored to cultivate awareness of my situated-understandings and their impact on the inquiry.

Research texts were positioned at a reflective distance from the field texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Moving into structured analysis, I sought to step back and approach the texts from a slightly distanced point of view, looking for patterns, narrative threads, and tensions both within and across individual accounts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Notations with questions, wonderings, potential storylines, and gaps were added, recording emerging ideas that were discussed with participants in further research conversations. Analysis involved reading, re-reading, writing, reflecting, and ongoing conversations with participants and my supervisor to illuminate the texts and the multiple perspectives brought to them. This process shared similarities with Dewey's (1938) principle of continuity, as understandings evolved and built upon one another. Within the

three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), I approached the field texts with wakefulness to look for possible patterns, threads, and tensions. Narrative accounts were co-composed alongside participants, giving voice to their experiences of identity-making through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work. Each narrative draft was reviewed by my research supervisor, Dr. Denise Larsen, and the participant for feedback in the ongoing co-composition process. Later, I also worked closely with Dr. Jean Clandinin to refine the narrative accounts, as well as the rest of the manuscript.

The participant's narrative accounts did not follow identical formats. Instead, I endeavoured to acknowledge the individuality of each participant's stories of experience. The format of each narrative sought to honour the tone of our conversations, the participant's voice, and the areas s/he seemed to emphasize. For example, while three of the narrative accounts began with childhood experiences, Brenna's narrative began with her education, as she did not create strong links between her early-life stories and her worklife stories.

During the writing process, I wrestled with representing the multiplicity of participant voices, alongside my own in a co-composed research text. Neither the participants nor myself were univocal, "we are all characters with multiple plotlines who speak from within these multiple plotlines" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 147); we spoke in multi-faceted voices complete with tensions, hopes, and uncertainties, as intricately complex life stories rarely resolved into neat, succinct narratives. Negotiating interim texts was tension-filled work (Clandinin, Murphy, Huber, & Murray Orr, 2010). In early interim research texts, I sought to remain as close to the participants' wording, as

possible, in an attempt to preserve their story and their voice. However, as writing continued, I became more aware of the inquiry's potential audiences and questioned how to communicate these stories to future readers. I struggled to write about participant experiences and represent the understandings we were creating through our work. I engaged in a balancing act as my own voice as an inquirer, a hope researcher, and a psychologist gained a stronger presence alongside the participants' voices. Ongoing meetings with participants allowed me to inquire beyond, "Is this what you said?", and into larger questions of, "Do you see yourself here?" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 148). Confirmation and ongoing feedback from participants that the narrative accounts fit with their experiences and understandings, in addition to their acceptance and interest in the writing structure, interpretations, and connections to broader academic literature that I introduced wove our voices together into a research text.

Looking Inward, Outward, and Across: Examining the Connections

Highlighting potential threads connecting the narrative accounts with related academic literature allowed the understandings gained from this inquiry to be situated in the context of the larger academic community. The analysis and interpretation process to co-compose narrative accounts was an evolving experience where understanding was built by attending with curiosity and openness in the context of the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I sought to bring this same curiosity and openness, as I began exploration of potential threads and tensions between the participants' narrative accounts and the related academic literature.

Reading, re-reading, and reflecting upon the narrative accounts, I noticed certain common threads, referenced by more than one participant. Drawing attention to these

common threads, I hoped to highlight possible shared stories among reintegration counsellors. While each narrative account is unique, it is also lived in the context of larger cultural, social, and institutional narrative experiences. Reintegration counsellors share certain experiences, including the positive and negative impacts of helping others, the constraints of government, social, and legal systems, and the expectations of others regarding their work. By raising awareness of these common threads, I hope to open conversations about the experiences of reintegration counsellors and the multi-faceted, interconnected patterns woven throughout their worklives and their larger contexts.

Looking across the narrative accounts and into the relevant academic literature helped me to make sense of the learnings and understandings I co-composed alongside participants. Utilizing narrative inquiry as a relational methodology, I sought to compose intimate, contextualized understandings. While this may have, at times, altered the transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of the understandings from this inquiry, the experientially-situated nature of this knowledge also increased the power of these worklife stories. Acknowledging the potential threads connecting the participants' narrative accounts to the relevant academic literature also helped me to consider possibilities for transferring these understandings into broader contexts, where other reintegration counsellors working with individuals on parole and probation may be inspired by the participants' experiences. In addition, I saw value in opening dialogue regarding how threads from the participants' narrative accounts lived alongside threads from other social, cultural, academic, or institutional stories.

Evaluating the Study

The understanding that qualitative studies required different evaluation methods than quantitative studies has become more widely accepted in academic circles. Acknowledging this idea, Lincoln and Guba (1985) argued, “Criteria defined from one perspective may not be appropriate for judging actions taken from another perspective” (p. 293). Narrative inquiry has been marked by its emphasis on engagement between the unique perspectives of inquirers and participants as they co-composed contextualized understandings of experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This understanding developed within temporal, relational, and place contexts which both shaped and was shaped by the inquiry process. As I ascribed to “the assumption of multiple constructed realities” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 295), attempts to address research trustworthiness needed to refer back to “the constructors of the original multiple realities” (p. 296). In this way, evaluating the quality of this inquiry referenced the understandings and actions of both the participants and I.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that the key issue in establishing the trustworthiness of an inquiry was whether “the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of” (p. 290). Engaging in narrative inquiry valued the uniqueness of participant stories and the interpretations composed within the research relationship. As an inquirer, I sought to transcend reductionistic and predetermined boundaries placed upon participants and their stories of experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). At times, this valuing of individuality and uniqueness placed the inquiry at odds with pre-determined evaluation strategies. However, I sought to continue addressing issues of legitimacy and authority to demonstrate the unique contributions it brought to the field of qualitative research and counselling psychology. I could not

simply dismiss criticisms that narrative inquiry sometimes lacked critical reflection and became overly personal (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Instead, I accepted the challenge to find authentic ways to respond to these criticisms and evaluate this study that fit with the principles of narrative inquiry.

Evaluative strategies offered ways to assess whether my representations of participant accounts honored their experience; they also helped me to clarify my impact on the inquiry. I utilized four evaluative strategies including (a) researcher reflexivity and personal introductions, (b) co-composition, (c) peer review, and (d) contextualization. These strategies evaluated the inquiry process and the co-composition of narrative accounts in collaboration with participants, my supervisor(s), and my response communities.

Reflexivity and personal introductions were two primary ways that I illuminated the experiences that I brought to the inquiry process. Prior to engaging with participants, I began journaling regarding my own experiences, understandings, and expectations regarding the research puzzle (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Engaging in reflexive practice was intended to foster awareness as I represented participant stories, by clarifying the contributions and interactions between myself and the participants (Josselson, 2007). Through reflexive practice, including writing in my research journal, meetings with my supervisor, and participation in response communities, I hoped to remain wakeful to the signature that I left on this inquiry.

Through a personal introduction and my own narrative account, I shared my experiences which shaped the inquiry (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Narratively, this information placed me within a social, cultural, and historical context that I hope allowed

readers to contextualize and critique my interpretations (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Throughout the document, I intentionally situated myself in the inquiry by allowing my voice and the rationale behind my decision-making to be clearly presented. In addition, my autobiographical narrative of experiences of identity-making through the stories of who I hope to be and become in relation to my work not only added another narrative account, but also offered additional information on my perspective in relation to the other accounts.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described member checking as "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (p. 314). However, as a relational methodology focused upon co-composing contextualized understandings within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), the inquiry process moved beyond simple member checking. The constant process of negotiating relationships, smoothing transitions, and co-composing interpretations offered many opportunities to check-in with participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Shortly after each research conversation, I sent a point-form chronicle (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Steeves, 2000) summarizing my perceptions of the main points of our conversation for participant review and feedback (see Appendix F). Participants were later sent copies of the research conversation transcripts, although two participants mentioned that they never reviewed them. As I co-composed narrative drafts, I met with participants several times to discuss my interpretations and obtain feedback which was woven into the drafts. Each of these instances offered opportunities to check-in with participants about the *fit* of the inquiry process and the narrative drafts with their own experiences.

Peer review involved having individuals who were familiar with narrative inquiry or the phenomenon under exploration review the texts and the inquiry process (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Reviewers offered support, asked questions about methods and interpretations, and challenged my assumptions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Joining two response communities at the University of Alberta, Research Issues and the Hope Research group, offered safe spaces where I engaged in peer review as drafts were shared, constructive feedback was given, and questions were discussed (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Additionally, I consulted with my supervisor and supervisory committee for feedback, including areas of further reflection, potential avenues for exploration, and the co-composition of narrative accounts.

Contextualization placed the inquiry within the milieu of larger social, cultural, and institutional narratives (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Using a relational methodology, I sought to co-compose intimate, contextualized understandings alongside four reintegration counsellor participants, including myself, through this inquiry. Acknowledgment of the situated-nature of this knowledge played an important role in the potential transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of the understandings from this inquiry. Narrative inquiry took place at the axes of temporal, relational, and place dimensions (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This background information gave the reader information to evaluate and understand the situated nature of the inquiry. By co-composing complex, multifaceted narrative accounts within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), I offered the contexts, within which, the inquiry occurred. Readers who are interested in drawing the understandings they composed from this inquiry into different contexts with different people, must acknowledge the situated

nature of this knowledge and take these contexts into account. Rich descriptions of both my own and participant histories and current circumstances, in relation to the inquiry, situated the narrative accounts in the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space. Acknowledging the value of contextualization, initial research conversations examined participant worklife histories before engaging in further conversations about identity-making and hope. Hearing and understanding the journey that brought them to and through their worklives as reintegration counsellors helped to situate the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work with individuals on parole and probation.

Approaching Narrative Inquiry in a State of Wakefulness

Seeking to attend wakefully to the inquiry process helped me to create and maintain a state of awareness throughout the inquiry. Maintaining a state of wakefulness invited me to be thoughtful, intentional, and aware of my research decisions (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). My commitment to wakefulness encouraged careful consideration of the decision-points that arose during the inquiry process. Clandinin and Connelly asserted, "A language of wakefulness allows us to proceed forward with a constant, alert awareness of risks, of narcissism, of solipsism, and of simplistic plots, scenarios, and unidimensional characters" (p. 182). In addition, remaining wakeful to rationales for decision-making, critiques from other research perspectives, and my responses aided in the evaluation of this study (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). For example, two participants left their roles as reintegration counsellors during the inquiry. At first, I panicked as I wondered about the impact on the inquiry. With further reflection, I realized this offered an opportunity to continue inquiring into the narrative unfolding of participant lives.

Roles and titles may have changed, but participants continued their ongoing process of composing who they hope to be and become.

Ethical Considerations

Narrative inquiry is a deeply relational undertaking (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Josselson, 2007). As a narrative inquirer, I faced the challenge of maintaining a dual role as a practicing psychologist and a researcher (Josselson, 2007). Through the inquiry, I initiated and entered into relationships with participants where they shared intimate personal and professional stories of hope, hopelessness, frustration, disappointment, and possibility. Simultaneously, I remained bound to uphold professional responsibilities to the scholarly community (Canadian Psychological Association, 2000; Truscott & Crook, 2004). The explicit, formalized component of the inquiry relationship was typically straightforward and navigated through informed consent forms (Josselson, 2007). However, the implicit component, characterized by the intimate and individualized nature of each inquiry relationship was more ambiguous.

Both the *Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists* (Canadian Psychological Association, 2000) and the Canadian Tri-Council Policy Statement *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2005) clearly outlined the ethical principles, values, and standards of practice for psychological researchers. Drawing from the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists, provincial and territorial standards of practice, and Canadian law and legal decisions, Truscott and Crook (2004) proposed that ethical psychologist-researchers must foster three essential qualities: (a) *awareness* of situations, (b) ethical,

professional, and legal *knowledge*, and (c) the *skills* to incorporate many details into ethically justifiable decisions. Drawing from biomedical intervention ethics, institutional review board policies, and the accumulated experience of narrative researchers, Josselson (2007) offered ideas specifically in-reference to narrative inquiry. Rather than crafting a "cookbook chapter" (p. 538) with perfected recipes for conducting narrative research, Josselson proposed adopting an *ethical attitude*. Maintaining an ethical attitude allowed me to reason through issues, decide how to honor and protect participants, and maintain standards of responsible scholarship, both relationally and in-context. Josselson's ethical attitude shared similarities with Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) conceptions of reflexivity and wakefulness. As I drew from each of these approaches to ethical decision-making (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2005; Canadian Psychological Association, 2000; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Josselson, 2007; Truscott & Crook, 2004), I sought to question my inquiry process, acknowledging that ethical research practice was a process rather than an event. Aspiring to uphold these principles, I gave particular consideration to the issues of informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality.

Informed Consent

Josselson (1996a) argued that the concept of *informed consent* in narrative inquiry was oxymoronic, as inquirers could never fully inform participants at the outset of an inquiry about the unforeseeable events which could take place during the inquiry process. However, it was important to open an ongoing dialogue with participants about each of our rights and responsibilities in the inquiry. Informed consent included both verbal and written components explained to the participants (see Appendix F). As informed consent was a process, not simply an event where participants signed a form (Truscott & Crook,

2004), participants were given opportunities to continue or cease their involvement at multiple stages, including during initial telephone calls, research conversations, and meetings to review narrative drafts. Throughout the inquiry process, questions, concerns, and feedback from participants were carefully discussed.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Every effort was made to maintain participant anonymity and confidentially. A coding system was used to organize the audio-recorded and transcribed material. In the written documents, pseudonyms were used and identifying information, including names, organizations, and potentially recognizable details, was removed. When participants shared identifying information about collateral parties (e.g., family members, clients), names and easily identifiable details were removed to protect their anonymity and confidentiality. Noting the small number of reintegration counsellors within the city, the participants and I carefully discussed and made decisions regarding how to protect their anonymity while respecting the form and content of their narrative accounts.

Confidentiality was also maintained by storing all records securely, in locked cabinets and with password protected computer files. Records will be kept for at least five years. Stored information was coded to protect anonymity and confidentiality. Finally, participants were informed about my planned use of the collected materials in my dissertation and other forms of dissemination, including, but not limited to scholarly articles, conference presentations, and books.

Introduction to the Following Chapters

In the following four chapters, I include the narrative accounts of myself, Chandra, Paul, and Brenna. The participants and I co-composed narrative accounts

exploring experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work. In chapter eight, I reflect on the possible connections between the narrative accounts and related academic literature. In chapter nine, I close the inquiry by reflecting upon the understandings composed, in relation to the research puzzle, offer recommendations for professional practice, and identify potential limitations for readers to take into account as they consider transferring these understandings to other contexts.

Chapter 4: Keri's Narrative Account

"I have hope because this journey of being and becoming has not yet reached an end."

This narrative inquiry emerges out a passion for hope and a burgeoning interest in identity-making that began in my early work as a reintegration counsellor. My own narrative account is an important part of exploring experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work, as I view their narratives through the lens of my own experiences. I am both inquirer and participant in this inquiry. Weaving a narrative retold from the present, I am informed by Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) "metaphorical three-dimensional narrative inquiry space" (p. 50) to focus and orient my reflections. Looking inward and outward, forward and backward, and in-place, I weave narrative threads of experience into a story of who I hope to be and become. I understand storied experiences as the materials, with which, we compose our lives. As previously mentioned, with the metaphor of the *thread* I seek to highlight the connections between past, present, and future, in the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space.[4] As such, threads of storied experience can be woven and rewoven to compose identity and hope, among many other possibilities.

The segments in italicized font below are narrative reminiscences, while my reflections upon these pieces appear in regular font. In addition, I occasionally italicize or capitalize key phrases in order to express the emotional tone of the words, which I find far easier to express verbally, in a three-dimensional conversation, than on a two-dimensional page. From the present, I seek to understand who I hope to be and become in relation to my work with individuals on parole and probation, despite the fact that I do

[4] The metaphor of the thread is expanded upon in chapter one.

not currently work with this population. However, I recognize that the experiences with people, places, and situations I encountered continue to shape my thinking as both a researcher and a practicing psychologist.

Building the Foundation

I always thought writing my own narrative account would be the easiest task in this inquiry. I know my own story and I can write a resume with ease: the people, places, and times. However, this is where the writing becomes challenging. Each date, each place, each relationship awakens a connection to another date, place, or relationship, a back-story that sheds light on the first part and helps it to make sense. These stories filter back and back into my history, as I seek to trace the storied threads, with which, I compose who I hope to be and become. The meaning-making that occurs regarding how my earlier experiences inform my later experiences is active, grounded in the present. This meaning-making process is both constructive and re-constructive, strongly informed by past experiences and future hopes (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Dewey, 1938) in a recursive spiral. I ask myself, "How well DO I know my own stories?" and ponder that the answer may not be as clear-cut and static as I first assumed. I am also reminded of the understanding that I need to listen to and be *with*[5] my own stories (Clandinin, Huber, Steeves, & Li, 2011), becoming more awake (Greene, 1995) to understand how I see the stories of others through the lens of my own narratives.

Early Life

In many ways, I had an idyllic childhood. I grew up rurally, outside the small and colourful community of Nelson, BC. To this day, I strongly identify with my place of

[5] Clandinin, Huber, Steeves, and Li (2011) distinguish between thinking *about* and thinking *with* stories. Thinking *about* stories tends to objectify narratives, whereas thinking *with* stories involves living through a narrative process.

origin and secretly delight when this fact emerges in conversation, as people gush about this beautiful, quirky city, nestled between picturesque mountain peaks and a long, glacier-fed lake.

I lived with my parents and my older brother in a big yellow and brick house with a gigantic yard. Many of my childhood memories were beautiful in their simplicity. Each morning, I walked along the highway to my small elementary school, either by myself or with friends. I loved learning and lived for praise from my teachers as a bright, eager-to-please, although too-talkative, student. At recess and lunch, I played make-believe games in the magical forest surrounding the schoolyard. In grade six, after years of begging my parents, I bought my first pony and spent hours riding into the peaceful wilderness which existed outside my back door. I was entrusted with an incredible amount of freedom that allowed me to learn, via trial and error, to develop independence and self-efficacy.

However, other threads weave within my story, some not as bright and colourful as the ones that typically surface when I remember my childhood. Alongside the bright strands, these darker hues help to weave the rich tapestry of my life. Now, I question the words, which I seek to write. I look forward in time, to the people who will read them and wonder how safe my words[6] will be with them. I think of the emotions, which may be catalyzed by these words. I sit and I wonder. I choose to proceed, knowing *I* need to write these words, they are a part of my story and I will not honour my story if I leave them out.

Although bright, funny, and outgoing, I also felt sad and anxious as a child. There were nights I lay awake in the dark, filled with fear. I walked across the hallway, wanting to climb into my parents' bed for comfort. I stood outside their door, not knowing

[6] In essence, the question is actually, "How safe will *I* be?"

whether I should enter. At times, my home was a place of fun and comfort, full of laughter. At other times, I felt alone and insecure. My mom struggled with depression. I didn't understand why my mom was often sad, irritable, and in pain, but I knew that I wanted to help and didn't know how. Part of me knew I couldn't lean on her, because I didn't want to add to her burden. I tried very hard to be strong and self-sufficient, cooking dinner and washing laundry. I worried about things in our family, like finances or my mom's health that were out of my control. I lived under the pressure of expectations I placed on myself and felt guilty when I fell short of my own standards.

In addition, I had a tumultuous relationship with my brother, who is eight years older than me. It's hard to put my experiences with him into words. We joke now that he tried turning me into the little brother that he didn't get: training me to wrestle, teaching me survival skills, and stifling my tears and expressions of emotion. However, he approached these tasks with a seriousness that I believed wholeheartedly, in my childlike way. I internalized the belief that vulnerability equated with weakness. To my adult ears it sounds silly to admit that he convinced me he was an alien, pretending to be part of our family, for several years. However, these beliefs left me feeling insecure in my home, doubting the very fabric of our family.

Words are inadequate to capture the depth of feeling and memory. There is a whole life of experience, bringing growth and change, between those years and today. I feel torn between honestly acknowledging the impact of those experiences and, instead, focusing on the ways in which I have moved forward and carried them with me. To truly honour this part of my story, I feel the need to include how my relationship with my mom and my brother changed drastically in adolescence. First, my brother, then I, and then my

parents became Christians. This began a powerful transformation for each of us and for our family, as a whole. However, I still recognize the impact that these childhood experiences had on my life and career development.

During adolescence, I turned to my friends for support. However, I never shared with them my deepest fears and uncertainties. I learned from my family that certain problems should not be discussed and I was too fearful of being vulnerable. I walled up those vulnerable parts, which I deemed too risky to share.

It was with my friends where I first glimpsed the incredible healing power of relationships, both as a giver and receiver of acceptance and support. These experiences sparked my interest to pursue a career in the helping professions. A few significant experiences stand out in my mind.

In kindergarten, I became friends with a boy named Dan.[7] *Throughout elementary school, we remained unlikely friends. He was "The boy with the temper", who struggled socially and behaviourally in the classroom and returned home to a difficult family life. I was "The good girl", who sought to excel in the classroom and earn praise from teachers and other adults. Dan and I drifted apart in junior high school, but reconnected again in high school. We sat in his parents' kitchen, talking about the struggles he faced and his confusion about what to do. He lived a tumultuous life and many of his problems felt out-of-my-league, including drug addiction and his step-father's terminal illness. I felt very small, having no idea how to help my friend. But as I listened, I expressed interest through my questions and reflected my own perspective on his troubles. Dan got excited. Together, we named one piece of the puzzle. He was able to put words to a pattern in his life: his vicious circle. We hadn't solved the problem, but there was a synergistic energy*

[7] Names and identifying details are changed throughout to protect the privacy of others.

alive in our conversation. In that moment, I discovered that I wanted to be part of this process with people. I wanted to sit with them, to listen, and to help them put words to the painful and often overwhelming experiences in their lives. It wasn't until later, pouring out my teenage angst in my pastor's office that he put my calling into words: "You should be a counsellor".

Looking backward, the memory with my pastor stands out as a significant choice point in my life as a new path opened up before me. There was a visceral *rightness* about my pastor's words, a deep sense of *knowing* that felt beyond my seventeen years of age. Although I had never thought of that moment in these terms, I wonder about the hand of God resting on that situation, awakening me to a life's purpose. That moment stands out clearly in my memory as the beginning of both a life and a career. Several years later, I felt the impact of being on the other side of the helping conversation.

The year between high school graduation and moving to Edmonton for university was a pivotal transition in my life. Although I was committed to pursuing post-secondary education, I recognized the need to experience the freedom of working, making money, and relaxing with friends. During this year, I became close friends with a woman from my church named Juniper. We worked together at the local Kentucky Fried Chicken where the ongoing joke was, "Nothing bonds like chicken grease!" Often, we worked the closing-shift together and hung out after work. There were many things I admired about Juniper, but two qualities that contributed to my growth in our relationship were her genuine interest in others and her directness. With others, I occasionally alluded vaguely to my own personal struggles. Juniper didn't accept my vague comments and, with characteristic directness, she asked the difficult questions, which encouraged me to share

some of my struggles for the first time. She created a space where it became safe to be vulnerable and I had the opportunity to learn how freeing it was to share my burdens with someone who cared. Whether I shared boy problems or deeper hurts, she listened with an enthusiasm that allowed me to feel that who I was and what I felt were important.

One year later, following my first year at The King's University College in Edmonton, I returned to Nelson heart-sick and shaken in the midst of a crisis of faith. Once again, Juniper showed me the incredible healing power of both drawing alongside someone and creating a space to non-judgmentally bear witness to pain. She was the first person I felt truly able to disclose my doubts and questions of faith, which I feared were unacceptable for a Christian to ask. She heard the uncertainty that I tried to hide and instead of offering platitudes or advice, she shared her own stories. Once again, I was able to enter into a relational space where I felt safe and accepted as myself.

Experimenting with patterns and designs. The four years I spent at King's were an exceptionally rich time of personal growth and burgeoning awareness. This growth began almost immediately as I moved into the student residence, my new home for the first year.

I arrived at the residence at 9:30 am on move-in day, eager to begin a new chapter in my story. As I met new people, learning and forgetting names, I heard that I was known as "The girl with the eyebrow ring who wore the red skirt". I laughed and informed my new friends that it was a wraparound sarong, not a skirt. I reveled in this new identity as someone who stood out, carrying my prized Nelsonite-identity with me.

Moving into residence, I gained the stunning realization that I was unknown and could re-create myself into whatever image I chose. Shaped by growing up in a small

town, I was no longer known as “Joe’s sister” or “a Ringrose”. I could become my own person. Reflecting on this realization, I began to understand that my identity was not static and that it emerged from my own constructions, not just the expectations of others. Writing about the narrative construction of self, Carr (1986) notes that composing our life story requires, “a narrative grasp, a quasi-narration” (p. 75) where we create an identity. As such, I felt empowered by my realization, freer to own my distinctiveness, compose my own identity, and become less fearful of possible judgments by others.

As I studied psychology at King’s, with the goal of becoming a counsellor, I realized that I had little experience actually working with people. I joined “The King’s Hands” a student volunteer club that visited youth on an in-patient ward at a local psychiatric hospital. The experience felt uncomfortable and forced, so I sought different opportunities. Later, I operated a Hire-a-Student program, assisting students to find summer employment. Hire-a-Student allowed me to combine my desire to help people with my interest in career by sharing the skills and knowledge that I learned, often from my Dad. My Dad’s worklife stories also inspired my interest in the stories behind the career and life aspirations of others.

Dad encouraged my own career exploration by bringing home career-development books like “Boom, Bust, and Echo”, engaging me in dinner conversations about the job market, and sending me scholarship applications. At times I was exasperated, but I later realized it was his way of showing that he cared about me and my future. Dad also shared about the world of work through stories from his varied employment history, beginning with childhood work at his uncle’s store, becoming a mechanic, owning several businesses, and finally transferring his years of experience

into higher-level government positions. He taught me that hard work, preparation, and basic politeness were a potent combination to help anyone pursue their goals.

Formal Introduction to Working With Individuals on Parole and Probation

There was a mixture of interest and coincidence that brought me into my first interactions with individuals on parole and probation. As I ponder my belief in the larger purposes and plans unfolding in life, I am reminded of a quote by Albert Einstein (1934/2006) which states, "Coincidence is God's way of remaining anonymous". I needed a summer job and I wanted to continue working with people in meaningful ways to gain experience and develop my skills. Hope Mission seemed to be a place where I could further my career goals. Little did I know that it would focus my interests in a specific direction.

After my third year of university, I applied as an intake worker at Hope Mission Women's Centre, an inner-city shelter which also operated as a community residential facility (CRF), or half-way house, for women on parole and probation. I felt excited about working in a women-only environment, which resonated with my own influential experiences connecting with girlfriends for help and support. However, I felt nervous because I feared I had little life experience to offer the residents, who often arrived at the House as survivors of abuse, addiction, incarceration, and poverty.

In early adulthood, I developed several strong, formative relationships with women, like Juniper, who deeply touched my life. In their lives, I saw some of the threads of the woman I hoped to become: strong and caring, creative and reflective, intelligent and free-spirited. These friendships had an authentic quality where I was warmly accepted, yet thoughtfully challenged to live out the emerging values I was

exploring. The authenticity and care I experienced in these relationships were healing. They also taught be about the powerful ways personal growth can be fostered within relationships.

I arrived at Hope Mission idealistically, ready to save and fix people. I wanted to be part of people's change processes, guiding them to make different choices and leaving behind lives of addiction, abuse, poverty, and criminal activity. The manager was a tough, no-nonsense woman who drilled me during the interview about my youth, my ability to maintain appropriate boundaries, and her beliefs about the residents' manipulative tendencies. The other staff and the residents taught me about the complexities faced by the women living at the House. There were shifts where I left the office, frustrated by the injustices I heard from residents or discouraged to hear that a client had her parole revoked for failing a urine-analysis test.[8] *However, I also had the privilege of sharing a woman's excitement as she showed me her 30-day sobriety chip or an acceptance letter to begin academic upgrading. Tough as it was sometimes, I loved my job. I worked at Hope Mission part-time, then casually for approximately two years.*

It was during my time at Hope Mission that people began asking, "How do you do that kind of work?" The question seemed to hold an inherent recognition of the difficulty of working with marginalized populations. I used those conversations to educate others about the challenges faced by marginalized women, hoping to broaden their perspective. Often I told stories to illuminate the human face behind labels like *convict, prostitute,* or *addict*, by sharing some of a woman's history and the determination involved in changing her life. My experiences at Hope Mission taught me that life was not as black and white as I originally believed. I gained a deeper appreciation of the caring, the lessons, and the

[8] Abstinence from drug and alcohol use is a common parole requirement.

relative safety I experienced growing up in my rural, middle-class home. As these understandings grew, often through conversations during quiet periods with other staff members, I began viewing the *manipulative tendencies* of residents as survival skills, which made sense in the context of their circumstances. As my own perspective broadened, my desire to advocate for, and empower individuals on parole and probation grew. I felt that if others understood this broader perspective, then we had a chance to work together as a community to prevent abuse, poverty, and addiction from destroying lives and to help individuals reintegrate back into the community after incarceration.

To continue this work, I obtained another part-time position working with several CRF's operated through Catholic Social Services after graduating from Kings. However, I wanted a full-time position which offered financial stability and additional challenge. Applying for a position at the Elizabeth Fry Society seemed like the perfect fit, as their agency emphasized advocacy and empowerment and offered services to women who had come into contact with the Law.

In September 2003, I began operating an employment program at the Elizabeth Fry Society. This was a significant year in my life. It was my first full-time job in the helping professions where I could use my shiny, newly-framed BA in Psychology. It was the year I applied for my Master's in Counselling Psychology and put a label to the phenomenon which seemed so integral to my life and work: Hope. It was also the year I found out that I was pregnant with my first child, instigating me to defer my Master's for one year while I began the incredible journey of parenthood.

When I look back at the time I spent working primarily with individuals on parole and probation, it seems like such a small period. I wonder how those brief years could

spawn an academic and professional interest which has spanned over ten years. However, those years did not stand alone in my life. They were informed by my past experiences, which shaped my values and beliefs. I began working at Hope Mission and met June, who, through her story, introduced me to the possibility of working with individuals on parole and probation. Those circumstances focused my passion to help others and be a part of life change with individuals on parole and probation.

Two stories of hope: Noticed and unnoticed. *Two stories stand out in my mind as notable in my interest in hope, especially in relation to individuals on parole and probation. In one story, hope seemed clear, bright and easily recognizable. In the other story, hope felt raw, challenging, and unshared, at times. Both stories are formative in my development and both stand out in my mind as significant contributors to my decision to study hope and emphasize it in my practice.*

June was a resident who arrived at Hope Mission shortly after I began working there. She was released from a federal correctional facility to serve the supervised residency requirement of her parole at the House. The first day I met June, standing in the lunch line, I shot her a cheery, "Hello," and tried to make conversation. She ignored me, totally and completely. Her entire demeanor dismissed my presence. She didn't even look up from the counter. Enjoying a challenge, I made a point to try and talk with her every day or at least to catch her eye and smile. At first I was rebuffed, but slowly she began to let down her guard. As the months passed, June's manner and attitude towards others gradually, but progressively, shifted and relaxed. She became part of the camaraderie at the house and I was fascinated by her burgeoning openness and engagement. As she cautiously lowered the hard facade that she wore in prison, June

began sharing her hopes for the future, including reuniting with her children who were cared for by relatives while she was in prison. As she and her children readjusted to living together, I'll admit that I was surprised at her parenting skills. June's children were polite and I often observed the older children helping to care for the younger ones. She was a soft-spoken woman who responded to them with quiet patience, respect, and love. From conversations with June, I learned that a lot of her own hope came from her children. When life was hard, they kept her focused and moving forward. We never discussed what contributed to her criminal activity, but she seemed ready to do everything in her power to remain free and raise her children. The night she left to a new apartment, I cleaned her room to prepare for a new resident. In the few months that I had known her, June had changed my perspective regarding women on parole. Watching her transformation made me want to be part of that process with other women.

Sharing a small part of June's story opened my eyes to the complexities faced by women on parole, the power of hope as a motivating force, and some possibilities for my role within these relationships. Despite my early naïve enthusiasm, I began recognizing that not all of the individuals I worked with would make such stunning transformations. Through conversations with my coworkers, I learned to seek and find small successes to remain positive in my work. Stories like June's were powerful, but rare. More often, I tried to focus on and celebrate the small successes I witnessed in a client's life, like avoiding a situation that tempted her to drink. However, witnessing this short part of June's life gave me a powerful hope symbol to draw from when I felt discouraged.

I find writing about hopelessness in my second story far more difficult than writing about hope. In this story, I felt hopelessness viscerally, like a thick, sticky glue

coating my client and I, holding us down and making movement nearly impossible.

When Martha first arrived in my office at the Elizabeth Fry Society, she was doing fairly well. She shared her story about building a new life with her granddaughter, Cheyenne, after leaving an abusive marriage. Subsisting on AISH,[9] she joined the casual labour program I operated to earn a little extra money. However, Martha required regular medical treatments that exhausted her body, making her sick for two days afterwards. Unable to properly care for her granddaughter in this condition, she began leaving Cheyenne with her ex-husband after her treatments. Sadly, this maintained their dysfunctional connection and hindered her new life. Her ex-husband often asked for money to support him and their adult sons, despite this leaving Martha struggling to pay for rent and groceries. She continued to talk with him and allow him to borrow her car, even though he filled her voice mail with derogatory messages. I didn't understand how difficult it was to end a marriage of over fifteen years, but I saw the impact each time she had contact with him.

One weekend, Cheyenne was apprehended by children's services and placed in foster care after an altercation between Martha and her ex-husband. Martha was devastated. Her own children struggled with alcohol and drug addictions and she had worked hard to pull her life together to provide a stable home for Cheyenne. With Cheyenne in foster care, Martha's world began to fall apart. At first, I tried to be the voice of hope and help her to focus on the practical steps that she could take to bring Cheyenne home. However, Martha was discouraged and overwhelmed by the process. As her depression deepened, she lost the hope to continue fighting. One day, she told me

[9] Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped is a provincial program providing financial and health-related support to individuals with disabilities.

about her suicide attempt which was interrupted by a friend. I felt lost and uncertain regarding how to proceed, totally unequipped to handle such a serious situation.

At the same time, I took a two-day Hope workshop for helping professionals. I tried to help Martha find small hopes in her life to focus on, like upcoming visits with Cheyenne or the monthly counselling she and her siblings partook in to heal the wounds from their residential[10] schooling experiences. Finding hope was difficult, because she kept telling me there was none. I saw possibilities for hope and action, but I felt helpless to help Martha acknowledge and take hold of these. I didn't feel like I was helping her. I felt like a failure. I wanted to see her change, but every visit she seemed to fare worse. I recognized that a part of me was preparing to receive the news that she finally killed herself. My heart ached each time I was reminded of her or her situation.

Even as I write, I feel anxiety in the pit of my stomach. I felt responsible to help Martha, yet I felt inadequate and afraid. Often, I wanted to pretend her seemingly irreconcilable situation did not exist, because doing so calmed my emotions and sense of obligation. In his groundbreaking work on compassion fatigue, Figley (1995) acknowledges that professionals often vicariously experience the feelings of fear, pain, and suffering expressed by their clients, to the extreme that "sometimes we feel we are losing our sense of self to the clients we serve" (p. 1). I felt the tension between being *a good helper* and trying to protect myself from feeling her pain and my own helplessness. This dilemma left me with uncertainties. I liked the success-story side of helping others and witnessing change, but I did not know if, or how, I could handle being part of stories that unraveled. These fears and strains weighed heavily upon me, both at work and at

[10] In the 19th and 20th centuries, Canadian residential schools were funded by the government and administrated by Christian churches. The schools were intended to assimilate Aboriginal Canadians and were the scene of numerous abuses and offenses against Aboriginal children and their families.

home.

Reflecting on June and Martha's stories, I recognize them both as stories of hope: noticed or unnoticed. There is a quality to hope that I find gritty and raw. I see a difference between hope and optimism.[11] Hope does not say, "Everything will be okay". Instead, hope acts as a reminder that there is light alongside the darkness and moments of beauty within the despair. I return again to my belief in the coexistence of hope and hopelessness.[12] Noticing and acknowledging hope allows the recognition that dark and light can exist, side-by-side, like the interplay of sunlight and shadow. I remember a client seriously contemplating suicide because living felt torturous in one sentence and laughing, just a little, as she shared the antics of her cat and the peace she felt while stroking his fur. For me, acknowledging the honesty of both experiences is representative of hope. To ignore either experience denies its existence and power. Instead, noticing moments of hope allows the view on life to widen, allowing the possibility of other possibilities and the reminder that all of life may not have been as it is now.

Threads of Being and Becoming: Who Do I Hope to Be?

In some ways, it feels impossible for me to answer the question "Who do I hope to be in my work with individuals on parole and probation?" without answering the question "Who do I hope to be?" This question is deeply tied to personal meaning and feels especially pertinent as I no longer work with this population. Instead, I live out the question, "Who do I hope to be?" working as a registered psychologist in the community

[11] As noted in the Literature Review, my understandings regarding the distinctions between hope and optimism are informed by the work of Bruininks and Malle (2005), Bryant and Cvengros (2004), Gallagher and Lopez (2009), and Magaletta and Oliver (1999).

[12] I am inspired by Larsen et al. (2007), Jevne and Nekolaichuk (2003), and Flaskas's (2007) discussions of the coexistence of hope and hopelessness. I am also reminded of a participant quote from my M.Ed. thesis describing hope as "the old four-letter word" (Flesaker, 2008), acknowledging that when hope is discussed without respecting the complexities of pain and turmoil, it can be damaging.

with individuals from varying backgrounds. At first, I wrestled with how to distinguish between these two questions. To clarify my thoughts, I wrote an autobiographical timeline of the experiences with people, places, and situations that stood out in my mind as I thought about who I hoped to be and become in relation to my former work. All of the moments were set in my childhood and early adulthood. None of them directly involved working with individuals on parole and probation. Then I began a timeline of my work with individuals on parole and probation, but the divisions between early life and formal work life felt artificial.

Commenting on the active creation of meaning, educational philosopher Maxine Greene (1995) notes that the very effort of shaping lived experience into narrative form acts as a meaning-making process. Reflecting on the experience of composing the two timelines, I came to understand that they feed one another. I am a unified person with many stories: complex, multi-faceted, occasionally contradictory, yet a whole. Greene writes, "What seems crucial is the noticing, the active insertion of one's perception into the lived world" (p. 74). My experiences build upon one another as I move into a future composed in specific temporal, relational, and place contexts. My stories both shape and are shaped by the choices I make into mutually responsive stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) of evolving growth and change. Together, these stories interweave to inform my work as a narrative inquirer. This realization helped me to understand that I could *begin my story at the beginning*, which launched my own writing after numerous choppy starts.

As I reflect on *who I hope to be*, my thoughts turn to *who I hope to become*. Through the subjective experience of time, individuals create a meaningful coherence in

life which involves projections of the future and remembrances of the immediate and distant past, all mediated in the present moment (Kerby, 1991). These memories and subsequent coherence create the possibility for personal identity and selfhood. Carr (1986) writes about how individuals organize experiences narratively by creating meaning and interpreting events. He extends this to include the narrative construction of the self who interprets events to create meaningful, coherent narratives. Situating this narrative tradition, Carr writes, "The narrative grasp of the story teller is not a leap beyond time but a way of being in time" (p. 89). Although individuals can step back to look at experience in different ways, they cannot step out of it. Who I hope to become builds upon who I hope to be at the present time. This process of *becoming* adds nuance and depth as I hope to grow more fully into the person I strive to be today. Building on Dewey's (1938) conception of continuity, I see how the person I hope to be today is woven from the many threads of storied experience I lived through. Reflecting on my early life, the qualities and values with which I hope to compose a life are woven from the multi-hued and textured threads of my narrative experiences. "Understanding professional knowledge as comprising a landscape calls for a notion of professional knowledge as composed of a wide variety of components and influenced by a wide variety of people, places, and things" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995, pp. 4–5). Drawing from these understandings, I hope to weave these threads together to form a life where I can be a caring, competent professional, who uses my aptitudes and skills, and is fully engaged in life, balanced, present, and hopeful. I hope to compose stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) exemplifying these qualities. Connelly and Clandinin characterize stories to live by as the storied compositions that "define who we are, what

we do, and why". These qualities I aspire to did not simply appear fully formed; instead they are richly textured, woven from diverse threads of experience emerging from my three dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Composing a Worklife Around Threads of Caring

I hope to weave my stories around threads of caring, because I have experienced many stories on the spectrum of caring. I have felt cared for and I have felt abandoned, lonely, and bereft. Looking backwards into my early experiences, I remember warm feelings of receiving loving care from my family and friends. I remember the excitement and laughter as my mom and I carried on the "Ringrose Family Tradition" of making uniquely creative Halloween costumes. We were both excited, bonded in the moments of silly fun. Knowing she was willing to spend time with me and value the things I cared about taught me about the transformative power of feeling attended to and acknowledged. My close friend, Juniper, taught me how it feels to be heard and know someone cares enough to listen. My life is composed of these stories and many others. Who I hope to be and become in relation to my work carries these stories I have lived and continue to live. By composing my life around threads of caring, I hope to express caring in my personal and professional contexts.

I define caring as a holistic and fluid concept. It involves my relationships with self, others, and the larger world that are responsive to changing needs and contexts. The care I show for my counselling clients is expressed differently, than the care I show my children or husband. When my children are sad, I often draw them up onto my lap to snuggle. This physical caring behaviour would be inappropriate with my clients. Instead, I try to communicate caring to my clients by showing that I attend to their stories with my

whole being. This approach shares similarities with Noddings (2013) theory of caring which involves engrossment and motivational displacement from the one-caring and a response from the cared-for. Engrossment involves thinking about an individual to gain a greater understanding of him/her. Motivational displacement occurs when the one-caring's behavior is largely determined by the other's needs. I seek to live-out these characteristics, in differing forms, in each of my caring relationships. Reflecting on the ways I live out my hope to be caring, I draw threads from my own caring stories to show care to a client within a counselling session.

Using my expressions and my gaze, I hope to communicate that her words impact me. Using my words, I hope to communicate that I am reflecting upon and remembering the pieces of herself that she shares with me. Using observations and metaphors, I hope to share the hope and the possibilities which I see, but that she may not recognize yet. I hope that she knows these actions are authentic outward expressions of the care and compassion I feel towards her.

I hope these behaviours communicate to my clients that they matter to me. I draw from my own stories, remembering how validating it feels to be seen, heard, and acknowledged. Looking backward into the stories from which this hope draws, I remember all of the people who encouraged me as I sought goals, like pursuing my education, which often felt insurmountable. I recognize that without their caring, in so many forms, I would not be here today. These thoughts and remembrances inspire me to care for others. This approach to caring is also informed by my faith and the responsive care I feel from God. In this regard, I draw inspiration from Mother Theresa, who was quoted saying, "Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great

love". I hope that my small actions show others that I care. I endeavor to be caring with warmth, openness, and respect in both my personal and professional lives.

Composing a Worklife Around Threads of Being a Competent Professional

One of the ways I learned that psychologists care for their clients and the community is through developing competence. My Master's and Doctoral programs have been small, close knit communities. The learning I experienced both inside and outside of the classroom was pivotal. Between classes, assignments, and client sessions, my classmates and I spent hours talking in the Bullpen, the Education Clinic's[13] student lounge. As we shared stories of failed and successful therapeutic interventions, hopes, fears, and uncertainties, I learned the value of making and learning from mistakes. As therapists, our words and actions can have a significant impact on the lives of others. Recalling these conversations, I reflect on this time as a deeply relational period where my passion took form and I began understanding what becoming a psychologist involved. I see many stories interweaving to create my understanding of competence.

As a psychologist, one influential, aspirational professional story involves the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists (Canadian Psychological Association, 2000). I hope to be ethical, someone who lives by stories identifying myself as a person who acts with integrity, upholds the standards of my profession, and is seen by others in the same way. I also hope to continue developing my skills in the field of counselling. I tell myself a story that I will be a lifelong learner, not only in my job, but also in my life, in general. Through my interactions with others, I hope to leave people with a positive impression of psychologists and the field of psychology. Looking into the present, some of the qualities

[13] The University of Alberta's Education Clinic offers low-cost counselling and psychological assessment services to the community by supervised graduate students.

that drew me into the private practice setting that I currently share were the collegial emphasis and the regular consultation meetings. I saw threads of my Bullpen story of accountability and encouragement to be a competent professional extending into my current work-setting. Choosing to enter this private practice allows me to continue weaving threads of competence into who I hope to be and become.

As I reflect upon this hope, it strikes me as deeply relational. My actions as a psychologist affect the people that I work with and the profession of psychology, as a whole. My commitment to this hope carries storied threads from mentors and colleagues who taught me to value and respect the roles and responsibilities of psychologists. Often, I think about my actions in relation to other people in the field whom I admire and seek to emulate. I think about the supervisors who patiently guided me through decision-making processes. One of my last clinical supervisors stands out in my mind as an example of the type of psychologist I hope to be.

In some ways, our supervisory relationship felt more collegial than authoritative. Nearing the end of the registration process, this seemed appropriate. My supervisor was also a young professional, so I looked to him as a role model. The qualities of our relationship mirrored what I anticipated as an independent psychologist consulting with colleagues. As I brought him my treatment and ethical questions, he encouraged me to reflect upon and hone my decision-making skills. At times, he raised considerations that I might have missed without negative evaluation. It was a safe place to learn, allowing me to glimpse the emerging possibilities of practicing as a psychologist.

In addition, being a competent professional reminds me about when I should not practice. As I reflect on who I hope to become, I hope to recognize when I need to step

away from my work. I remember times during my graduate training when I knew that I was not practicing in a healthy, competent, and caring manner. I wrestled inwardly, as I tried to hold this belief, while simultaneously completing the requirements of my degree.

At 8:55am, I closed the door to my office. I was nearing the end of a year-long practicum, waiting for a 9am client. I was exhausted, burnt out, and near tears. I felt anxious and sick-at-heart about my course deadlines and family pressures. I felt unreasonable anger towards the clients in my schedule who I blamed for stealing my last remaining reserves of strength and energy. I walked briskly around my small office, trying to wake up and shake off the heaviness I felt in both body and soul. I prayed for strength, using my own self-talk to encourage and soothe myself.

I have no memory of the rest of the day, but it symbolizes a low-point in my journey to become a psychologist. As I reflect upon my hopes for being a competent professional, I know that I never want to be in that type of unhealthy situation again. However, this story carries an important thread of learning as I hope to put my competence and caring, for both myself and others, above other obligations and choose to make better decisions.

Composing a Worklife Around Threads About Using My Abilities and Skills

Through educational experiences, both formal[14] and informal, I seek to actively hone my abilities and skills to pursue my potential. This elusive *potential* is not one set goal, although I have created goals like graduating with a Ph.D., registering as a psychologist, and completing a half-triathlon. Rather, pursuing my potential involves the choice and commitment to continue striving forward and challenging myself. I feel

[14] I use the word *formal* to distinguish my structured, academic educational experiences from the unstructured educational experiences I engage in in everyday life.

strongly that I have talents to use in my life which should not be squandered. During my time at King's, I told and was told stories which wove these threads into a pattern that made sense to me.

Twice yearly, King's held an interdisciplinary studies conference where a single topic was approached from multiple perspectives. In my fourth year, I wrote a paper about the use of masculine and feminine God-imagery in the Bible for a Sociology course. My friend, Desiree, invited me to collaborate on a workshop for the conference. Desiree had worked previously as a minister and part of our conversation revolved around the tensions she felt as a woman in Christian ministry. As we talked, she shared the anger, joy, heartache, and questioning that accompanied doing the work she loved and felt called to, alongside obstacles and marginalization. She shared her interpretation of the parable of the talents,[15] *along with her belief that God had blessed her with certain abilities. Consequently, Desiree wondered if she would be at-fault if she didn't use them. These thoughts weighed heavily upon her heart as she occasionally battled opposition in the church and parenting tensions. One year later, when I found out I was pregnant with my first child, similar thoughts flooded through my mind: "What if I can't pursue my dream? What if I never use my full potential?"*

Looking backward, forward, and in-place, my stomach tightens as I feel fear and anxiety imagining storylines where I perceive squandering my own *talents*. Storied threads of the young girl desperate to meet the perceived expectations of others return. These feared, imagined stories act as a motivator each time I consider giving up my journey to complete a Ph.D. These imagined stories keep me doggedly determined to complete my educational journey; however, they also carry a heavy weight. I live in

[15] The parable of the talents is found in the biblical books of Matthew 25:14-30 and Luke 19:12-27.

tension between the vibrant imagined stories of using my gifts and pursuing my dream, alongside the heavy stories of potential failure. More often than not, the fear is stronger. Alternately, threads of my young self surface as I acknowledge feeling buoyed by the recognition and status I receive from others when I state, "I'm pursuing a Ph.D. I'm a psychologist". I also value social recognition of the skills and hard work it takes to achieve those goals.

Composing a Worklife Around Threads of Engaging in Life Fully

I hope to engage in life fully: weaving rich life stories with cognitive, emotional, physical, relational, and spiritual threads. Living this way helps me to see hope and possibility, even in challenging situations. This way of being supports me as I try to create a life that is enjoyable and personally meaningful. One of the things I love about engaging in therapy with clients is that it allows me tremendous creativity. Returning to Bateson's (2001, p. 228) idea that we are all, "representative and unique," I am able to draw from my formal and informal educational experiences while simultaneously listening to client stories for strengths, challenges, previous experiences to draw from, and personally meaningful metaphors which may help to communicate alternate perspectives and strategies. Often in those moments, I feel like I am living out this hope.

My hope to engage fully in life possesses a stronger *becoming* quality, as I know that I have a long way to go before I can claim living within it. I notice a recurrent story where I realize how important something is when it is lacking in my life. This recognition took shape as I wrote an assignment for my narrative inquiry course. The following draws excerpts from that assignment, where I put words to my hopes and fears.

Reading Natalie Goldberg's (1997) chapter, "A deep source of my writing" reawakened a profound dissatisfaction in the current state of my life. I do not feel that my hopes for being are being lived out fully, at this time. Several aspects that my life lacks include a sense of creativity, connection, and holistic balance. After writing out my grief about this state, I realize this dissatisfaction offers an important launching point. Mulling over the qualities my life is lacking, I understand that these dissatisfactions and absences return focus to the deep values and desires I hold. In response, I created a declaration of who I hope to become. This declaration stands like a flag of resistance, boldly asserting my refusal to live only half a life. Turning to poetry allows me the space to liberate my creativity and engage with life and work in a more-satisfying way. Ely (2007) encourages narrative inquirers to use different writing forms, like poetry, that "come closest to the essence of our understandings and presenting them in trustworthy ways [as] a crucial, ongoing, interactive dance" (p. 568). Poetry is a form that seems most able to represent the emotional, in-process quality of my experiences. Like Goldberg, my work becomes drudgery when these deep sources are discarded. In this act of writing, I feel hope and uncertainty: hope that I know the way and uncertainty that I will be able to walk the path.

Who Do I Hope to Become?

I hope to become playful again,
coming full-circle.
Childlike joy to childlike joy.
Wisdom enough to recognize the pricelessness
of play
the second time around.

I hope to become a good therapist.
Good enough therapist?
A healer?
To journey alongside,
offering a hand,

painting a vista which might have been missed.
Offering the possibility of walking more slowly,
looking with different eyes
along the way together.

I hope to be free.
Free to take time without guilt.
Free to be inefficient.
Free to pick up a paintbrush,
or stroll,
or lay in bed reading on a Saturday morning
knowing others are moving around downstairs.
I hope to create my own life,
a life that represents my deep values,
a life that doesn't make me weep at the imbalance.
A life where there is time for laughter
and tears
and the what-ever-falls-between.

I hope to be multiplicity,
many coloured,
prismatic, reflective.
Strong, yet supple,
firm anchor points and sails aloft.
I hope to be new each morning,
yet able to draw from my depths.
More than my roles,
But claiming them with intentionality.
They are mine,
all mine,
with love.
All in love.

In poetry, brevity allows space for the unsaid stories. There are parts expected to remain untold, although not because they lack importance. There seem to be spaces between the lines where these ideas can take root, waiting to bloom. These spaces allow readers to fill in the gaps with their own connections and interpretations, actively composing meaning as they place themselves between the lines. I understand that I will weave these hopes into my life, my stories to live, in small ways, one day at a time. And

like the poem with pieces left unsaid, I can accept the tentativeness and uncertainty because I hold hope that one day, I will move into who I hope to become.

Composing a Worklife Around Threads of Being Balanced

Similarly, my hope to become balanced also possesses a stronger *becoming* quality, because of its tentativeness and its uncertainty at the present time. My hope to become balanced is closely connected to my hope to engage in life fully. Balance allows me the ability to give and take time for the meaningful aspects of my life: myself, my clients, my family, my friends, and my faith. However, *balance* can be a loaded term for me as it often conjures stories of perfection.

I picture Balance in my mind. She is personified by the image of a professional woman, dropping off her children at school, working at a fulfilling career, attending a yoga class, coming home to share a healthy meal with her family, followed by quality time with her children and partner. All of these tasks accomplished at a calm, measured pace which I rarely witness in my life or the lives of others.

Instead, I seek to restory balance as a spinning teeter-totter. At different times, I give certain areas of my life more of my energy. This approach to balance creates the possibility for livable stories acknowledging that I am not able to do everything and it frees me to concede that my life and priorities will change over time. As the mother of a young family, my children tend to occupy the first place in my mind. As a young professional, my career and my continuing professional development are also prioritized. As I move towards the completion of my formal academic education,[16] I intend to reallocate the energy allotted to my Ph.D. to the pursuit of other personally meaningful

[16] Following the completion of my Ph.D., I will continue storying myself as an academic. However, I intend to pursue education in less formal ways.

areas of interest, including painting and learning to ride a motorcycle. Composing a worklife around stories of being balanced allows me to weave multiple, meaningful threads into a rich, although often chaotic, tapestry. One component of living a fully-engaged, balanced lifestyle involves not only creating the time and space to connect with people, but also the *ways* in-which I relate to them.

Composing a Worklife Around Threads of Being Present

As a narrative inquirer, I am keenly reminded of the temporal aspects of my experience. I often look backward into the stories with which I weave the intricate tapestry of who I hope to be and become. With hope and trepidation, I look forward into the possible designs which can be crafted from multiple threads of experience. Too often, I forget to inquire into the present, the stories I am living in the moment. I hope to renew and redevelop my ability to be present with people, including myself. I feel like I used to be better at remaining present and focused in my interactions. Sadly, I feel that I lost much of that ability, succumbing to the over-burdened lifestyle that was, and remains, my norm. I feel a persistent tug on my attention, pulling it in many directions as I try to navigate numerous roles and expectations. Often, I notice my greatest ability to be present with others in the counselling room.

In the counselling session, there are moments where the world shrinks down to the size of the room we occupy. I'm not thinking about what happened this morning as I rushed off to work. I'm not thinking about the paperwork that happens later. I attend with my entire self, watching body language, listening for word choice and tone of voice, assembling these pieces and looking for patterns. As I share my reflections, I see her pause and watch the ideas sink in. She sits quietly for a moment, then builds upon them.

At the end of the session, she recalls that moment and says that it was important. I walk her out the door, feeling peaceful, yet energized. I relish the experience of being present and feeling like a good therapist. Moments later, I lament, "Why do I have so much trouble doing this with my kids? My husband? Don't they deserve this part of me too?"

The threads composing this hope often pull me in different directions; they also feel unequally distributed in my life. I see the need to be present especially in my personal relationships. I hope to create space to be mindful with myself, recognizing my own limits. I hope to be mindful with others, attending to and acknowledging their needs, instead of viewing them as tasks to accomplish in a never-ending cycle. Drawing from experiences where people, like Juniper, offered me the gift of being present, I hope to intentionally practice being mindful and giving people my full attention, whether it's for five minutes, fifty minutes or in an ongoing relationship, until it becomes a way-of-being.

These final hopes to engage fully in composing a balanced and mindful life feel more tentative and uncertain; they possess greater *becoming* qualities than the first hopes I offer. One day, I shared with a colleague my hope to birth two lives in one year: my son's and my own, post-Ph.D. Looking forward, I wonder who my son and my daughters will become as they live out their stories. Similarly, although it took an extra year, I also wonder about how I will live out my own hopes for being and becoming. My hopes need to stay large enough to wiggle my toes in, large enough for comfort, growth, and freedom. However, I want my hopes to remain small and intimate enough to feel held within. I want hopes with soft edges that I can explore with my fingertips, lingering over the textures, and reaching beyond to feel where they touch other edges, new border places, and alternate possibilities to consider and explore.

Composing a Worklife Around Threads of Remaining Hopeful

It seems almost silly to include this as a final descriptor, but it is a crucial part of who I hope to be and become. I hope to be hopeful. When I reflect upon the threads that hopeful stories weave throughout my life and work, explicitly in the past twelve years, and implicitly throughout my lifetime, I recognize that I need to acknowledge hope.

I notice hope most keenly when I wonder about how different life would be in its absence. Without hope, I would never have followed my dream to pursue graduate studies and become a psychologist. Without my own hope, I would not be able to offer alternate perspectives and hope to my clients. Without hope, there would not be a field of Corrections or attempts to help people change and move forward after committing a crime. And during many dark moments, when I feared that I would never finish my Ph.D. or that I made a mistake in pursuing this life course, I could not have mustered the strength to breathe and take another step forward without hope.

I hope to remain hopeful, able to acknowledge the impact that my work has on me, while continuing to find ways to foster my own hope as I work alongside people who are hurting and struggling in life. I hope to give myself the space to witness darkness and sorrow, while not forgetting to look for the subtle moments of hope and beauty. Finally, I have hope because this journey of being and becoming has not yet reached an end.

Reflections

As I reflect on the distinction between being and becoming, it begins to feel artificial. *To be* is a present-tense verb. When I reflect on the threads from which I hope to compose my worklife, I have not mastered any of them. I see these qualities shifting and changing as I continue on my journey of development, both as a person and a

professional. These are all *becoming*-qualities; they are process-oriented, not outcome-oriented. I doubt there will ever be a day where I say, “There. Now I am caring. Now I am balanced. I am finished”. I hope to remain open and engaged in this ongoing journey, as I shape and am shaped by my experiences.

However, in the relationship between being and becoming, I see a spectrum within my stories. I can easily point to the places in my life where I see threads of my hopes to be a caring, competent professional who uses her skills and abilities lived out. I feel able to live solidly within these hopes. On the other hand, my hopes to engage fully in a balanced and present life feel farther away. There are brief moments where I see these threads woven into my life, but they are not the norm. My final hope to remain hopeful feels like the thread that holds these pieces together. It allows me to live within uncertainty, while continuing to take small steps towards the future life and identity I hope to create.

In addition, I do not think it is possible to explicate all of who I hope to be and become in relation to my work. Some of my hopes lack words. However, as I review the hopes that I make explicit, I feel satisfied that they represent the major threads of who I hope to be and become. I treasure this writing, because it presents a snapshot of who I am today, recognizing that this is not wholly who I will be in five or ten years. However, that future self will be partially composed from these hopes and experiences, alongside the new adventures and possibilities that I anticipate tomorrow and every day following.

Chapter 5: Chandra's Narrative Account

"If you've found something you believe in and you enjoy it, everything fits".

Chandra worked with individuals on parole and probation for over twenty years, primarily with one agency. Sharing stories of her worklife history and who she hopes to be and become in relation to her work with individuals on parole, she weaves strong threads from her personal experiences, from childhood to present day. These connections between the personal and professional contexts of Chandra's life illustrate the mutually influential relationship between these worlds and her sense of consistency as one person across many settings.

During the course of the inquiry, Chandra decided to leave the agency where she worked. Composing a meaningful story about leaving, she shared her sense of surprise at emphasizing personal reasons, rather than pursuing a more financially-rewarding job. During our early conversations, Chandra described openness to the possibility of leaving the agency for a job that met her familial and financial requirements. Later, meeting to review and discuss the narrative drafts, she described being in a place of uncertainty and transition. During this time of transition, Chandra said that reading and reflecting upon the drafts were helpful to make sense of the threads, with which, she was composing her present and future worklife.

Pulling up to the unassuming apartment building in May 2011, I wonder how many of the neighbours know they live next to a community residential facility for parolees. With the awareness I bring from my own work and life experience, I laugh a little at the stereotypes these neighbours might hold about living next to a halfway house. I think it might be safer to live next door because of the extra security measures! Greeting

a few men smoking outside the building, I feel slightly appraised. I wonder if they think I am a new parole officer or other visiting professional. Chandra greets me warmly and invites me into her office. Our first meetings occur within these walls, where she appears comfortable and confident.

Fast forward two years later, I walk up the sidewalk to Chandra's home to review another narrative draft. Several months prior, she informed me that she left the Agency, but gave no details. I am curious to hear about this new chapter in her story and wonder how it will impact our work together. A more intimate atmosphere seems to lead to more intimate conversations. She inquires about my family and the baby I am expecting, while she relaxes her boundaries to speak more openly about her own family and life than she did within the walls of her office. Once again, I note the careful way she offers feedback about the draft. She takes time to read, reflect upon, and respond to what I write. I am touched and slightly relieved as she affirms, once again, that reading the narrative account that we are co-composing feels like reading her own story.

Early Life

Early in our conversations, Chandra weaves a strong, coherent plotline through her stories. She makes easy connections, illustrating how threads of early life experience with her best friend and several alcoholic family members, weave together to compose pieces of her stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). These threads include a belief in the underdog, the importance of choice and personal responsibility, and that everyone is an individual worthy of respect. In some ways, it seems that Chandra composes a worklife story in response to the questions and events experienced in childhood. References to these beliefs echo repeatedly throughout our conversations.

When I think about where my work with individuals on parole and probation started, it probably happened at a young age. There were a couple of experiences that came to mind that may have contributed to my entry into this field. I always believed in the underdog. When I was twelve years old, I had a best friend that got involved in drugs, alcohol, and prostitution. She was like my sister and I experienced not knowing whether she was alive or dead. Eventually, she left that life. When I went to her treatment centre graduation, I thought, "Wow". At that time, I wasn't really thinking about going into Corrections. For her, the issue was more addictions. But my experience with her was so odd. She was so close to me, then she was gone. She was gone because of a choice. She was gone because of an addiction. She was gone because of so many other things and our relationship was never the same. Maybe our purpose for being together was for her to prepare me for this. I don't know.

Another experience that might have contributed to my work was that several close family members were, and still are, alcoholics. Growing-up, life was so chaotic. Alcohol was never an interest for me. I've seen what it can do. I chose to stop the cycle. As kids, it wasn't uncommon for us to be awakened at 3am with pizza. That was normal for us, but later on I thought, "That's not too normal". I wasn't thinking of taking my life in this direction for work. I was just led in this direction. I'm very spiritual, so I believe that God led me where I needed to go and to what I needed to do.

As our conversations progress, Chandra weaves threads of faith and spirituality throughout her worklife stories. Composing a story about being *called* into her work, she weaves a pattern with her beliefs in a life purpose shaped by God, who guides and directs her path. Drawing together these threads, Chandra composes a story to live by (Connelly

& Clandinin, 1999) where she lives out her hopes for being and becoming, regardless of the context. The intricate weaving of these threads creates a coherent pattern within her stories.

When I started in this field, I was going to be a parole officer or something like that. I was going to make a difference in the lives of others and make lots of money. Even as a little kid I was always caring for something. I brought home the stray cats and dogs. That's who I am. They needed someone. And I guess that ties into the fact that I want to be that someone who can make a difference in the lives of others.

An interesting contrast that emerges in Chandra's narrative is the balance between the values of making a difference in the lives of others, making money, and external recognition or status. I appreciate Chandra's forthrightness as she shares the practical side of her decision-making, as well. A dominant social narrative[17] for people entering the helping professions highlights the expectation that they only care about helping others. I have observed social expectations that helping professionals are wholly selfless, disavowing their own needs. Drawing from my own experience, I have seen helping professionals leave the field because of excessive demands on their time, energy, and emotions, coupled with a lack of financial sustainability. Instead of fully engaging this dominant story,[18] Chandra composes her own counterstories (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) regarding her wants and needs alongside the needs of others. Chandra's counterstories do not simply replace these stories with another dominant story. Instead, her counterstories

[17] See the literature review for a discussion of how the work of Michael White and David Epston (1990) influences my understandings of dominant social narratives.
[18] Drawing from work by White and Epston (1990) and Lindemann Nelson (1995), I conceptualize counterstories in opposition to dominant social narratives, creating opportunities to undo and retell dominant stories with space to reauthor oneself and invite new interpretations and possibilities.

undo the dominant story and allow her to recompose herself, alongside new, personally-meaningful interpretations and conclusions.

Formal Introduction to Working With Individuals on Parole and Probation

With each participant, research conversations began by discussing his/her formal entry into work with individuals on parole and probation. I use the term *formal* to acknowledge that participants live many threads of storied experience prior to beginning work with individuals on parole and probation that help each of them to compose a worklife where choosing to work with marginalized populations makes sense to them. I chose to open our conversations in this way because I thought the topic and approach would make sense to them due to the nature of the research puzzle. Also, it is important to gain an understanding of each participant's worklife history, including the temporal, relational, and place dimensions (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), within which, to situate the later narrative accounts of being and becoming. Chandra's introduction to work with individuals on parole and probation begins as a volunteer, which kindles her desire to pursue further education in the field.

My work with individuals on parole and probation really started when I was about eighteen-years-old as a volunteer probation officer. At that time, I predominantly worked with youth. Under the supervision of another probation officer, I met with three youth clients, got to know them, and made sure they were doing what they needed to do for their probation. I did this for a year, but within the first month I knew that working with youth would not be my chosen field. I certainly had a lot to offer that clientele, but I didn't have the passion. So I decided to go to college to get some education.

In the Correctional Services program, I did a placement at a correctional centre in the Temporary Absence[19] program. I remember one person who walked into the centre. The way he was talking and tattied[20] up, I thought, "Obviously he's been in the Institution for a while". He didn't seem like a nice individual. Then I found out he was staff! There was no professionalism, whatsoever: his mannerisms, his loudness, even swearing at a client! Right from the get-go, I realized the type of staff person I didn't want to be. I think everyone should be treated with dignity and respect.

As a student in the Correctional Services program, Chandra begins to experience the possibilities of working with individuals on parole and probation. Drawing from both negative and positive examples in the probation office, she composes a story to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) emphasizing respect and professionalism that she lives out and expects from others working in the field. In addition, Chandra also shares stories about the relationships where she experiences encouragement and role models that she seeks to emulate.

In my next practicum placement, I returned to the rural probation office where I volunteered previously. I met some really good people there that I still associate with twenty years later. I loved the atmosphere. The receptionist was a wonderful person. If clients were really struggling and really upset, seeing her bright, wonderful spirit might help them feel they could belong and get connected. Although clients were still going for probation, they saw someone who could make them feel comfortable. I felt comfortable there, like I could work in a community corrections setting. It felt normal; it felt right.

---

[19] A temporary absence allows an offender to leave the correctional institution, with or without an escort, for a defined period of time. It is considered an opportunity to prepare for release into the community.
[20] "Tattied" is a slang reference for having tattoos.

This second story of a warm, welcoming environment offers a central thread, around which Chandra composes her stories within the halfway house. She mounts inspirational plaques on the walls to inspire others and to present her belief in the power of change. In addition, she takes small actions to create a sense of community, for both staff and clients. Every year on Tim Horton's™ Camp Day, Chandra orders coffee for everyone in the house. At Christmas, staff and clients prepare and eat a festive meal together. Chandra refers to the House using phrases like, "My place of home" and, "Home base", storying the House as a safe, welcoming place for both herself and the clients. Although she emphasizes that safety and security are the highest priorities, Chandra weaves these threads alongside other personally meaningful threads about creating a warm atmosphere conducive to growth and change. Her stories of place highlight the importance of location in her experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Drawing from both positive and negative experiences in the probation office, Chandra weaves threads to compose a worklife story about being respectful, welcoming, and encouraging. These stories rest alongside her professional responsibilities to uphold safety and correctional requirements. In these ways, Chandra composes a worklife using storied threads from experiences that do, and do not, fit with who she hopes to be.

My next placement in 1993 was at the halfway house where I worked for twenty years. I only intended to be there for a short period of time, because I still wanted to be a parole officer or a probation officer. But I worked with clients on parole and sometimes probation in a residential setting for two decades! As a caseworker, I had a caseload of six to ten clients. I ensured that the clients were abiding by their conditions of release. My casework specialized in working with sex offenders. I did a lot of training through

CSC[21] to work with that clientele. That was really important because we needed to understand the clientele that we worked with to do better casework.

Later, I did parole secondment with our community assessment and parole supervision program. I did parole supervision for a period of time and got to know the guys in the parole system that were living in the community. I made sure they followed their conditions of parole, like providing work documentation or attending counselling. I enjoyed doing parole supervision, but it wasn't my passion. I liked regular contact with the guys and I didn't get that working there. I met with the guys every week or two. Sometimes the meetings were very generic, reporting about work or any concerns. It was a good experience, but not something I was truly interested in.

Working as a parole supervisor offers a subtle choice-point in Chandra's worklife. In her early worklife, she composes an anticipatory story about becoming a parole officer. These positions attract her because they offer an appealing combination of financial reimbursement, status, and opportunities to make a difference in the lives of others. However, the time Chandra spends in parole supervision allows her to realize that working as a parole officer does not fit for her. Instead, she returns to her previous job, which offers greater opportunities for meaningful interaction and a better fit with who she hopes to be and become. Chandra shifts her storyline to emphasize the most meaningful aspects of her worklife: connection with others and fostering positive change. In some ways, Chandra's decision to return to the halfway house foreshadows her future choice to leave the field for personally-meaningful, rather than financial or status-related reasons, creating a coherent (Carr, 1986) worklife story.

[21] Correctional Service of Canada.

Once the parole supervision contract was over, I came back to the halfway house as a caseworker. I moved into the Coordinator position in 1999. The title just came one day, but I was already doing the work involved in the position. The main difference between being a caseworker and being a Coordinator was that I didn't have a caseload. I supervised the other staff's caseloads. I didn't micromanage the cases, but with my experience, I took an interest in lots of things. The guys and their stories stayed in the back of my mind, like I could ponder a guy's history: his crimes, his family, and all the other stuff about him. Working in the Coordinator position, I oversaw the staff and the clients from a different perspective because of my experience. And when the Manager wasn't there, I oversaw the program. I also talked with a lot of people, answering questions from the district parole office, finding out information, and welcoming new parole officers to the unit. And when I became the Assistant Manager in 2010, I was running the show!

Threads regarding the impact of lack of recognition from management weave through Chandra's stories of career advancement. Despite her years of experience, she identifies feeling overlooked for advancement, which she attributes to lacking a degree. Exploring threats to hope at work, Chandra expands upon her experiences of feeling unrecognized and lack of belief from her managers.

I contemplated leaving the Agency before I got the Assistant Manager position. I was new to this position, but I wasn't new to the unit, so I didn't like it when people talked to me like I didn't know this stuff; I did. In a sense, I had the same role as I did before; I just didn't have the title. So it was hard, because everyone talked about how great it was during the three years I was in that position. But really, there was no change.

I was the one who was consistent. I appreciated the acknowledgement of a job well done, but I felt like, "Hey, I was here all along, but you didn't see me". I didn't want people to recognize me only because I had the title of Manager. I tried not to be snarky, but I found that the frustration built up over time. I had all of the ideas, like the coffee day and making sure we had Christmas gifts available for guys who couldn't afford to buy them for their families in my mind already. Like I said, that's always been who I was. At times, I thought the management didn't believe in me because the only thing that really stood in my way was that I lacked a degree. So I didn't want to be the one in the corner. I wanted to be the one that people said, "Yeah, I know her and this is what she does".

Chandra tells herself a story about recognition and its acknowledgment of valued parts of who she is by others. She lives out these caring, respectful, and responsible parts of herself through external actions, like the coffee day and helping clients provide Christmas gifts for their families. When others acknowledge Chandra for her title as *the Manager*, it seems to detract from this central thread of her recognition story. She hopes to be recognized and acknowledged for embodying qualities like caring, respect, and responsibility, regardless of her title or role. The lived experience of embodying these qualities seems far more important to Chandra than a title, bestowed by others. Weaving alongside these threads are other threads regarding the validation and motivation Chandra feels when someone believes in her and recognizes her potential. Together, these threads compose a story to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) regarding belief and recognition.

There was one manager who believed in me, even before I took on this role. It meant so much when someone said, "I believe you can do this". Like when he decided,

"We're going to do a community carnival and you're going to be the person making the contacts". Or, "You're going to be presenting to a group of 150-law enforcement officers". He pushed me in that direction because he believed in me.

Touching on the relational aspect of the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), Chandra weaves threads from influential relationships into her worklife stories. Several of these people include the Agency's executive director, a manager, and a college facilitator. The stories of belief and encouragement they tell to and about Chandra become threads that support the composition of her own stories of being and becoming.

Representing a Worklife

When asked about phrases, images or symbols that represent her worklife, Chandra pondered the question. After some thought, she selected the Agency's core values which were posted on her office wall. Drawing from the Agency's core values, Chandra shares how she weaves these values into the intricate pattern of her stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999).

I believe that every individual has intrinsic worth and has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. I believe in the potential of all human beings and in their capacity for growth and change. I believe that all individuals have the right to live in a safe and peaceful society and that justice is best served through measures that resolve conflict and restore harmony. I believe that individuals are responsible for their own actions and must be held accountable for those actions. I believe that the root causes of crime are found within communities and that the solutions to crime are also found in

communities. I believe in serving community needs by cooperating and collaborating to achieve a healthy and safe society.

As she personalizes and draws these beliefs into her own stories, Chandra weaves in threads of her own deep belief in personal responsibility and change, for both clients and herself. These beliefs draw threads from early life experiences with her best friend and alcoholic family members that bring her to this work. Chandra acknowledges that she chose to live a life without substance abuse or criminal activity, despite witnessing these in her childhood. She also weaves an abiding sense of hope through her work with individuals on parole and probation. Even in the midst of perceived failures, Chandra composes stories that acknowledge her understanding that hope remains.

In order to work with my clients, I needed to believe in the power of change and to believe in myself. I had to have that buy-in in my work. The clients needed to believe in themselves too, because responsibility for change boiled down to them, ultimately. So, I tried to support and bring out that belief. And if change didn't happen this release, maybe it would happen the next release. I'll admit, there were some guys that I saw and thought, "Oh my gosh, we're getting him again?" There's one guy who came to mind and it's like he thought the world owed him. The last time we had him at the House, I said, "Quit blaming others, take ownership for the choices that you've made, and start making some changes". I understood why he felt that way, but he needed to stop the cycle. In my life, I chose to stop that cycle. I wasn't going to be a drinker. I wasn't going to make that part of my life. So I guess I believe in the power of change. However, with community corrections, we didn't always have the luxury to wait, especially if a client was going into

his crime-cycle.[22] *Protection of society outweighed protection of the individual. So if a guy was up-to-no-good, I had no problem calling him in. That was my job.*

Chandra tells a story about a balancing act in her worklife representation that mirrors the larger balancing act in her stories of who she hopes to be and become. In her worklife, she composed a balance between caring for clients and believing in the possibility of change, alongside her responsibilities for protecting society. Daily, Chandra chooses how she will live out who she hopes to be and become. Even in the midst of difficult decisions, she chose to view a client's re-incarceration with hope, storying it as a positive opportunity to continue working on himself. After twenty years of working with individuals on parole and probation, I am inspired by Chandra's ability to remain hopeful, yet cognizant of the tensions inherent in her responsibilities and decisions between protecting the community and supporting clients through reintegration.

Who Do I Hope to Be?

Chandra composes a coherent story about who she hopes to be and become across her life contexts, both inside and outside of work. Weaving together deeply meaningful hopes, she creates rich, multifaceted stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) that represent who she is, regardless of the situation. Emphasizing how Chandra composes these stories to live by across contexts, she shares, "I can still be the same person if I decide to go into nursing, teaching or modeling". She composes a worklife narrative drawing from her hopes to be compassionate, recognized for making a difference, a role model, respectful, an advocate, and a capable professional.

[22] The "crime cycle" references events, thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, which typically precede an offence.

Composing a Hope Around Being Compassionate

Chandra composes a hope to be compassionate that involves caring, recognizing everyone's individuality, and believing that everyone possesses the capacity to change. Part of her compassionate approach involves broadening the stories told about her clients to view them as whole people who bring a lifetime of experience to their interactions. In addition, Chandra seeks to support her staff to compose compassion in their work by discussing these broader stories. However, she continues to weave threads of personal responsibility through her work by emphasizing that recognizing her clients' complex, storied lives and potential contributing factors to behaviour does not condone it.

I'm definitely a compassionate person, in my work and what I believe in, in general. Being compassionate means believing in the power of change and caring about people. Working in the restaurant business, there were some families nobody wanted to serve. I served them because I thought, "So what if they don't clean up as well as everyone else? They're still people". It also helps me to enjoy what I do. I'm a compassionate person, so being compassionate at work helps me to be authentic and live out who I am at work.

When the guys are struggling or they snap, being compassionate means recognizing everyone's individuality and humanness. When staff get frustrated because a client's behaviour irritates them, I remind them, "He's a stat-release[23] guy. He didn't earn his release, so this has been his attitude". When we get a new arrival, sometimes the staff want to do his intake immediately. But it's important to recognize that he just came from an institution, so he needs time to unwind. We try to accommodate his needs

[23] The term references that some parolees are released due to legislative requirements rather than earning their release.

alongside our need to get the job done: "Do you need a cigarette? Do you want to eat first?" Then we can do intake. So I try to treat everyone as a person. I recognize that everyone has needs and I need to be as responsive as I can, while still getting the job done.

Compassion is a concept in both everyday folk usage and in academic research. Drawing from evolutionary psychology and neuroscience, Gilbert (2009) defines compassion as basic kindness with a deep awareness of the suffering of oneself and others, alongside a desire to relieve that suffering. This understanding of compassion shares connections with Chandra's understanding of compassion, including caring or kindness, awareness of other's difficulty or discomfort, and willingness to take action to alleviate discomfort which is grounded in her early childhood experiences and worklife history. Opportunities to live out her hope to be compassionate allow Chandra to weave together her hopes for being and becoming alongside her work. Throughout our conversations, she reiterates the importance of living out her beliefs at work. Composing a worklife acknowledging these meaningful stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) seemed to contribute to Chandra's ability to work as a reintegration counsellor for over two decades.

Composing a Hope Around Being Recognized for Making a Difference

Through her stories, Chandra weaves threads that acknowledge the value she places on recognition of her actions. She stories recognition highly, because she interprets recognition of her actions as an acknowledgement of the qualities, like compassion, respect, and competence that she seeks to live out. The stories Chandra is told and tells about herself through acknowledgment of the difference she makes in the lives of others

offers her valuable feedback and encouragement. In contrast, there are times during her career where she feels unrecognized by the management. Chandra stories these situations as threats to her hope, an indicator of the importance recognition plays in her worklife.

I hope to be recognized for making a difference in the work I've done. Later down the road, if someone says my name, I want people to say, "Yeah, I know her and she's done this and this and this". It's not my driving goal to be famous or for people to be aware of who I am and the work that I do, but I want to know that I made a difference in the world. I remember calling an RCMP officer about something work-related. When I said my name, she mentioned, "I've heard a lot about you". I asked, "What have you heard?" and she said, "Really good things". I was surprised. It meant a lot to me that I'm known outside of the circle I usually work within. It's that pat on the back that I don't necessarily need, but it's just one of those things that I like to hear sometimes.

About ten years ago, I was given two awards by the Agency: one nominated by peers and the other by management. It meant even more to be recognized by my coworkers. I was recognized by the team for the work that I did and the person that I am. It was a surprise, because I know what I am and what I try to do, but hearing someone say, "This is what you've done and this is how you made me feel," was deeply touching. That acknowledgement really meant a lot. Not that it's the pat that I'm looking for, I don't need to have that, but validation for who I am and what I enjoy doing meant a lot.

Exploring potential reasons underlying altruistic behavior, Batson and Shaw (1991) purport that people help out of regard for the well-being of others. Altruistic behavior is influenced by the individual's degree of initial empathy and the ease of psychological distress gained from helping. The empathy-altruism hypothesis (Batson &

Shaw, 1991) proposes that feeling empathy for a person in-need evokes motivation to help that person, which benefits the self as an additional consequence. Chandra's recognition of the rewards gained through empathically-motivated helping seems to fit with this understanding. While acknowledging how helping others benefits herself through positive feelings, she also expresses tension within this desire by repeatedly downplaying her desire for recognition. Discussing this point in one conversation, Chandra pondered whether it appears *weak* to want or need recognition from others. This discomfort with her desire for recognition may tie into dominant social stories (White & Epston, 1990) and expectations that people in the helping professions are completely selfless and work only for the benefit of others. Alternately, these tensions may draw from Chandra's faith teachings that discount the desire for praise or story it as a sin of *pride*. Regardless of the source, tensions between wanting and downplaying recognition surface within her narrative account.

Composing a Hope Around Being a Role Model

Chandra weaves together several threads to compose a story about being a good role model. First, she describes role modeling to clients and staff by being both a teacher and teachable. In addition, Chandra composes a future-oriented, anticipatory story about her hope to act as a role model through her words and actions to others outside of work. As she lives out her hope to be a role model, Chandra notes tensions about being maternal in a correctional setting, alongside the important role models in her own life.

I definitely hope to be a good role-model for my family, my clients, and my staff. I want to be a positive person, someone that my kids can be proud of: happy and healthy, working from the inside-out, but always being who I am. I probably have the same

background as some of the guys here, but I made different choices. As a role model, I try to teach the guys what isn't going to work in mainstream society. One guy came into the office, super-emotional and dropping the F-bomb after a meeting with his parole officer. Once he had the chance to process it, he cooled down. Then I could say, "The way you talked to me is not appropriate. It's not going to work in the real world so we need to work on that". He's not going to be able to talk to an employer like that. So I made sure that I recognized and corrected that behaviour.

Sometimes the guys laughed at me because of what I tried to teach. One day the guys were talking, "Stupid this and stupid that". And I said, "You know what, stupid is a thumbs-down word". They looked at me, "Thumbs down word?" I said, "It's a very negative word. When you use it, you feel negative". He rolled his eyes and said, "Ok", but it's true. I don't treat them as kids, because I'd say that to anyone. If my kids are saying, "Stupid," they hear the same thing from me. I think it's just because I'm maternal. I'm sure even if I didn't have kids I'd probably still be maternal, because that's who I am from raising my brothers.

Much of the teaching experience that Chandra draws into her work was developed by raising her siblings and her children. As a role model with her family, Chandra taught valuable life skills, some of which her clients may not have learned previously. In other examples, she shares stories about prompting clients to wear gloves or winter coats when the temperature dropped to dangerous levels. However, she describes some tensions with living-out these maternal, relational qualities while working in a correctional setting. According to Chandra, the correctional culture underscores stories emphasizing distance, boundaries, and accountability, so acting *maternally* is discouraged. Despite respecting

the correctional culture and the need for boundaries within her work environment, this represents a different way-of-being for Chandra. She admits that it takes time to compose a balanced way of living out these different aspects of herself at work.

In the beginning, I leaned towards the stringent side. If a client called me, "Buddy", or "Girl", I corrected him because I wasn't his buddy or his girl. As I worked in the field longer, I start realizing that maybe that's just his language. Maybe there wasn't always some underlying meaning, like he's trying to manipulate me or take away my authority. But I am a firm believer in boundaries between myself and clients. When guys leave the house, sometimes they want to meet for coffee. I say, "No", because we can't be friends after they're my client. Our relationship has to stay in the work context.

As a teacher, Chandra acknowledges that she needs to role model willingness to learn and ask questions. She shares stories about openly asking managers for help or clients to explain things to her: "Half the time I didn't know what I was doing with computers, but I want to have that teachable spirit". Chandra weaves threads that normalize lifelong learning and making mistakes through her hope, including being willing to admit when she is wrong: "When I'm wrong, I'm willing to apologize. I want to learn from it and make sure it doesn't happen again". As a role model, Chandra stories being teachable as an important thread that illustrates how she lives out her own teaching.

Powerful experiences with role models in her own life offer Chandra meaningful threads to weave through her stories of being and becoming. One role model offers storied threads that Chandra draws from as she composes her stories to live by.

A lot of who I hope to be comes from a wonderful facilitator that I had in college. At Christmas, she gave us each a decoration. The decoration represented who she saw

me as. My decoration was the manger, the stable, the star, and a person inside kneeling and praying. She said it's because I take care of everything and it's also spiritual. Every Christmas, I take it out and it's a reminder of what she said. If someone mentions her name, others say, "Oh my gosh, yeah, I know her". It doesn't matter who you are, she'd sit down and have a conversation. I think I have parts of her attributes, but she's amazing. She's compassionate and a good teacher. A lot of the qualities I aspire to could come from her. She is such a beautiful person; maybe she's someone I'd like to be like.

Chandra highlights that her role model is well-recognized by others as a caring, compassionate person who seeks to make a difference in the lives of others. In addition, this role model also communicates her belief in Chandra and her potential. These experiences echo the recognition and encouragement from others and worklife qualities that Chandra aspires to in her own life.

Composing a Hope Around Being Respectful

Chandra composes a hope to live in a respectful manner. Regardless of their background, she tells stories that emphasize how everyone deserves respect. Even when she disagrees with someone's choices or lifestyle, Chandra seeks to untangle the threads connecting the person and the action to continue offering individuals respect. In this way, she seeks to compose worklife stories emphasizing understanding, where people with differing beliefs can co-exist in a courteous and considerate manner.

I think it is important to live by what you believe. I'm very spiritual and I need to follow that path. However, I need to make sure that people who don't share my beliefs have a right to their own opinion. They might believe in something else, so I try to understand what they study or what they worship. For our Aboriginal clientele, there

were some practices they couldn't do at the House. For instance, they couldn't burn sweet grass or incense, because the suites were non-smoking. However, we could respect their practices by allowing them to utilize the program room, because it had better ventilation.

Giving and receiving respect are meaningful threads, around which Chandra composes her stories of being and becoming. She shares her willingness to acknowledge and accept differences, with the expectation that those considerations will be returned. As she weaves together multifaceted stories of respect and safety, Chandra describes taking a firm approach when she perceives that respect is lacking.

I have my limits. We have Aryan Nation members and people who share those beliefs at the House and I can't handle that stuff. I keep my opinions to myself, because it's their choice to make, but they're not going to do it here. I'm very vocal with anyone who says negative things against other ethnic people. The clients who come here need to feel safe here, regardless of their race or their criminal sentence. I can respect people's beliefs, as long as they're respectful of others.

Chandra remains cognizant that her work with individuals on parole and probation carries many multifaceted and complex stories. She seeks to balance living respectfully alongside the needs and safety of clients and staff within the House. These stories are thoughtfully and intentionally composed as Chandra draws from her early worklife experiences working at a restaurant, in the probation office, and during her correctional placement in the Temporary Absence program.

Composing a Hope Around Being an Advocate

Chandra composes a story about being an advocate around a central thread of viewing each person as a human being, not just a label or a file. Typically, she practices advocacy subtly, involving the way she perceives and treats people, rather than the actions she takes on behalf of others. As an advocate, Chandra seeks to promote actions that empower clients to act on their own behalf, rather than always advocating for them.

I hope to be an advocate and in a roundabout way, I do that now. It frustrates me when a guy tries to establish credit, but he can't get credit because he has no credit! Or a guy tries to establish a future when he has a criminal record. I realize that breaking the law is a choice he made, but someone needs to give him the opportunity to start again. I saw those struggles with the guys. There was a client who got a labour job and they didn't ask for a criminal record check. He asked me, "Should I tell them that I'm on parole?" I knew his employer would probably fire him if he found out. So I said, "Why don't you let him get to know you as a worker, as someone who's always punctual and dependable. Then you can let him know". I'm not saying that they need to be deceitful, but sometimes our guys need the opportunity to prove who they are. It was the same when I got a new guy at the house. I liked to meet him first before I read his file. Sometimes if we heard a guy's story and found out the circumstance that led him down that path, it didn't support what he did, but it gave a bit of an understanding.

Chandra's hope to be an advocate is deeply informed by experiences in her personal life**.** One of Chandra's children has health concerns, which have taken their family on a life-changing journey. Through these experiences, she identifies learning many lessons, which influence the personal and professional aspects of her life, including her hopes regarding advocacy and viewing people as individuals, first.

At my child's school, they tried to give my child a diagnosis by telling me to read a book. When I spoke with the school, they said, "We want to hit you with a possible diagnosis of…". It was very unprofessional. I felt wronged because of the way they gave the diagnosis. If that was my child's diagnosis, they needed to tell me.

It was similar with our guys at the House, if they felt wronged, they had a voice. And when they didn't have a voice, I could help them by being that voice. I might not advocate to go out and do something specific, but I could remind them that just because someone says, "No" doesn't mean "No" is the only answer. For instance, one guy tried to get housing. They told him the place was ready, but after they knew he had a criminal record they said, "We want to see your criminal record". I thought, "Why would they need to see his record?" So we encouraged him to appeal the decision. I said, "They gave you the apartment and you paid the damage deposit. You have the right to an appeal". So, whether it's in my professional life or my personal life, I think people still have the right to be listened to.

Building on her stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) that shape her view of people as individuals with the capacity to change and grow, Chandra recognizes that people carry different stories from their early lives that inform their decision-making. Across personal and professional contexts, she advocates for people to have opportunities to reach their goals, even if the resources needed are different to achieve them.

I heard a guy talking about, "I can't do this, because I have this diagnosis," I questioned that belief, thinking, "My child has the same diagnosis. My child can do this, this, and this". So I asked, "Who told you that you couldn't do this?" He responded, "That's what the report says". I wanted the guy to know there's a difference between

what's written about someone and what they might be capable of. When we hear enough negatives about ourselves, we start believing them. When a guy hears, "You're a violent person," he's going to start believing it and he's going to start being it. Instead, I want to make sure that both my child and the guys have what they need to be successful.

Chandra's hope to be an advocate draws from threads of viewing each person as a human being, rather than a label or a file. Her self-story of advocacy is woven through the way she perceives and treats others, rather than the actions she takes on their behalf. Drawing from deeply meaningful and formative experiences with her child, Chandra composes a story of hope about the possibilities for individuals to journey towards their goals, with the supports they need.

Composing a Hope Around Being a Capable Professional

Many of Chandra's previous hopes for being and becoming weave through her larger hope to be a capable professional, including being a compassionate, respectful role model and advocate who is recognized for making a difference in the lives of others. Composing an increasingly complex pattern, she adds threads into her stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) as a capable professional, including protecting the safety of others and being responsive and adaptable to change. These threads draw from her correctional experiences, alongside protective and caring experiences as a mother and a reintegration counsellor.

I hope to be a capable professional. Part of my job was making sure that everyone was safe at the House. We had situations where one client made another client feel unsafe because of the offence he committed, like a sexual offence or family violence. It wasn't okay if someone felt unsafe or uncomfortable because of his offence. In the past,

clients spread the reason one guy was serving-time throughout the unit. In that case, the parole officer and I needed to make changes in the House. If that meant the instigator got his parole suspended or was transferred to another program because of his actions, then that's what we needed to do. Although clients chose to do an offence, they needed to feel safe and comfortable because they were gonna be in the House for a while. If they didn't feel comfortable, they could start making more poor choices. So safety was an important part of my day-to-day work at the House.

Weaving together threads emphasizing physical and emotional safety, Chandra highlights another meeting place between the personal and professional aspects of her worklife. Drawing from experiences in childhood and adolescence, she composes stories that oppose bullying and seek to create spaces of safety and welcome. Even as a child, Chandra described standing up for others who were bullied on the playground. In her worklife, she lives out these stories through her responsibilities to maintain safety within the House and the community. Once again, Chandra composes a worklife narrative where she is able to live out her deeply meaningful stories through her professional responsibilities.

Another thread in Chandra's hope to be a capable professional involves her openness to the diverse situations she experiences every day at work. She acknowledges and creates space for multiple layers of stories for clients and within the House, itself. Chandra tells herself stories about being a person who is responsive and willing to implement change. Her hope to be a capable professional weaves through both her responses to clients and her own actions when faced with novel and mundane situations.

I want to continue being a person that's adaptable. Our clients come from different backgrounds and have different needs. I need to respond to their differences and not treat them all the same. In the same way, I hope to be adaptable with all the different things that come at me at work. I see myself wearing so many different hats. I do the things that need to be done and role model that for clients and staff. I may act as the manager, but I'm not above picking up a broom. I don't want to get stuck thinking, "I'm the manager. That's beneath me". I want to be willing to implement change. After years of our Agency doing the community carnival the same way, we decided to make a bunch of changes, like finding a new venue and making new contacts. I also don't like rules that don't make sense. If I can't explain to a guy why we have a rule, then it doesn't make sense to me and maybe we need to change it.

Threads of leadership weave throughout Chandra's hope to be a capable professional. Over the years, her responsibilities for making decisions and supervising staff increase. Within these expectations, Chandra hopes to compose stories about being fair, respectful, and approachable. Alongside these hopes, she sought to remain wakeful to needs for balancing multiple responsibilities to staff, clients, CSC, and the Agency.

I hope to be fair and make sure that everyone's needs are met, to a point. I had a budget, but I also needed to make sure that my staff and the guys were happy. I knew that I had to balance those two things. So there were some constraints that dictated what I could do. But I hope that when I made those decisions, it was fair even though people may not have liked my decision sometimes. For example, staff wanted team building days, but team building days cost a lot for the unit. I got the importance, but I liked doing team building in different ways. Maybe I ordered pizza for the staff, just because. Or I included

the guys in Tim Hortons™ Camp day or a hot dog day, just because. I tried to recognize staff by saying, "You did a good job" or sending a little note to acknowledge, "You finished a project that you worked so hard on. I know it's important to you. Here's a gift card for lunch". I liked to do it that way. With the budget, I tried to find that fine balance.

I hope to be approachable, someone that people come to for support or advice. When clients came to me, sometimes I could be that person for them. But I needed to make sure they knew that they had a caseworker to go to. It was a balance and sometimes it depended on the guy. There were times where saying, "No", to a guy when he wanted to talk might have ended that relationship. He may not have been willing to come and talk to me in the future when he was having a rough day. So I tried to find that balance. To be approachable, I built working relationships built on respect. That's important to who I am. I hope that staff felt that they could talk to me. I tried to listen. I supported their decisions and I supervised their work. I had the final decision, but it was also important to make sure I didn't micromanage my staff. They made their own decisions.

One role model who inspires Chandra's stories to live by about being a leader is a manager who worked at the Agency. She describes experiences where she learned meaningful lessons about leadership alongside him, including the importance of recognizing and believing in others' potential. Threads regarding the powerful impact of others' belief in her potential weave throughout Chandra's stories, both encouraging her in its presence and harmful in its absence.

Leadership is my passion. It encompasses how I approach my responsibilities and how I worked with my staff. I am truly blessed because I had the fortune of working with a wonderful manager for a long period of time. He was an exceptional leader and I

learned to be a responsive, engaged leader under his guidance. He taught me about the importance of being approachable, admitting my mistakes, and being teachable. On the other hand, he also imparted that a leader had to be able to make decisions without consultation, when necessary. He showed me how to be a great leader by believing in me. At times, he believed in me a lot more than I believed in myself. When he put me in charge of the community carnival, I thought, "Are you nuts? Why would you ask me to do that?" His answer was, "Because you can do it." So I learned that from him.

Into her hope to be a capable professional, Chandra weaves previously discussed hopes about being a compassionate, respectful role model and advocate who is recognized for making a difference in the lives of others. Into these stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999), she adds threads of the stories she tells herself about being a capable professional, including protecting the safety of others, responsiveness, and adaptability. Chandra draws these threads from her correctional experiences, alongside protective and caring experiences from childhood, parenting, and work. Weaving these together, she composes stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) expressing who she hopes to be and become in relation to her work with individuals on parole and probation.

Representations of Who I Hope to Be

Over the course of the inquiry, Chandra's image representing who she hopes to be and become in relation to her work changes. Initially, her image tells a story about outward recognition and success. However, within this image Chandra holds onto deeply-meaningful threads about the importance of flexibility to prioritize her family's needs.

In the future, I see myself in a big office with a briefcase, where I can look out and have a beautiful landscape. I could easily go with the government if I wanted to, but it's not all about dollars. Sometimes money makes a difference but flexibility is more important with the needs of my child. Flexibility outweighs whatever zeros are behind the numbers on my pay cheque.

However, after leaving the Agency, Chandra shares uncertainty about representing who she hopes to be in her work. She describes feeling very unsure about her career plans. As we talk, I reflect my observation that she maintains hope by returning to her belief in a greater purpose and plan for her life, even though the details remain unclear. She agrees and we compose a story about hope in the midst of uncertainty.

The phrase, "Everything happens for a reason" supports my hope, especially during difficult or uncertain times. It's such an important statement for me, going through my child's hospitalization, the transition of leaving the Agency, and trying to figure out who I am and what I want to be when I grow up! I always thought I'd leave the Agency for a better paying job; instead I left because it's healthier for me. Believing that there's always a reason helps me to make some sense out of confusing situations like that. Even if I don't know how things will work out, it helps me to move forward.

Reflections on Who I Hope to Be: Life, Work, and Balance

Reflecting on who she hopes to be, Chandra seeks to compose a story to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) about worklife balance. However, she acknowledges the tensions inherent in her attempts to compose a story of balance, as she feels pulled between the demands of her work and her family. Once again, the discussion of worklife

balance offers an authentic meeting place where Chandra composes her story, weaving together meaningful aspects from her personal and professional contexts.

With the work we do, we need to make sure that we're healthy and balanced. It can be hard to do that. I see the burnout that can come from our work, so I think it's really important to have that balance. It's really important to look out for one another and care for one another at work. With some of the stories we hear from the guys and some of the work we do with them, it can be hard not to keep thinking about it. We get excited about their victories and we can get saddened by the choices that they make. Or we see how they try so hard for something and they don't get it. Although it's a professional relationship, we know these guys for six months to one or two years. So it can be hard not to recognize and feel those ups and downs with them.

I have three kids and I reviewed all the guys that came into the House. When I reviewed the guys' files, I needed to be aware, especially if the file content hit close to home. If there were children involved, I made sure to read that file in the first part of the day or I talked about it with colleagues. Sometimes the files were horrendous. We got a lot of case details from the court process and the police reports. It was hard to read. But we also saw the perpetrator of the crime and heard his story. So it was hard, at times, not to think about all those things. When I went home to my family, I looked at my kids differently. I wouldn't say I was an overprotective mom, but my parenting was shaped by my work; I was aware. The world wasn't a trusting place, so I needed to make sure that my kids were equipped with the knowledge, skills, and tools to be safe.

Through her narrative, Chandra creates an authentic meeting place between the personal and the professional contexts of her worklife. Acknowledging her hope to be the

same person, across different situations, she describes openness to different career possibilities where she can live out her hopes for being and becoming. Alongside these hopes, Chandra also shares honestly about the challenges of being both a mother and a reintegration counsellor who carries the weight and responsibility of living with the often horrific and painful stories she encountered through her work.

Reflections

Beginning with a number of formative experiences in her early life, Chandra composes hopes that she seeks to live-out across the personal and professional contexts of her life. Learning through experiences like raising a child with health concerns and hearing the complex, multi-faceted stories of her clients, Chandra composes hopes to be compassionate, recognized for making a difference, a role model, respectful, an advocate, and a capable professional. The stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) she weaves from her hopes for being and becoming encompass not only her work with individuals on parole and probation, but all areas of her life. In her own words, Chandra stories the worklife that she continues to compose:

A new staff asked me, "How long have you worked here?" At that time, I worked there seventeen years and he responded, "And you still talk like this?" Maybe he thought I was nuts because I was still positive and passionate, but if you've found something you believe in and you enjoy, everything fits. It was easy, because this is who I am. I could be out in the community and I was still the same person. If I saw something unfair going on in the streets, I spoke out against it. My belief that everyone has a right to be respected and safe didn't end when I left the House. It's part of who I am, at work or anywhere. I knew that even if I didn't work there, I'd still be this person. If my career changed, this is

still who I'm all about. I haven't had much experience outside of this field, but if I did, I'd hope that these qualities would come with me. Because this is who I was before: compassionate, approachable, and an advocate.

Chapter 6: Paul's Narrative Account

"There's a calling to go out into the darkness and search for the lost and the broken".

Paul worked with individuals on parole and probation for thirteen years, primarily as a reintegration chaplain. Sharing the stories that compose who he hopes to be and become in relation to his work, he identifies threads weaving from his childhood to the present day, especially his faith. Holistically, Paul seeks to live out who he hopes to be consistently, as a whole person engaging with many life contexts.

Paul and I met for numerous meetings and conversations over the course of the inquiry. Through these conversations and feedback on narrative drafts, he helped me to understand his experiences and the threads connecting his multi-faceted hopes and identity-making.

Our first meeting takes place in Paul's office in June 2011. His excitement is palpable as we discuss the inquiry, including my interests in the area of hope and my background as a reintegration counsellor. I find myself building on his energy, excited to connect with such a passionate participant. Early in our conversations, Paul shares openness to change in his career. We discuss how our conversations offer him the opportunity to reflect on who he is and what he hopes for in his worklife. In December 2012, Paul shares his decision to leave his job as a reintegration chaplain to become the executive director of an organization that nurtures hope, health, and transformation by empowering neighbors to help neighbors. As we meet in January 2013, Paul discusses how his new position offers opportunities to fulfill aspects of his hoped for identity, including making decisions and inspiring social action.

A Brief Introduction: Stories of Learning the Work

Paul entered his work as a reintegration counsellor in 1999 at a faith-based organization dedicated to building community, growing hope, and supporting change for individuals affected by poverty. Beginning in the drop-in centre working with individuals facing addictions, homelessness, and mental health issues, Paul later moved into the community chaplaincy program. He describes this as a formative time where he learned about corrections, working with sexual offenders, and his identity as a chaplain. With these threads, Paul composes a worklife as a reintegration counsellor.

I got to know a lot of individuals with active addictions who were involved in street life. Most had histories in the justice system, for either themselves or their family. In 2000, I began being mentored by our community correctional chaplain who worked with federal inmates being released in the community. We oversaw a program called COSA, Circles of Support and Accountability, which brought support around high-risk, warrant-expiry[24] sex-offenders being released in the community. I met with these fellows, supported and identified volunteers, and did some of the training. So I was really on a learning curve as my predecessor mentored me into these roles.

Shortly after that, I became the intern-chaplain for a small, federal prison in downtown Edmonton. The community correctional chaplaincy creates continuity of care from the institution into the community. From 2000-2002, I got my feet wet. It was a great place to learn. We only had thirty inmates and it was minimum security, so we weren't dealing with a lot of BS like the larger prisons. It was a very supportive environment to cut my teeth and figure out what it meant to work with a guy who did eighteen years in prison. Then, from 2005 until 2012, I grew from being a community chaplain to the director of our community correctional services program.

[24] Warrant expiry is the date a criminal sentence officially ends.

Paul reflects on the correctional-world he engaged in as a reintegration chaplain, including learning about offenders, barriers, and crime-cycle patterns. Through his experiences working alongside parolees he witnesses stories that deepen and challenge his understanding of the theoretical concepts and labels he learned during his formal[25] education. This situated, experiential learning adds nuance and deeper meaning to the stories Paul tells himself and others regarding working with individuals on parole and probation.

Working with Corrections involved understanding the dynamics around offending. I gained a better grasp of offending behavior and how it came about. I learned what sexual offending was and how crime-cycles were triggered for sexual offenders. I also learned what somebody faced when they came out of prison after two, ten, or fifteen years and made their way back into the community. It took me a couple of years to understand what it meant to walk with somebody as they transitioned back into the community. Saying employment is a barrier is so generic. Walking alongside somebody who couldn't find a job because he's a sex-offender, I learned that journey wasn't just about not finding a job. That journey was about marginalization and rejection. And I came to understand how long a journey that could be.

It also took me a couple of years to understand our vision as a program and as a non-profit agency. Our vision was to build safe and healthy communities by supporting those leaving prison through engaging the local faith community. It wasn't just the inmates I dealt with. I asked, "How do I engage faith communities to come alongside and support these guys". It took me a long time to figure out how to enter into that dialogue.

[25] As in chapter 4, I use the word *formal* to distinguish structured, academic educational experiences from everyday, educational life experiences.

For the first few years, I climbed onto a soap box and screamed, "You need to provide a place for these guys! They need acceptance and support. They can't make the journey on their own". But I realized that screaming wasn't the best way to communicate. After a couple of years, I figured out that I needed to enter into a real interesting dialogue.

Describing his early learning as a reintegration chaplain, Paul shares his process of growth and maturation as a professional. During this time, he is inspired by his organization's vision to question the status quo and instigate broader social change. Clandinin (2006) notes that individual narratives are situated within and alongside larger cultural, social, and organization narratives. Similarly, Paul composes a worklife identity that draws from his interactions with larger correctional, social, and religious narratives.

Shifting Storylines

Over his career, Paul notes a shift in his focus. Early in his worklife, he primarily assists individuals with community reintegration. As time progresses, leadership roles emerge which shift the way he allocates his time to higher-level, organizational and administrative responsibilities. This shifting storyline offers previously unforeseen possibilities for Paul to compose his stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) through addressing client-barriers in broader, systemic ways. Paul embraces his emerging identity as a way to compose new potential stories for individuals on parole and probation.

In my journey with Corrections, I went from the streets, to the prisons, back to the community, and into the role of a director. In 2007, my interests moved towards wanting to address the bigger problems. There was a slow shift in my job from working with the guys day-to-day into a combination of administrative and organizational duties, with a

systems perspective. I wanted a position where I could access and build networks to address the larger issues that will hopefully help more offenders succeed. Becoming a director on the leadership team, I carried responsibilities not just for the Correctional program, but for the whole organization. I began asking myself, "How do our actions in Corrections integrate with the organization's work and vice versa?"

Paul identifies three areas of focus as his interests shift towards addressing larger systemic issues: housing, employment, and mentoring. Drawing threads from his years working individually, he weaves a story about how these areas consistently impact reintegration for parolees. Rather than addressing these areas with each client, Paul composes a new, passionate story about becoming a person who creates broader changes that decrease barriers and facilitate access for parolees.

There's strong research done on the connection between homelessness and recidivism. With some guys, half of the battle was getting them into stable housing, especially if they had mental health issues and sex-offences. I was invited to give voice to parolees on a housing committee with the federal, provincial, and municipal governments, because they slip between a lot of cracks. I started wondering, "How do we get proactive and do the assessments so they go straight from the prison to an apartment, without a stop on the street?" I developed a comprehensive provincial strategy to build those supports wherever they were released so they stayed in the community. Looking at the whole province definitely took me outside of the viewpoint of the individual.

Employment was another huge piece of success during reintegration. It wasn't just the money and paying the rent, it was the self-worth and the sense of belonging that came with being employed. Employment and housing were self-sustainable; they went

hand-in-hand. Our organization had an offshoot social-enterprise. While they were with the social-enterprise, they had a support worker who helped them deal with job or life issues to keep them employed. We targeted former-inmates who were lower functioning or needed more supports to gain the skills that made them employable.

Mentoring was another big part of making the transition back into the community. It was important to have somebody to walk that journey with them and not many people leaving prison had positive role-models. Mentors were there to help with accountability. A mentor could stand back and say, "I'm seeing these behaviors rising up and I need to challenge you on them". And volunteers, including mentors, carried more power with this population than we did. Volunteers gave their time because they cared; we got paid for it! When our volunteers showed up Friday or Saturday night for groups, the guys really appreciated it. There was a lot of power behind those actions.

Because faith communities play a key role in mentoring, part of the reintegration chaplaincy was giving our vision to the faith communities. We provided the support, resources, and training for churches to mentor. I believe our churches need to step up and say, "You have a place to belong with us". But we didn't want to enter these relationships naively. We talked about what it might look like theologically and practically to invite these people into a church community. Theologically, it was important that we connected mentoring with their faith, so they could grasp how being involved was part of living out their faith. Practically, we needed to discuss how it might look to have an inmate come and be a part of their worship community. So incorporating volunteers was part of our vision to involve the community in the reintegration process.

Paul weaves together threads drawing from his experiences working with housing, employment, mentoring, and community into a story of successful reintegration. Although he describes the shift to higher-level responsibilities as primarily positive, he identifies tensions within the change. Paul notes limitations in his time and abilities, which do not allow him to meet all the needs that he encounters. However, he seems able to weave the tensions between his desire to help clients individually and create support at an organizational-level into the pattern of his shifting worklife. Paul seemed able to accept this shift in his allocation of time and energy because it allowed him to draw new threads of systemic-level helping into who he hopes to be and become.

I felt tension as I pulled away from the healing side of my work to more of the administrative side. Cerebrally, I knew the payoff was that things would actually be better. But there was still a draw, because I wanted to see change in people. I knew putting more time and energy into the administrative side allowed more healing to take place, but I liked being present with the clients. I liked doing our group and one-on-one meetings. Although administrative activities were more energy-sucking than energy-giving, they had to happen. I had responsibilities for myself and the two staff that relied on me. The more time I spent in structure and development, the more time the other chaplains could give to working with people. I couldn't respond the way I used to, which felt negative but wasn't necessarily a bad thing. It reinforced my boundaries, but at the same time, I couldn't be with the guys in the midst of a crisis. It forced me to prioritize. I was no longer a chaplain with some director responsibilities; I was a director with chaplain's responsibilities. So, I definitely moved out of the chaplaincy-first mindset.

Over the course of his worklife as a reintegration chaplain, Paul shifts from working primarily one-on-one with clients to higher-level responsibilities and activities. This shifting story away from work directly with clients offers him possibilities to address individual barriers in broader, systemic ways. Paul balances tensions between individual and systemic work to continue composing his stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999).

Early Stories: How I Got Involved

Paul relates stories influencing his choice to work with marginalized individuals, specifically individuals on parole and probation. Drawing from numerous formative experiences in adolescence and young adulthood, Paul weaves storied threads of caring, support, and accountability to embody and communicate his hopes and belief in change to others. His faith and desire to see God existing *in the darkness* strongly shape the ongoing story of who he hopes to be and become as a reintegration chaplain.

I felt very comfortable working with this population, because I went down a lot of the same roads and was involved in a lot of the same stuff as these guys. I came out of it, but I knew I didn't do it alone. I was a pretty heavy drug-user as a kid. The first time I got high was in Grade Six. So, I was a dope smoker for most of my teens and into acid, alcohol, and a bit of cocaine when I got older. I was very much into the drug culture.

In my twenties, I slowly got back into school and did a bunch of things to change my life. While I was making those changes, my dad volunteered at faith-based, non-profit downtown. One day he asked if I could help him fix a few doors and build some stairs. I said, "Why not?" It was time to hang out with dad and pretend we're men and build stuff. At some point, I started going to church again and they needed a group to prepare

dinner at the organization. So I arranged the dinner and went down a couple of times. That's where I first met the Correctional Chaplain.

At the same time, I was doing a Sociology degree with an emphasis on Criminology. Doing my Sociology degree and volunteering in the inner city wasn't planned. One day, the Correctional Chaplain came up to me and asked, "Would you be interested in a part-time job? I'm starting a drop-in so the guys from prison have a safe place to watch hockey on Saturday nights". It was a really good parallel, doing Sociology and being immersed in the whole inner-city culture.

Paul creates a worklife reflecting the growth and learning gained through his life experiences. Considering how his adolescent experiences inform his decision to work with this population, he emphasizes his realization that dramatic life change is possible with support. As such, he seeks to offer his story of hope to others. His hope and belief in transformative life-change are inextricably linked to his faith**.** One thread that runs through Paul's narrative account is his desire to see God working in the darkest situations.

My own spiritual journey of faith, alongside wrestling with theological issues and justice and how they fit together were key elements that got me involved in this work. It also influenced why I wanted to be an agent of healing for the guys. I encountered God in some really crappy moments in my life and I had to know that the God that I followed could live in the darkest of places. To me, those darkest places were our prison system and our streets. Seeing God at work in the messiness of a high-risk sex-offender's life or a woman who worked the streets for twenty years was really important for me.

I remember one offender with the COSA program who I had breakfast with every week. At the same time, I knew a lady who was becoming a chaplain. She asked if she could meet "Jim" to hear his experiences. Jim was hesitant, but he agreed so we all went for breakfast. She shared her story about being a survivor of childhood sexual abuse while sitting next to a fellow who was a prolific sex-offender. She shared about her faith and a sculpture of a globe with cracks in it and a light shining inside of it. And she talked about how the sculpture really spoke to her faith: God's light shining through this whole dark, broken world that she lived in with the cracks that showed. And he sat there describing how God walked him through the forgiveness-factor of all the offences he did. It was a very profound moment, as I listened to both of them relate to God and this sense of being loved, despite all the stuff that they carried. I just sat in awe, listening. For me, that was the whole idea of finding God in those places.

Another event was with a fellow who was in prison for two really brutal rapes. I did the parole hearing with him because I'd been working with him and I was going to support him in the community. I listened to the victim tell her gut-wrenching story of what it was like to be raped. It was horrific. And my heart poured out to her as a victim and as the father of daughters and just everything. But I quickly recognized that when she looked at me, she identified me on the side of the guy that raped her. That was really hard, because I wanted to be back with her, walking with her in her healing. To complicate the story, I found out how bad the offender's life had been. He was given up by his mother into foster care. And when he met his real mom, she told him that she tried to kill him while she was pregnant by overdosing on heroine. So he lived with the realization that, "My mom didn't want me and she actually tried to kill me". He had FASD and his dad

killed himself. His story reminded me that the distinctions between victim and offender weren't clean. It took me a long time to reflect on what it meant for me as a chaplain and the work I did with offenders. The people we worked with in Corrections contained both a victim and an offender. They were just as broken as the people they've broken and at some point we needed to break the cycle. This guy was cared for as an offender, but nobody stepped in to care for him as a victim for all the stuff he suffered through. So I realized, as much as I wanted to care for the victim behind me in the parole hearing, I had another victim sitting beside me that needed caring for too. In those moments, I knew there was something important about this work and recognizing everyone's humanity.

Part of what made these pivotal moments was that I had to understand my identity as a chaplain. I was there to care for him. And there was this automatic repulsion: "I don't want to be associated with the people that nobody likes". It was like in Grade Two, I wanted to hang out with the cool kids on the other side of the playground. I wanted people to know, "That's not me. I'm a nice person". I had to sort out my own pride and ask myself, "What do I want to be identified with?" I couldn't sit with the victim from the parole hearing and say, "I'm working with your rapist because I don't want him to hurt anybody else". I came to understand it was ok if she saw me that way. I had to cross that bridge and say, "I work with people who hurt people". Those were the things where I had to figure out how to meet God in the midst of the darkness. God was there with this young guy who was just as broken as the girls that he hurt. And I do believe there's a calling to go out into the darkness and search for the lost and the broken. I believe we're called to be agents of healing.

Drawing meaning from deeply influential, lived experiences, Paul weaves a profound sense of calling and purpose into his stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Building from significant life experiences, he develops a strong sense of hope in the possibility for change, which he seeks to foster in others. As such, he continues to acknowledge the personal threads of caring, support, accountability, and faith that contribute to his professional work, illustrating the mutually influential relationship between these areas, allowing him to compose a coherent sense of worklife identity (Carr, 1986).

Representing the Work

When asked to reflect on his work as a reintegration chaplain, Paul identifies the concept of hope as a key symbol. For Paul, hope and faith are intimately interwoven throughout his worklife stories. He stories himself as an agent of hope, offering support and sharing the possibility of growth and change for the individuals with whom he works.

In chaplaincy, whether it's in the hospital or the prison, our first job is finding out what people hope for. Hope is the key ingredient for any population who's really at-risk or marginalized. I fostered hope in people who had given up hope. It was amazing to watch what happened when somebody got hope again. Hope was a sex-offender who thought it was hopeless that anybody would want to be with him, finding out that he could make friends and find belonging. Without hope, there was no movement. So hope is one phrase that represents my work.

Who Do I Hope to Be and Become?

Through his worklife stories, Paul identifies threads from his faith and adolescent experiences connecting the personal and professional contexts of his life, which inform

who he hopes to be as a reintegration chaplain. He shares the stories that compose his hope to be an innovator, a healer, a decision-maker, a strong leader, and someone who is compassionate, wiser, sensitive, connected, and successful. Although I discuss these hopes in separate sections, they weave together to create a coherent worklife identity (Carr, 1986).

Stories of Hopes to Be an Innovator

Paul identifies a strong hope to be an innovator. After working alongside individuals for several years, his interests shift towards enacting change on broader, systemic levels. Drawing from both experience and research, Paul seeks to compose a worklife story about himself as a person who promotes effective action. Utilizing the language of his faith, he describes his hope to be a prophet, speaking truth from a place of caring to instigate change.

I hope to be an innovator and find new ways of doing things. I hope to be a catalyst for change, when I see things that aren't right. One of the reasons I got involved in this work is because I want to see change in people's lives, but I realize there's a change of culture that needs to take place first. We need a change in our communities. Sometimes, I feel like a salmon swimming upstream against the current, thinking, "These decisions coming from Ottawa go against what is shown to work for offenders". For instance, there's a piece of legislation called the Truth in Sentencing act.[26] *Part of the legislation looks at getting rid of statutory release*[27] *so that offenders earn their parole. On the surface this sounds good, because people should have to earn their freedom. But*

[26] The Truth in Sentencing Act, or Bill C-25, alters parole eligibility by ensuring that inmates serve the time period for which they are sentenced and limits the discretion of sentencing judges to give credit for time spent in incarceration prior to conviction.

[27] Most federal inmates are automatically released after serving two-thirds of their sentence if they have not been released on parole.

when people get held until their warrant expiry date rather than being released into community supervision, it removes safe-guards and causes more problems than it solves.

The push for longer sentencing is another issue we're challenging. What's the philosophical stance under longer sentencing? Rehabilitation? Retribution? If the government spends $150,000 a year to incarcerate somebody, are they getting their money's worth? Could we spend that money on mental health or addictions, which are a lot of the things that get people into prison? Is there a better way to do this? These are some of the questions I ask while trying to be an innovator and a catalyst for change.

Within the chaplaincy, I hope to continue growing in the ability to speak prophetically. Speaking prophetically involves seeing an injustice and speaking out. It involves challenging the status quo when it's unjust. For example, I question why so many people with mental health problems end up in prisons when they really need to be in a therapeutic setting. I disagree with that practice and someone has to speak up.

Drawing from his experiences with his organization and the small, minimum security prison, Paul stories himself as an innovator. After witnessing the significant impact, either positive or negative, that housing has on his clients' lives and reintegration, Paul joins a housing committee to advocate for the correctional population. Rather than maintaining the status quo, his experiences working alongside marginalized individuals inspire him to enact changes to create alternate, possible stories.

It is interesting to note that, unlike the other participants, Paul does not begin his exploration of who he hopes to be and become in relation to his work with the qualities of compassion or caring. However, returning to his shifting storyline, his emphasis on being an innovator fits with his worklife story about himself as a catalyst for change. It may

also reflect a gendered-approach to identity-making, as Paul is the sole male in this inquiry. Re-examining masculine traits and strengths, Levant (1995) notes that men tend towards demonstrating *action empathy*, an inclination to translate empathic, caring responses into instrumental actions. Similarly, Noddings (2013) also notes that action "directed toward the welfare, protection, or enhancement of the cared-for" (p. 23) is often a natural outgrowth of caring. This action-oriented approach to caring seems to fit Paul's focus on taking action, like informing policy, to facilitate change.

Paul expresses his hopes through action, actively and intentionally drawing from his experiences to compose who he hopes to be and become. Freire (2004), an educational philosopher, writes, "The idea that hope alone will transform the world… is an excellent route to hopelessness, pessimism, and fatalism" (p. 2). Instead, Freire argues that hope needs to be anchored in change-oriented action and struggle. Addressing hope as a concept for social change, Rorty (1999) notes that tension between desire and expectation makes hope transformative by influencing individuals to act and engaging them as participants in the world. Similarly, Paul weaves threads from his hope and belief in the possibility of change into intentional actions to create social change.

Stories of Hopes to Be a Healer

Once again, Paul places his caring and compassion into an active, helping role as a healer. Within his hope, he draws from his own stories of healing as he hopes to be a healer for others. Paul acknowledges the mutuality inherent in his helping relationships. Offering healing to others, he views his work as both personal redemption and an opportunity for self-healing.

I hope to be a healer. Part of the reason I got into this work is to help people in healing processes. I hope to see them grow and deal with the issues, like grief or addictions that contributed to their behaviour. I want to help them to get on with their lives, in whatever form that takes. I used to label this quality, "The dysfunctional rescuer," because it feels like you're working on your own issues by helping others. For a while, I did this work because of a sense of my own redemption. I was working out stuff that I did as a wayward youth and young adult. There was a sense that if I did something good, I could redeem some of the crap I did. In some ways, doing the work wasn't about them, it was about me. I don't want to use it as a negative term, but there is something about working out our own issues as we work with a marginalized population. There is something about being there with people, jumping right into their crisis, and acting as an agent of healing.

Speaking developmentally, Paul shares how understanding and working through personal and professional issues grows over time. As an adolescent and young man, he wrestled with painful challenges, including drug use and isolation. Paul draws on threads from his interactions with family, an influential teacher, and God. In each of these relationships, he experiences the power of being loved and acknowledged as a human being despite his mistakes. In turn, Paul offers and receives healing through helping others.

Recognizing the mutually influential relationship between the personal and professional contexts of his life, Paul brings self-awareness to the ways he is nourished by his work. Although the term *dysfunctional rescuer* may possess negative connotations, he does not use it as an inherently negative descriptor. Rather, Paul uses it to raise

awareness that helping others may not be a completely selfless act. He acknowledges the complex and multifaceted nature of co-composing stories with other individuals, alongside the process of being and becoming within his work.

Stories of Hopes to Be Compassionate

Paul's hope to be compassionate is relational, weaving together threads of accepting others and creating spaces where people can belong. In addition, he demonstrates compassion by valuing others enough to be present and authentic in his interactions. Paul shares a deep sense of empathy for individuals on the margins of society. Common psychological definitions of empathy involve the capacity to take on others' perspectives by understanding their needs and situations as separate from oneself, combined with emotional arousal from witnessing others' emotional arousal (deWaal, 2008). Paul describes the origins of his compassion and empathy for marginalized individuals emerging from his own childhood and adolescence experiences of ostracism.

I hope to be compassionate in my work. I hope that came through in the work that I did with staff, volunteers, our community, and the men and women living in prison. I want to be someone who can enter into authentic relationships with others. Whether it's a five-minute discussion or a five-year relationship, I want to be present for people. When I sit with someone, I want them to know I'm with them. And I hope the people I work with can say, "He cares for us. Even when he gives us shit, we know he does it because he cares". I want them to succeed and I want them to know I'm still in their corner.

Understanding my own pain as a teen allows me to be compassionate and empathic to marginalized people. When I was a youth, our family moved a couple of times. I was acutely aware of feeling ostracised, especially when we moved from the city

to a small town. I was an awkward thirteen-year-old who stood out in a small town where everybody knew everybody. I got in a lot of trouble and a lot of fights. I also didn't fit in my family, because they were deeply-rooted in church life and, by this point, I was a heavy dope-smoker. So, I didn't fit in my family, I didn't fit in the church, and I didn't fit in the community where I lived. The only place I belonged was with the dope-smokers. Looking back, I think that understanding that I didn't fit drew me to this population. I easily identified with the inmates' sense of being an outsider. I think that's why I have profound compassion for some of the guys I've worked with, because I had no idea where in the world they could belong. There's one guy I worked with who was a sex-offender and cognitively lower functioning. He held a job at a coffee shop, mainly because the owner had compassion on him. The only people he counted as friends were the police officers in the high-risk unit, his probation officer, and me. Talking to him broke my heart. I wondered even in prayer, "Where does this guy fit?" He had all these knocks against him and I just had compassion for him. Everybody needs a place to belong and to be part of something.

Paul identifies the significance of people who believed in him and showed compassion in his own life transformation. He shares his desire for others to know that he believes in them and is cheering them on, composing a story that mirrors the compassion he experienced in his life journey. The balance of accountability and support Paul brings to his working relationships weave together with these threads of compassion and caring.

Part of this hope comes from having people in my life that saw good in me, even when I was being a little shit. They believed in me and that helped me to see past the guys' actions and see there's a good side to them too. There was a teacher who ran the

alternative school I attended. He always treated me with respect. He always gave me time and listened and was very patient. He called me out on things, saying something about my actions, like "You shouldn't have been out doing acid. You needed to be at school today". He wasn't giving me hell about doing acid, he just said, "That decision impacted you being at school today." My parents were a huge part of the team too. I knew they loved me, even when I was being an ass. They were always in my corner. There were times when they made tough decisions, but I knew they'd always be there.

Coming into this work, I realized how important that compassion and support was because I worked with people who never had anybody in their corner fighting for them. The more I worked with people on the streets or in prison, I realized how important it was to have somebody saying, "I'm here for you. You need to keep going". I really try to be a cheerleader for the people I work with. They were labelled and told that they're worthless; I want to give them the confidence and the knowledge that they can do things. When they couldn't believe in themselves, I believed in them, for them. And that's part of who I hope to be.

Paul's hope to be compassionate weaves together relational threads of acceptance, belonging, authenticity, and being present. Drawing from his own experiences of ostracism, he composes a story about himself as a compassionate professional. Bringing a deep sense of empathy balanced with accountability to his working relationships, Paul seeks to embody the qualities of compassionate support he received from significant people in his own life.

Stories of Hopes to Be a Decision-Maker

Although descriptions of Paul's hopes to be and become are broken into separate sections, overlap is expected because he weaves them together to form a coherent (Carr, 1986) worklife-identity. His hope to be a decision-maker overlaps with his hopes to be an innovator and a strong leader. The power and responsibility that Paul wields as an organizational leader and decision-maker support his ability to innovate and act as a catalyst for change. In addition, there are inherent leadership qualities within his decision-making role.

I want to be within the powers making the decisions. There's part of me that, maybe selfishly, wants to be at the top. I worked solo as a community chaplain for six years. I made all the decisions for the program. Also, I sat on the leadership team of our organization, so I was involved in the decision-making for the whole organization too. I liked thinking at that level and helping to create and structure vision. This may be a stereotype, but sometimes having a male-persona creates the need to climb the career ladder. I can't be static; I need to drive further. Sometimes I wonder whether I need to challenge that drive and ask myself, "What's wrong with just being a really good chaplain? Why do I need to be part of the decision-making?" I kept my work balanced by asking, "What's my vision?" The ideas of innovation and prophetic voice drove my sense of leadership, because being a leader is a great vehicle for change.

Paul identifies tensions within this hope between his ego and a sense of humility. This tension seems driven by the acknowledgement that Paul enjoys status and power, alongside faith-informed values that emphasize humility. Simultaneously, he recognizes that taking on a higher level of responsibility and authority as a decision-maker gives him the ability to enact positive change. Paul's hope to be a decision-maker rests alongside

his hopes to be an innovator and a strong leader, weaving together to compose a coherent worklife identity. To address the tensions that emerge in his hope to be a decision-maker, Paul focuses on the vision and purpose of his power and status.

Stories of Hopes to Be a Strong Leader

Paul composes a hope to be a strong leader, drawing from his experiences as an administrator, a visionary, and a supervisor. His understanding denotes a process with being and becoming qualities, as he already possesses leadership skills and hopes to continue growing within them. This hope grows from Paul's experiences, both working as a reintegration chaplain and from formative experiences of being led by others.

I hope to continue becoming a stronger leader. I want to continue developing my leadership skills. Being a strong leader involves developing my administrative abilities; that's my weak part. I went into this type of work, because I can connect with people and network really well. Now, I need to look at creating measurable outcomes, developing systems, and data tracking. Part of leading is being able to look at the whole picture and not just one end of it. I need to balance the amount of time we spend with people and the amount of time we spend developing things that help us to work with people.

Being a strong leader means continuing to be a really good supervisor and helping my staff and volunteers to grow. I want to learn more about teaching and mentoring volunteers and staff to grow and develop their skills. I also want to learn how to develop their passion for this work, their own growth, and their understanding of this work as a ministry, not just a job. Being a Christian ministry, there's a sense of a calling to this work. I question what it means to wrestle through that calling. There are situations

that aren't just emotional; they also present theological issues that we wrestle with. I wonder, "How do we work through those issues? And how can I help them to do that?"

Paul notes how he draws some of his motivation to be a strong leader from role-models in his own life. Weaving storied threads from his experiences of being mentored, Paul composes a story to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999), drawing from witnessing the lives of other leaders.

Some of my hopes are inspired by people who mentored me. The people who led me well had the biggest impact on my work. I see qualities that I aspire to and want to shape in my life in those leaders. The chaplain who initially mentored me into Corrections took time with me and let me process things. He really believed in me. As he transitioned from being the community chaplain and gave me that role, he allowed me to fit it to who I was. He allowed me to work out of my strengths instead of his strengths. When I remember conversations I had with him and others who led and encouraged me, I hope to incorporate my own style with the principles I learned from them.

Paul hopes to be a strong leader with administrative and supervisory qualities who enacts change. His descriptions possess both being and becoming qualities, denoting a process of growth between his current skills and his hopes for ongoing development. Paul's hope draws from influential experiences of being led by strong leaders, which he draws from to compose his own stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999).

Stories of Hopes to Be Wiser

Paul's hope to be wiser possesses evident temporal qualities. He tells himself stories about being wise that involve taking time and developing patience, both aspects that encourage reflection before action. In some ways, Paul's hope to become wiser

offers an opportunity to temper his passion and energy with careful consideration. Practically, he shares about learning to make wise decisions regarding allocating time and resources by creating professional boundaries.

I hope to be wiser, especially about when I decide to speak. Often I'll verbalize things before I've thought them through. When I sat in large discussions, I needed to monitor myself and what I added into the conversation. I tried to figure out how to become more patient in the process. Even when I want to see results quick, developing patience helps me become wiser.

Sometimes I have to slow others down and pull them back because we're not ready to proceed. I need to figure out how to do that for myself and develop stronger boundaries. As a dysfunctional rescuer, there's a tendency to say, "Yes" too quickly, because we're always trying to help people out. If I'm going to mentor staff to set boundaries, I need to be able to do it too. I don't want my staff burning out, so I work with them to acknowledge that they have a limited capacity. So I commit to slowing down. I want to create time for my staff and myself to plan, to make the right decisions, and not overwhelm ourselves. I want to identify our strengths as a team and as an organization and build on those. We're not able to meet everyone's needs, so let's not pretend that we can. So I want to take time to develop wisdom and boundaries too.

After three decades of contemporary wisdom research, no widely recognized definition of the concept of wisdom exists (Bergsma & Ardelt, 2012). However, in a study investigating potential tensions between wisdom and happiness, wisdom is operationalized as "an integration of cognitive, reflective, and compassionate personality characteristics" (Bergsma & Ardelt, 2012, p. 483). The *cognitive* dimension characterizes

a deep desire to know truths, with particular emphasis on intrapersonal and interpersonal matters and the acceptance of ambiguity. The *reflective* dimension draws attention to self-examination, self-awareness, and self-insight. Finally, the *compassionate* dimension is characterized by sympathetic caring and motivation to foster well-being in others. Paul composes his hope to be wiser to highlight his desire to slow down and reflect wisely on the implications of his actions. As such, slowing down seems to offer him opportunities to engage with these cognitive, reflective, and compassionate qualities as he composes his stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). As Paul becomes wiser, he hopes to role-model these wise, sustainable worklife behaviors for others. His approach underscores the balance between careful consideration and passion, which he is learning to foster.

Stories of Hopes to Remain Sensitive and Connected

Paul illustrates the deeply personal impact of his work. Storying desensitization as a protective mechanism in his work, he shares his hopes to remain sensitive and connected to the impact of his clients' actions. Over time, Paul notes that his ability to be sensitive and connected shifts. Distance and sensitivity/connection seem to act as opposite ends of a spectrum, with Paul travelling within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) space of time, relationships, and place.

I hope to become less desensitized to what clients have done. It's like I heard the stories too many times. I heard them and I didn't even flinch. After a while, they just became stories. When I did risk assessments to determine programming for parolees, I asked them very logistical, detail-oriented questions. There was no sense of the reality of the event. And yet I had these lucid moments, especially on the two-hour drive from

Bowden: "I can't believe he did that to his daughter". But as he told me, I thought, "He's just another sex-offender". The faces and the names changed, but the stories mingled among each other. Staying connected actually makes me a better chaplain, because I can keep the clients rooted in that reality too. If I don't attach any meaning to their actions or if I don't express the damage done by those acts, how do I help them understand the full implication of their actions? At times, I was shocked because they had no connection to the horrific events they perpetrated. So I hope to redevelop my sensitivity and ability to connect with those realities.

There's definitely a shift in my level of sensitivity over time. When I started working in this field, I couldn't believe the stories! At some point, I disconnected because I couldn't hold all the grief and suffering. But, there's got to be a place to really feel the impact of the situation, both for the offender and for the victim. There's got to be a way to keep offenders present, not minimizing or finding excuses for their behaviour. As I sit with him and acknowledge that he's capable of doing these things, I still identify him as a person and don't totally identify him by his crime. But it can be really tough.

Stories about the painful impact of bearing witness to pain and suffering are common when inquiring into the work of many helping professionals. Coping strategies including distancing and detaching one's feelings to avoid negative affect are frequent symptom descriptors for both compassion fatigue (Bride, Radey, & Figley, 2007; Figley, 1995) and burnout (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). Paul's hope to remain sensitive and connected holds marked temporal qualities, as he shares his experience of being worn down by ongoing exposure to stories of crisis and trauma. However, time also offered opportunities for healing, as taking time away from work helped him to reconnect. Paul

shares honestly about the inherent tensions of working alongside offenders convicted of appalling crimes, while simultaneously trying to see them as human beings in need of healing. He views this tension positively, as evidence that he and his staff remain wakeful and reflective.

I'm working with people who may absolutely turn my stomach because of what they've done. There are times when I literally want to bash 'em upside the head! And yet, I'm trying to help them heal. There's a natural tension as I try very hard to help. I don't want chaplains who don't have that tension because it means they're desensitized. I want them to be able to hold that tension between our hopes for this person and what he's capable of doing. I don't want anyone to lose sight ten years down the road and allow a sex-offender to volunteer with the kids. Our first goal is no more victims.

Paul seems comfortable weaving together storied threads that recognize tension throughout his hopes for being and becoming. Although he acknowledges his compassion and caring towards individuals on parole and probation, he also shares the anger, disgust, and caution he feels towards them. The grey areas in his worklife, though challenging, seem to accommodate these difficult questions and reflections. With candor, Paul describes the demands that working with offenders places on him as he composes stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) where he remains sensitive and connected to the breadth of experience he encounters every day.

Stories of Hopes to Be Successful

Paul composes a multi-faceted story to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) about success that weaves together relational and change-oriented qualities. He describes his hope to be part of the process of growth and change for staff, volunteers, and clients.

In addition, his hope also involves shifting attitudes and larger structures to assist clients to compose their own successes.

It's kind of obvious, but I hope to be successful in my work. I'd hate to do all this work and find out that none of our programs work and all of our people go back to prison. For me, success has a couple of key signs. One is seeing my staff be successful, by growing, taking on more challenge, and becoming better at what they do. I'd also like to see attitudes change in the universities and the churches where I speak and through our public awareness programs. I love seeing people questioning their beliefs around justice and engaging in new discussions. I love seeing our faith communities speaking out for justice and becoming catalysts in our communities. And ultimately, I want to see lives change and quality of life improve for the people we work with. I'd like to see them enter into a sense of hope for their lives.

Paul notes multiple threads weaving together to compose his hope to be successful. One thread acknowledges the tension he feels about receiving personal satisfaction from helping others and being recognized for his actions. Similar to the narrative accounts of myself and Chandra, Paul acknowledges the personal benefits of helping others. His authenticity speaks to his ability to practice reflectively and acknowledge the complexities of working as a reintegration chaplain.

I'd be lying if I didn't say there's a selfish side that contributes to doing this work. There's something about being recognized for the work that we did at the Agency and with the guys that drew me. After giving a presentation on restorative justice, the people in the congregation said, "I could never do that. You are so amazing. God has given you such a special gift". When I started doing this work, I thought, not so humbly, "Yeah, I

know". After a while, I understood, "It doesn't take rocket science to do this, you just have to care about people". I'd be lying if I didn't admit that I like the admiration. I thrived on that for the first couple of years, but after a while, I matured. So that's wrapped-up in wanting to be acknowledged for my successes at work.

Paul composes his hope to be successful using both relational and change-oriented threads. His stories of success weave together qualities of facilitating individual growth alongside informing broader changes in social attitudes and structures. In addition, Paul notes tension as he acknowledges the personal satisfaction gained by others' recognition of the stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) he seeks to live-out through his work.

Representing Who I Hope to Be in My Work

When asked to represent who he hopes to be in relation to his work, Paul offers a story illustrating how he composed his hopes for being and becoming alongside a client. Although the story focuses on the client, Paul shares how who he was as a chaplain supported his client's transformation through a working relationship built on belief, encouragement, and caring.

There are a number of stories of working with the guys and hearing about their own healing and revelations that I think about in my work. One story that stands out is about a young fellow who did two federal sentences for drug trafficking and high-speed car chases. The first time I met him was on his first sentence and he was a little shit. He was just gonna ride out the program, get out, and do whatever he wanted. So he and his buddy made a prison-release plan. They were gonna pool together their money, buy meth, sell it, and make a huge profit. The downside was they tested their product. He

went from doing a three-year sentence to doing seven-years. A few years later, I saw him again. He realized, 'I'm going to be thirty-four when I get out. If I pick up another charge, I'm here into my forties". Something in him snapped. It was amazing to see him catch a glimpse of becoming something better and realizing that people believed in him. Most of all, he believed that he could become something better. Now, he's got an amazing job. He's reaching out and mentoring other people. Our relationship moved from friend to chaplain and having some hard conversations. I walked with him through the process, believed in him, and supported him at his parole hearing. We can't put our sense of accomplishment or purpose solely in the offender's successes or failures, but it's important to see those successes once in a while. We work with enough people who crash over and over again. Once in a while, we need ones who become shooting stars. And I want others to see they have the same capability to live successfully, whatever their limitations.

Reflections

Paul composes a story to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) about who he hopes to be and become in relation to his work with individuals on parole and probation that draws together threads from the personal and professional contexts of his life. After composing a profound story of transformation in his own life, he encourages others by sharing his hope that change is possible, especially with support. Paul's stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) weave together his desire for change and growth, both for individuals and communities. His faith threads powerfully through the stories to live by that he composes about being an innovator, a healer, compassionate, a decision-maker, a strong leader, wiser, sensitive and connected, and successful. With these hopes, he

composes a coherent (Carr, 1986), multi-faceted story to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999), despite the fact that he no longer works as a reintegration chaplain. In his own words, Paul shares a culminating statement about who he hopes to be across all life contexts:

I hope people see continuity between what I do at work and how I live my life. I don't want to seem disconnected outside of work, like I care about the poor and the needy from 9am-5pm, but after that I'm done! I want my lifestyle to be consistent with my portrayal at work. I believe in these values and actions, whether it's at work or at home. I believe in the pursuit of justice. I believe in the restoration of people and the building of healthy communities. I believe in incorporating those who are on the outside to bring them inside.

Chapter 7: Brenna's Narrative Account

"It felt like an unfolding of things".

Brenna has worked with individuals on parole and probation for over ten years. Her stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) as a reintegration counsellor exhibit temporal, becoming-qualities, acknowledging how she continues to grow within and through her stories. She does not identify significant connections to her childhood and adolescence informing her decision to work with individuals on parole and probation. Nevertheless, Brenna weaves storied threads from her early life through who she hopes to be and become in relation to her career. One prominent thread weaving throughout her story involves composing a helper-identity, which shifts over time and experience. Brenna composes her stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) with a sense of unfolding, without a focused-intent to work specifically with this population. However, she describes a strong belief in a life-purpose that directs her decision-making, an overarching story weaving a rich tapestry from the threads of her past, present, and anticipated future experiences.

During our conversations, Brenna typically speaks in abstractions rather than specific stories. When I ask her for stories about people or situations that inform who she hopes to be, she shares generalized reflections rather than specific stories of experience. In my own reflections, I wonder how practices to protect client confidentiality by withholding details inform the approach she takes to our research conversations. As we discuss her early worklife experiences, Brenna shares how coworkers encouraged her to withhold personal information to protect her own boundaries during client interactions. Within correctional contexts, these conversational styles tell a story about the strict

separation between professional and parolee. Upon reflection, Brenna's approach resonates with my own experiences as both a reintegration counsellor and a psychologist. When I speak about my work, I often share vague or amalgamated stories to protect client confidentiality. Speaking in generalities offers a safer way for helping professionals to discuss their sensitive work and I wonder about the depth, to which, these qualities inform our conversations.

My relationship with Brenna begins during a period of worklife transition. Our first meeting takes place in May 2011 at a bustling, downtown coffee shop. Brenna shares her interest in participating, but states that she is in the midst of several worklife transitions. Her current position with the Agency's intake program is ending, while a new position as an enhanced caseworker begins. In addition, she is completing coursework for a Master's in Counselling. Life is hectic. We agree to revisit her participation in the fall.

In November 2011, Brenna and I meet to discuss her worklife history with individuals on parole and probation at her office in the community residential facility (CRF) where she works. The day outside is bitterly cold, but Brenna invites me warmly into her space. The bookshelves in her office are occupied by binders filled with training resources and policy and procedure manuals. She appears confident and comfortable discussing her work. However, inquiring into life experiences which may contribute to her worklife direction seems to be new territory. She remarks repeatedly how she has never thought about the past experiences which may inform her present and future hopes. In reflection, I wonder about the potential for personal exploration instigated by our conversations.

Early Worklife: Education Inside and Outside of the Classroom

Although Brenna weaves threads from the values instilled in early life through the stories of who she hopes to be and become, especially as a helper, she does not story strong links to early childhood experiences that influence her choice to work with individuals on parole and probation. Instead, her choice to become a reintegration counsellor is informed by post-secondary experiences, alongside her desire to work in a helping profession. The educative[28] experiences that support her decision-making occur both inside and outside the classroom.

I started my BA in Sociology in 2000, right after I graduated from high school. Later, I transferred into the Criminology program, which was a huge decision, because that's how I got my practicums. I did a practicum at the halfway house where I currently work and also at an in-patient treatment program for sexual offenders. Getting into the Criminology program and the practicums are probably why I'm in this field, today. There was nothing in my life that really made me turn in one direction. It just unfolded. I knew I wanted to help people, so I thought sociology or psychology would be a good way to go.

After my first two years of university, there was an interesting presentation on the Criminology program. I needed some volunteer experience, so I volunteered as a key worker with a youth from a group home. I also volunteered at the courthouse with the Elizabeth Fry Society, helping people through docket court, providing information, and taking notes during the court proceedings. After all that work, getting into Criminology was a pretty good achievement.

[28] My recognition and belief that all life experiences offer possibilities for learning and growth are informed by the work of John Dewey (1938).

When I chose my first practicum, I was very interested in sexual offending. I picked this halfway house because they had a large majority of sexual offenders. I came here and that drove me to pick the in-patient treatment program for sexual offenders as my other placement. After I finished my practicum here, I got hired on part-time and that started everything. I maintained a part-time position at this halfway house throughout my entire time in the intake and employment programs. I enjoyed the job and it's an amazing Agency, so I wanted to stay.

Beginning her worklife with at-risk populations, Brenna weaves together a patchwork of overlapping part-time and volunteer positions. During her first year of university, she works at a detox shelter and, later, as a youth worker. During her early worklife within the Agency, she also holds part-time positions at the CRF, facilitating Anger Management and SARPP (Substance Abuse Relapse Prevention Program) groups, and conducting community assessments.

In 2004 or 2005, I began facilitating Anger Management with probation clients. In 2009, I became the team lead of the Anger Management program. Basically, I made sure everything ran well with our contractors and our facilitators and supervised the operation of the whole program. It was the first time I supervised. I felt proud of myself for taking on that challenge. The manager offered me the position, even though I didn't have any supervision experience. They saw my potential and believed I could do it. I did part-time community assessments from 2005-2007, because the Agency got a contract through the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC). Community assessments involved interviewing family members of people on parole to see if they would be appropriate supports for the parolees. I'd get a sense of the home environment and the person who

might be supporting the parolee. Then, I'd interview the support person, asking questions about the parolee's crime, addictions, employment history, education, and any other major things. In 2008, I facilitated a relapse prevention group for parolees called SARPP. It had a group therapy feeling to it, with check-ins about their week, some psycho-education, activities, and conversation. When guys came out of the system, it was difficult for them to open up and be authentic in a group that was connected to CSC. They knew we reported to CSC, so we talked about what we could keep private and what we had to report.

Brenna's choice to work with individuals on parole and probation is strongly influenced by her formal and informal educational experiences, alongside her desire to be a helper. Trying many volunteer and employment opportunities in a variety of contexts, she has the opportunity to test roles, learn skills, and find what fit with her interests and values. In her practica, Brenna discovers an interest in working with sexual offenders and challenging some of the dominant stories (White & Epston, 1990) about the meaning behind the label. Interacting with community-based and correctionally-oriented groups allowed Brenna to test how the stories she composes about herself fit with the individual, social, and institutional stories with which she engages.

Stories About Being an Intake Worker

After graduating from university, Brenna pieces together full-time hours from several different jobs. Eventually, she begins a full-time position in the Agency's intake program. The intake program offers Brenna the opportunity to gain a breadth of experience working with clients from diverse backgrounds. At this time in her worklife, Brenna's helper-identity seems characterized by giving to others to remediate their

perceived deficits. She learns firsthand the satisfaction and the demands of working with people facing numerous challenges. As well, these experiences help Brenna to compose and recompose stories about who she hopes to be and become in relation to her work.

I started in the intake program in 2006, working with all kinds of people in the community until summer 2011. The majority of clients had some criminal past or were currently involved with the police. Whatever their history, whatever their barriers, we helped them find resources and problem-solve ways to fix things in their lives. Sometimes, they were simply looking for a place to upgrade their education. On the other hand, our work could be really in-depth: they're living on the streets, there's mental health and addictions problems, and everything's wrapped up as a barrier in their lives. We helped them with housing, supported them to stay clean or gave them socks, underwear, and a toothbrush when they needed it. For the people on parole and probation, it was often "I was just released and all I have is the clothes on my back". We gave them the first steps to get things back together in life, like handing out bus tickets, problem solving or doing unofficial crisis counselling. We really tried not to do the steps for them, but empowered them instead.

The majority of our clients came in some kind of crisis. Sometimes I felt like, "Wow, I don't really know what I can do for you," because their problems were so big. Having multiple crises walk through the door wore on me after a while and then our program numbers picked up. The program blossomed until we had to say, "If you haven't come in the door by 11:30am, we can't see you until after lunch". At a certain point, I was going home tired. As soon as our doors opened, we ran until noon. Then we shut

down for an hour, opened our doors at 1pm, and went again until 4:30pm. After a few months, I said, "This is too much". I needed to readjust.

Brenna describes her work in the intake program as a pivotal learning experience in her worklife as a reintegration counsellor. Recognizing the personal and professional impact of working with clients in-crisis, she becomes proactive. Brenna chooses to weave threads of caring for self, for both herself and her coworkers, alongside caring for others into her worklife identity. Supporting her ability to help, Brenna composes a story to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) about prioritizing wellness to maintain her passion and ability to work as a reintegration counsellor. She creates space to give back to herself, filling the hole left by giving to others.

At that point, I really started looking into self-care and teaching my office and my supervisor about the need to take care of ourselves at work. I recognized that if I wasn't in a good space, then I wasn't helping my clients. When we were busy, taking a break meant that the next person waited for fifteen minutes. It wasn't always about getting people through the door, but it often felt that way. Taking breaks was looked down on. So I had to teach the office that if I didn't take those fifteen minutes then it affected the next person I saw. It was a balance. If I didn't take a break, by the end of the day, I couldn't listen anymore. It was about changing perspectives, because, ultimately, meeting my needs was good for our clients. When I presented it that way, everyone thought it made sense.

Part of the broadening experiences Brenna engages in during her time in the intake program includes acting as a liaison between her agency and the Edmonton

Institution.[29] Typically, Brenna composes a primarily positive worklife narrative, recognizing struggles, but remaining focused on the passion and purpose she creates in her work. However, one of the low-points she names in her story involves her time liaising at the Edmonton Institution. Working with the inmates remains positive, however, she characterizes the physical and spatial qualities of the facility as threats to her purpose and hope. In addition, feeling ineffective seems to stymie her helper-identity. Similarly, in an exploration of health professionals experiences of compassion fatigue, Austin et al. (2013) also identify the negative impact of institutional factors shared by participants in their study. During a meeting to review one of her narrative drafts, Brenna noted the negativity within these stories where she felt ineffective as a revelation regarding the impact of working in the intake program and her need for a change of pace.

Early in my intake career, I acted as a liaison with the Edmonton Institution for about a year. I did pre-release planning, giving the inmates information on employment, housing, and doing resumes. But I met with a lot of guys who were two years away from their release date. However, it was a successful link for the guys who stayed in Edmonton, because I was a connection point in the community.

The Max was a hard system to stay hopeful in. They had such harsh histories. I looked at them and thought, "This guy is really multi-barriered. It's a very complex case". During the year I liaised there, I saw a lot of guys return to the Max. It was tough. Going through the jail physically, being searched, and dealing with staff was very depressing too. Even the drive out to the Max was long. Meeting with the guys was fine, but being forced to do it on the Institution's schedule bothered me. I'd have fifteen guys

[29] The Edmonton Institution is a maximum-security correctional facility for men, sometimes known as *the Max*.

that I needed to see, but a range[30] *would be shut down because there was a concern. Or I'd get pushed to the back burner because the PO*[31] *or the nurse or the psychologist was meeting with the client. Or it took fifteen minutes to bring a guy from his cell. It was very slow. I'm a very focused person. I like to cross things off my To Do list. I wondered, "Why are we even here?" So I lost my motivation and left that position after a year.*

Operating the intake program, Brenna works with individuals from many backgrounds facing a variety of struggles. Weaving threads from the joys, challenges, and fatigue of working alongside individuals in the process of life change, she actively composes who she hopes to be and become in relation to her work. Facing these challenges, Brenna subverts dominant stories (White & Epston, 1990) of burnout in the helping professions by acknowledging her limits and composing a more meaningful and personally supportive counterstory (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) embracing self-care. Self-care offers one way to remain a helper by giving back to herself in order to continue giving to others. Finally, contrasting the intake office and the Edmonton Institution, Brenna identifies spaces where her needs for hope and purpose were supported.

Stories About Being an Employment Program Coordinator

During Brenna's position in the intake program, she operates an employment program for parolees from 2006 to 2007. A distinguishing feature of the employment program is that it is appointment-based, whereas the intake program operates on a drop-in basis. Through these longer-term relationships, Brenna begins storying herself as someone who can help others by building rapport and connecting with clients in the ongoing process of change.

---

[30] Correctional facilities can be separated into different sections, sometimes called *ranges*.
[31] PO is an abbreviation for parole officer or probation officer.

The employment program was specifically for parolees, helping them look for work and do their resumes. We paid for training and loaned them money to get work boots, so those were good incentives. I received the referral from the parole office, sat down with the guy, and got some information about his plans and goals. Some clients wanted to be there and some were mandated to attend by their PO. Some guys came, did the minimum, and never came back. But some returned for the resources and support. It was nice to have a regular schedule with the employment program clients, because I got to know them, build rapport, and know they're coming back.

Brenna shares how helping clients find employment with a criminal record is challenging. For some clients, a criminal record is only one of many barriers to employment. She describes sensing defeat, hopelessness, and decreased self-esteem from her clients as they bump against larger social narratives about the meaning and consequences of being convicted of a crime. Brenna offers the story of one client who stands out in her memory, exemplifying the ups and downs of seeking employment with a criminal record. Through her story, she highlights the impact of working through the ongoing situation for both herself and her client, including how the story she tells herself about being a helper is both threatened and supported.

Early in the program, the economy was booming. Companies were looking for workers, so having a criminal record wasn't such a big deal. But as the economy shifted, employers had more choice and started screening. That really changed things. I remember one older gentleman that had a very specific work area and a very specific offence. If he ever had to disclose his offence in an interview, it would have been really bad for him. He stayed away from postings that required a criminal record check, but

they were usually required in his industry. It took almost a year for him to get employment. I remember sitting with him and looking at postings together on the computer. He got discouraged, because only a few postings came up every few weeks. So we brainstormed how he could work his employment connections or flipped through the yellow pages to pull out companies and send a resume, whether they were hiring or not. Also, his field had specific technology and his skills were a bit outdated. So it was really a struggle for him. He was also at the point where he couldn't really choose an alternative field, because he only had a few years left until retirement. Those were some of his barriers.

Working with him was sad, at some points. At times, I felt discouraged. In the back of mind, I thought, "I can see that this, this, and this are all going to be problems for you". I talked about the barriers, but I reframed or restated them so I didn't discourage him. There were times I felt like I was faking it, so his hope wouldn't be discouraged. But I held hope for him. He kept trying, so I believed it would work out for him in the end. I was the one person who was his cheerleader, encouraging, "You can do this". It involved a lot of remaining positive and being that hope for him. When he found work, I think that was the last time I saw him. I think he appreciated my support and he found it really helpful, because he wasn't the only one who was pushing through the challenges. He wasn't alone.

Through the difficulties of her work, Brenna shares her beliefs and perspectives that maintain hope. Due to the transient nature of her client population, Brenna often shares only a small piece of her client's larger story, often leaving her to wonder about unknown endings. However, she holds onto her belief in hopeful stories, recognizing

future possibilities outside the range of her vision. In addition, Brenna emphasises small or subtle client successes which offer daily opportunities to celebrate accomplishments that sustain her hope and self-story as a helper. Together, she weaves these worklife perspectives into a rich tapestry that allow her to maintain hope and the ability to work as a reintegration counsellor.

Happy endings happen, but the clients didn't always come back and tell us. Some brought us cards or came back to say, "I wanted to let you know that I'm still working" or "I found an apartment". We would have a little celebration and be really excited. When I looked at the huge number of clients and only a handful of success stories, it was tough. Initially, it affected my work, but my first job in human services taught me that success was measured by the small things. At the intox shelter, clients returned under-the-influence, but they were still considered successful because they were in detox five more days than last time. If I spent an hour listening to a client without handing him a single resource, perhaps that was all I needed to do. Those experiences taught me to appreciate that it's more about what the clients saw as important and helpful than about what I didn't do. Acknowledging subtle changes also protected my hope. If I only acknowledged big, storybook ending successes, there wouldn't be a lot of hope because that might happen once a year. If I'm happy with smaller successes, than it means I get to see and celebrate lots of them.

Brenna acknowledges the ongoing process of composing a worklife throughout her career. Weaving threads of experience from her early career in the intake and employment programs, she composes stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) that emphasize who she hopes to be and become. One prominent thread weaving throughout

her worklife involves Brenna's story about herself as a *helper*. This story, among others, shifts with time and experience. Gaining confidence in her roles, accepting her limits, and focusing on her own actions, Brenna acknowledges the clients' capacity to take responsibility for decision-making. This shift supports work-sustainability by accepting that she remains a co-author in her client's lives, decreasing her sense of responsibility for her clients' actions.

Initially in the intake program, there was an urge to give clients as much as I could, because they were so transient. If I printed off a resource and forgot to give it to them, I'd beat myself up for that. Over time, I grew out of that mindset and decided to focus on their priorities, rather than bombard them. There were definitely clients who didn't want any support for their addictions, but they wanted work. My response became, "Okay, let's look for work", even though I thought, "Your addictions will probably get you fired, but let's look for work". Instead, we worked on their addictions issues in small steps, when they were willing to talk about it. So I became less eager to give them everything and more willing to listen to their priorities.

Also, I learned to be easier on myself. As the program became very busy, I realized "We're not the only agency that has these resources". When we talked about restricting our client-numbers, some staff were really resistant. My response was, "If someone wants to use the phone at 4:25pm, there are a lot of other agencies they can go to and there's always tomorrow". Saying, "No" doesn't mean that we're bad, it just means that we're setting up our boundaries. I realized that I can only do the best that I can and that clients' lives aren't fully in my hands. Changing perspectives made work easier on me. I didn't have to worry so much. I could put the job away at the end of the

day. My identity changed with the empowerment versus enablement shift. Our work is collaborative, the client and I work together. I maintained my empathy, but I had to find the balance between being callous and over-helping. So I moved from being a fixer to being one piece in the puzzle. I'm not the only puzzle piece and I really wanted my clients to have a few pieces. So I asked, "Do you know how to build your puzzle? Can you find more pieces? I gained faith in my clients, because I taught them how to find resources, so I wasn't so worried about giving them everything.

During her years in the intake and employment programs, Brenna composes stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) that acknowledge her strengths and abilities, alongside her clients' strengths and abilities. As time and experience progress, she tells stories about herself as a professional that allow flexibility for mistakes and learning. Through experiential learning, Brenna changes her worklife-metaphor, shifting her story about what it meant to be a reintegration counsellor. While retaining a prominent story about herself as a *helper*, she restorys what it means *to be* a helper. Brenna's early helper-story involves being a *fixer,* giving to others to remediate perceived deficits. Over time, she restorys her helper-identity, moving out of the lead role in the helping relationship and acknowledging others' autonomy, as she becomes *one piece in the puzzle*. Drawing threads from work, educational, and volunteer experiences, Brenna refines her interests, recognizes her limitations, and broadens her interpersonal and intrapersonal understandings.

Stories About Being an Enhanced Caseworker

Engaging with Brenna's three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), she describes the intake program as a place where she gains breadth in

her experience by engaging with different people in a hectic, yet supportive environment. However, she seeks to live out her hopes for being and becoming working alongside offenders. After encouragement to apply for an enhanced caseworker position, Brenna takes a chance. Following increased awareness of work-related stress and the disappointment of a failed funding proposal, she decides to shift her worklife storyline.

In June 2011, I left intake to come to the halfway house as an in-reach caseworker with the enhanced program. I work with offenders who have a high UAL[32] *history or are a bit harder to handle. Our position is to closely monitor those clients. For example, our regular clients are on in-house orientation for three days after they arrive before they are allowed more community access. My clients are in-house for thirty days. We look at their needs, get them stabilized, and then hopefully make them successful. We have official meetings, but usually we just chat: checking in about things like their maintenance programs, work, parole conditions, and personal lives. The other part of the job is general house duties: security, doing the rounds, and making sure everyone's calling in when they need to call in. We also try to maintain a really good relationship with our clients' PO's through visits, calls, and case conferences.*

One of the shifts Brenna notes in her work as a caseworker is the depth of interpersonal investment required in longer-term client relationships. She shares how her approach to professional boundaries evolves as she negotiates her worklife. Brenna draws threads of understanding from her Master's training into her work. Specifically, she is inspired by one professor who offers ways to build authentic therapeutic relationships by sharing professionally-appropriate personal information. These experiences allow Brenna

[32] UAL is an acronym meaning "Unlawfully at Large".

to compose a story to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) about professional boundaries which incorporates who she hopes to be and become into her work context.

I've noticed that the case worker position requires a lot more interpersonal investment than any of my previous jobs. In intake, I couldn't build rapport quickly, because the clients were transient. In my current position, I see my guys every week, sometimes every day. Although I have an authoritative position because this job is more correctionally-oriented, I still need to develop rapport to be therapeutic or helpful. I'm not just managing a file; I'm here for the guys' lives. I don't just ensure that they're back at the House on-time or following the conditions of their grounding.[33] *For example, one of the clients at the House was working tons and following the conditions of his parole. But I felt it was important to discuss work-life balance with him, because he neglected other things that were important to him, like family and going to the gym.*

I've found that taking the authoritative role can damage rapport. With one of my first clients, there was something that came up in a casual conversation, early on, that I needed to report to his PO. His trust was injured and it took almost five months to repair the damage. The guys need to talk to me so I know what's going on in their lives. I thought that it would be helpful to ask for his feedback on what I could do better so that we could share information. It was a professional risk to open up to him. In my previous work we were encouraged to be very boundaried: "This is me and that's you. If you ask me about my personal life, I'm going to say 'no'". This interaction was different. I don't air everything, but I'm learning that I have to expose some of myself. I don't share details about what's going on at home, but I do share my reactions to clients: "I was getting very frustrated with you and I didn't know what to do". Opening that conversation was a

[33] Clients in a halfway house may have privileges revoked after breaking house rules.

valuable experience. It's a new place to be, for myself too. I don't know if I would do it with every client, but it felt important in that scenario.

Weaving together threads from previous work and educational experiences, Brenna composes intricately-patterned stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). As the stories composing Brenna's worklife identity bump against larger social or institutional stories, she refines who she hopes to be. Returning to the halfway house where she began her career offers the opportunity to realize a long-held hope. Weaving together her interest in working with sex offenders and groups into her ongoing worklife narrative creates excitement and hope in her new job.

I always wanted to return to the halfway house, so it's felt like an unfolding of things, being nudged in that direction. My overall intention is still to do a group for sexual offenders. We have some long-term offenders doing 5-10 years on long-term supervision orders (LTSO).[34] *CSC's treatment programs for sex offenders in the community are meant for maintenance. With LTSO's, the insight process takes longer. They're putting these LTSO-guys into the maintenance programs, but it doesn't work because they're not ready for maintenance yet. So the question comes up at a case conference, "What should we do with these guys?" And my boss has always had the idea of doing a program for longer-term offenders. The idea of a group for sex offenders excites me. It feels like working with sexual offenders has become my niche.*

Returning to offender-based work offers Brenna further opportunities to compose who she hopes to be in relation to her work. Working in a setting with longer-term clients, she tells new stories about herself, including her ability to build therapeutic

[34] An LTSO provides an alternative to indeterminate incarceration for sex offenders who, in the opinion of the court, exhibit a substantial risk to re-offend, but could be effectively managed in the community.

relationships and maintain professional boundaries. Brenna also has the potential to live out two long-held hopes: working with sex offenders and facilitating group programming.

Tracing the Threads

Unlike the other participants in this inquiry, Brenna does not story strong connections between her early childhood experiences and her decision to work with individuals on parole and probation. Instead, the inquiry process seems to act as a catalyst to her own reflections on her worklife stories. At many points in our conversations, she seems unsure about the threads that compose her values and passions. However, with time to reflect, Brenna situates her worklife stories more-deeply within her lived experience, including the prominent thread regarding herself as a helper.

I didn't necessarily decide to work with individuals on parole or probation and I can only guess at what encouraged me to want to help people. I don't know if it was in my nature. I'm a middle child and a mediator, so I have the urge to help. It could be my family history. I have a family member who is an alcoholic, so that might have spurred me into something. I may have had the idea, "This whole experience with alcoholism is just negative, bad, and somewhat criminal. I don't want to have anything to do with it, because of the hurt that it caused in my life. Instead, I'll move completely to the other end and help people". My aunt and uncle took me to church, so I also grew up in a bit of a Christian background. That might have contributed too. Being around Christians and learning Christian values through church, youth group, and bible camp ingrained helping people in me as a value. That definitely contributed to my decision to enter Sociology and want to help people. My faith is still an important part of my life. Because of my faith in a higher power, I believe a lot of my opportunities were set-up. I feel like I

was given skills and talents for a purpose, as part of a larger plan in my life. There was that sense of: "I am where I need to be".

Getting into the Criminology program and my practicum experiences were a big part of why I'm in this field today. People ask me, "Why do you want to work with sex offenders?" From my perspective, out of all the people that need help in the world, the offender population has a lot of barriers to getting back on-track. And out of all the offenders, sexual offenders have the worst chances of getting back into the community and being accepted again and doing well. I think those things draw me specifically to this population.

Brenna hesitantly traces potential threads from her worklife to her early experiences. She acknowledges early experiences as a middle-child mediator with an alcoholic family member from which she may draw to compose a story about herself as a helper. In addition, she acknowledges weaving her faith and educational experiences into her choice to become a reintegration counsellor. The inquiry process seems to act as an instigator in Brenna's co-composition of worklife stories. Subsequently, I wonder how these stories will continue to shift and support her work, over time.

Representing a Worklife

Brenna shares how the metaphor representing her work changes over the years. Her early helper stories seem to focus on giving to others to remediate their perceived deficits. Over time and experience, this definition shifts. Brenna's helper-identity moves from an overemphasis on giving and directing the helping relationship, to acknowledging client contributions of autonomy and strength. She uses the image of a bridge to represent her role with individuals on parole and probation. However, Brenna's position with

clients on the bridge shifts over time from being a *fixer* into a *collaborative support person*.

In the earlier portions of my career, I pictured myself diving in: "I'm gonna help. I'm going to do everything I can". Now, I've matured to the point where I'm still eager to help, but I have my limits. I have an image of being a bridge, being a connection or in-between. Each person has their concerns, problems, and dreams and I'm that bridge to get them where they need to be. I'm not there to do it for them, but I help them because I want their goals and dreams, as well. I have knowledge, some wisdom, and guidance that I can use to get them to their goals. I feel like I've moved from the urge-to-fix to more of a support-role. In my early career, I'd be on the other side of the bridge, shouting, "Come on, come on!" while they're still considering crossing the bridge. Now, I see me and the client walking side-by-side on that bridge. Sometimes we're stopping or going back a little bit, but we're still going. It's collaborative, by-your-side, trying more to understand them than to make them. And knowing that taking some steps back doesn't necessarily mean that we're not successful.

Who Do I Hope to Be and Become?

Brenna's stories of who she hopes to be and become weave narrative threads into increasingly complex and multifaceted stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). She describes how her hopes to be and become shift and evolve over time and experience. Looking into the future, Brenna continues to anticipate change, acknowledging the becoming-processes inherent within her worklife stories. Drawing from her experiences, she composes hopes to be compassionate, knowledgeable, well-trained, a teacher, a support for others, grounded, and effective and capable within her

work. Although these hopes are discussed separately, they weave together into stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) about being a helper that compose a holistic worklife identity.

Composing a Hope to Be Compassionate

Brenna composes a hope to be compassionate that recognizes everyone's individuality and humanity. She notes that compassion takes work and intentionality, recognizing how easy it can be to give up on clients as they struggle repeatedly. In turn, she weaves threads drawing from her passion for helping and belief in her purpose into an ongoing story about herself as a compassionate reintegration counsellor. These stories act protectively, especially in relation to dominant stories (White & Epston, 1990) of burnout and jadedness, helping her to sustain her helper-identity.

I hope to be compassionate. Every situation is different with clients. Not everybody has the same story or shortcomings or struggles. Compassion is individualized. Because people aren't the same, my ability to be compassionate adjusts to the individual. I work with a large majority of sexual offenders. I wouldn't say it's been easy to be compassionate but it comes more naturally for me than if I was working with someone convicted of family violence. Finding compassion for someone in family violence is one of those examples where I work extra hard to detach the individual from the action and try to find something likeable or some common ground with him. It takes more conscious effort.

Passion for what I do, in-general, helps me be compassionate. I have to have a heart for what I do and who I'm working with to keep that compassion. Passion keeps my engine running, keeps it full of the energy to be compassionate. Having that desire to

work where you work or having a purpose to be there helps. It gives me a backing for why I'm compassionate or why I am who I am with my clients.

Being compassionate comes from a desire not to be cold-hearted or jaded too. It's a risk in this work. Compassion helps fight off that. I see lots of people who do the job because they need a job or they liked it many years ago, but they've been in the field too long. I see people that burn out and it affects the client work. When I work with a client who stumbles, over and over, I work to keep compassion for them and a heart to help. A colleague at a different agency mentioned a client who was set up with housing repeatedly, but didn't maintain it because of his addictions. She said part of her job was to make sure that he didn't feel ashamed and that she could still support him without feeling like, "All this work goes to waste". It's so important to find that separation where we can manage those frustrations and be there for the client, despite the stumbles. In Corrections, a suspension is typically considered a failure, but the clients still come back to us. It's tempting to say, "You keep messing up, so the amount of work I put in on your first, second or third time here, I'm not going to do on your sixth time". Compassion really does fight off that hardening or becoming jaded. It's protective. It's like being compassionate and burnt out can't take up the same space. Like, if I become burnt out, I'll lose the ability to be compassionate.

For Brenna, compassion involves acknowledging individuality and humanity. She draws threads of caring and acceptance from her Christian faith to compose her hope to be compassionate. Additionally, witnessing and experiencing the pain of a family member's ongoing struggle with alcohol may also inspire her deep desire to help others. These deeply meaningful threads of acceptance, caring, and compassion weave intricately

throughout the stories of who she hopes to be. Brenna intentionally fosters compassion by seeking ways to connect with clients, noting that the stories she tells herself about her clients shape her perceptions. In addition, she composes stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) with threads drawing from her passion for helping and belief in her purpose to remain a compassionate reintegration counsellor.

Brenna's worklife stories bump against other stories from the academic literature. In an examination of compassion fatigue for psychotherapists, Figley (2002a) states that while empathic abilities are central to helping others, they can also put counsellors at risk for suffering harmful effects from caring. However, Brenna proposes that compassion actually protects her from burnout and jadedness. She notes the impossibility of remaining both compassionate and burnt out, a finding consistent with Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter's (2001) theory of burnout. Their theory identifies cynicism and detachment from one's job as central components of burnout, qualities incompatible with compassion. In response to these possibilities, Brenna intentionally composes counterstories (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) by drawing threads of compassion through her stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) to protect herself and support her clients.

Composing a Hope to Be Knowledgeable

Working with people, Brenna composes a hope to be knowledgeable about a wide variety of areas to help herself, her clients, and her coworkers. She stories how breadth of knowledge, alongside the development of useful skills supports her everyday client interactions. In addition, Brenna notes that expanding her experiences informs her ability to show compassion by helping her to compose and tell counterstories (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) about clients and their situations.

I hope to be knowledgeable and have some expertise in different areas. The breadth of experience I gained in the intake program was really great to learn how to work successfully with a mixed-bag of clients. I learned to use needs-assessment to figure out where to start, because some clients have so many needs. I also got to see, in the raw, a really realistic image of someone with bipolar or depression or schizophrenia who also struggles with other challenges. So when clients are talking to me about that stuff or they have that on their file, it's helpful to know beyond book knowledge. I've seen it lived out.

In the intake program, I learned about family violence, the youth population, and what it means to come from a foster-care background. I remember one client at the House who was about 24-years old, but he acted younger. He had some family violence background and a lot of things he said reflected the thinking of someone who abuses. When he came to us, his file said he'd be difficult and he was difficult. Most of our guys don't act out physically, but he barricaded his bedroom door! So I encouraged him to show his frustration in other ways. One time he called the house to yell and scream after meeting with his PO. I said, "I understand that you're upset and you're really frustrated but it shouldn't be directed at me. I'm here if you want to vent, but you can't dump it on me". Drawing from my previous work in group homes and intake helped me to maintain patience and compassion. That knowledge made it easier to role model and teach those skills, rather than saying, "I wash my hands of him. Eventually, he'll just get suspended".

Drawing threads of understanding and compassion from her previous work experiences in intake and group homes, Brenna's hope to be knowledgeable allows her to expand her client's stories. Instead of simply storying each client as a convict, she creates space for multiple stories about mental illness, family violence, and the possibility of

change. Brenna's hope to be knowledgeable interweaves with other hopes to be compassionate, well-trained, and capable and effective, creating a richly-hued pattern that illustrates how her hopes to be and become are embodied through her actions as a reintegration counsellor.

Composing a Hope to Be Well-Trained

Brenna differentiates between being knowledgeable and well-trained. Being *knowledgeable* encompasses the breadth of her educational experiences, whereas being *well-trained* involves the depth of her expertise in one or two areas. However, Brenna acknowledges the fuzzy boundaries between being knowledgeable and well-trained. Threads of passion and a desire for continuous learning weave through her hope to be well trained. Brenna's hope to be well-trained illustrates the ways in which her values inform her actions as a reintegration counsellor, creating a sense of worklife continuity.

I hope to be well-trained. I hope to stay good at what I do and do my job to the best of my ability. It's not like I took some training when I first started and said, "Okay, I'm good for the rest of my career". I'm a lifelong-learner. It's important to know the information out there and the tools I can bring into my toolbox to work with this population. Working in intake was a really good experience, but I know I want to specialize and focus all my efforts on one topic. I'm able to do that in my current position. I can focus my knowledge on learning how to support people with sexual offences and higher-risk clients. My philosophy is that if you arm yourself with the best knowledge possible, then you have a better chance of being effective and supportive. Training increases my ability to work with different clients because my perspective opens up and I'm more able to understand what my client is going through.

My focus on being well-trained fits with my decision to do a master's degree. I know that I want to do some type of group therapy work. So I thought, "If I'm going to move in that direction, it would be a really good idea to get more training". I was doing a lot of counselling-type things, like listening and problem solving in the intake program. So getting my master's helped me with that position that too.

Brenna composes a story about herself having a *niche* working with sex offenders. At present, she lives out her hope to be well-trained through her role as an enhanced case worker. Through formal and informal education, she continues to compose her hope to be well-trained. Brenna notes the connections between different aspects of her hopes to be and become. Living out her storied hopes, different pieces of the pattern highlight and deepen one-another.

Composing a Hope to Be a Teacher

Although Brenna expresses some hesitancy storying herself as *a teacher*, she holds a long-standing desire to teach and educate others regarding the realities and complexities of her work. For Brenna, this hope holds qualities of both being and becoming, as some of her hopes to teach are realized currently, while others hold possibilities for realization in the future. Noting these temporal qualities, Brenna draws threads of fostering growth in others from her past and present actions as a supervisor and a community educator into her envisioned future.

Down the road, I hope to have the expertise and specialization to teach other people. That's a big part of who I am at work too. I've learned these things and more people should know them in order to work with these clients. Teaching others feels like an outflow of gaining expertise, but it feels like something that will happen in the future.

Beyond the book knowledge, I hope to share my practical experience to help people working with sexual offenders learn the things they need to do their work successfully. I don't want the knowledge, skills, and expertise to just stay here. I want it to broaden out and benefit others, as well. A couple people in the Agency talk to me if they're working with someone who has sexual offences in their past. Actually, my master's project is researching the skills and training needed to work with sexual offenders or high-risk populations. I talked to my research advisor about the topics I'm interested in and she said I could make a presentation in my workplace. Educating my colleagues fit for me. So I'm hoping to do that and maybe get paid to do more of it.

Right now, I'm in a supervisory role with the anger management program. Some staff have never facilitated before and I really enjoy talking to them about the group process, what to expect from the group, and how to facilitate those pieces. I want to help them create a cohesive, comfortable, safe group that feels like it's a good place to be. Mentoring them through that is rewarding. I like seeing their progress, as they go from, "I'm not really sure," to, "It's second nature to me now". I hope to do more of that mentorship.

Brenna's definition of teaching involves educating individuals, including the public and coworkers, alongside educating organizations and society via policy. Drawing threads of understanding and compassion from her experiences with individuals on parole and probations, especially sex offenders, she shares counterstories (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) that rest alongside the dominant stories (White & Epston, 1990) typically told about offenders. Through experience, Brenna's stories of "resistance and insubordination" (Lindemann Nelson, 1995, p. 4) to dominant narratives about herself

and others create possibilities for new interpretations and conclusions, inspiring both intimate, personal change and larger-scale, societal change.

A lot of people ask me about my work, so I do a bit of teaching in that way. People hear the word, "sex offender" and it's a really big deal. Education and sharing knowledge is an important piece of helping people to change their perspective. In my own life, the more I understand about offenders, the more I'm able to be effective. I hope to do workshops or public speaking to change the perspectives on sex offenders. With the public and people working in the field, the more knowledge they have about a population, the easier it is for that population to be successful in the community. People say, "I could never work with that population," or, "They should all be shot". I want to teach people that the gap between you and them isn't that big. Some of our perceptions are really skewed and society makes certain decisions on those perceptions that aren't actually helpful in the grand scheme of things. I have a passion for public awareness and sharing knowledge. I feel like being a teacher is something I'm skilled at doing.

In reflection, Brenna shares how she is living pieces of her hope to teach now, while acknowledging the future hopes that she is growing into. As she unravels the threads linking experience, knowledge, and action in her own stories, she seeks to foster this process in others. Brenna's shifting storylines about herself and others offer meaningful possibilities for change. As her helper-identity shifts from giving to others to remediate perceived deficits into a supportive role that acknowledges the strengths and contributions of others, educating others seems to become another form of helping. Specifically, she hopes to use her experience to inform public policy in well-informed

ways. Looking into the future, Brenna offers hopeful possibilities for teaching and authoring new stories to change perspectives to support offenders.

Composing a Hope to Be a Support for Others

Drawing from her prominent story to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) about being a helper, Brenna weaves threads of caring and compassion throughout her worklife, whether supporting clients or coworkers. In addition, she acknowledges the importance of reciprocal support to maintain her ability to work. Debriefing and listening to one another allows Brenna and her coworkers to balance their professional responsibilities alongside the challenges of working with clients. Through these actions, she composes a hope to be a support for others and herself.

I hope to be a support for others, like my co-workers. In intake, we had a really tight team. If something frustrating happened in our office, like a client yelling and swearing at us, there was always someone we could vent to. Or we could admit, "I really struggle to work with this client and I don't understand why". I remember one client who got under my skin. I had very little patience for him. Having a co-worker there to work with him or to talk with about why he irked me so much allowed me to do my job without that stuff getting in the way. We need that support where we can vent, in a good way, or discuss an incident. Or it's safe to have a really candid conversation and admit, "I know I have this bias". And when I go back to my client, I don't take that baggage with me. Having that support available makes such a difference. I want my coworkers to know they're not alone. The helper in me comes out for them, as well.

Brenna acknowledges the meeting places between the personal and the professional, as she seeks to balance her responsibilities alongside challenges and

frustrations. She shares the importance of helping to create safe spaces to tell authentic stories, which may not be the stories that are expected. Together, Brenna emphasizes how mutual support and recognizing the person within the professional allow her to compose a worklife rich with ongoing enjoyment and wellness.

Composing a Hope to Be Grounded

Brenna composes a hope to be grounded that acknowledges her own emotional-state and energy level as she interacts with others. She describes turning her attention inward, examining herself, and making choices about how to respond. Within Brenna's hope to be grounded, multiple stories rest side-by-side, as she chooses which one will take priority. Creating space for multiple stories that acknowledge the present moment, alongside past and future hopes and uncertainties helps her to focus on the client and support her ability to be the person she hopes to be. Brenna composes this hope with a self-compassionate voice as she recognizes times when her personal life affects her professional work. Tensions exist between the knowledge of what she needs to be grounded with restrictions on her time and resources.

I hope to be grounded in my work. To me, being grounded means that no matter what's going on in my personal life, I'm still able to be present. No one's perfect, but I hope to be there for a client in his crisis and not have my worries come into that space. I'm able to really hear them and be the helper that I hope to be. When I'm grounded, I don't bring a lot of hype into my work space from my own life. If my client is really agitated or worried, I don't want my stress to heighten that. So I'm conscious of the energy that I bring. I know I bring emotions into it and I want to be genuine, but I don't

want to get to their level where we're both in crisis-mode. So groundedness is for them, but it's for me too.

I make a conscious effort to be grounded or bring in a different energy; it allows me to create a division between everything that's happening in my life. If things are going crazy at school or at home then I get a break when I focus on something else. So the stress of my practicum doesn't run into a session with my client or the stress of my marriage doesn't run into my practicum. People say, "Leave your home at home and your work at work," but you have to figure out how to do that. So I'm really conscious; I check my energy: "Am I grounded? Am I bringing a calm nature?" To ground myself, I come early to work, so that I have a few extra minutes. If I feel rushed, I carry that anxiety-energy with me. When I walk into the building, I try to check, "Am I feeling tense?" If so, I breathe that out and remember why I'm coming to the building. Asking myself those questions helps me to self-monitor and it gives me space too.

Brenna begins composing her hope to be grounded during her time in the intake program. As her passion to help others meets the challenges of working with a multi-barriered population, she chooses not to succumb to the dominant stories (White & Epston, 1990) of burnout. Instead, Brenna re-stories her worklife trajectory, intentionally seeking ways to sustain herself and her career as a helper. In addition, she identifies a role-model who inspires one of her stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999).

Sometimes we had crazy days in intake, so I had to build in self-care to stay grounded. Hearing people talk about burnout and seeing people burning-out taught me how to combat that. Often people say that non-profit takes a lot from people. I have a different opinion. I don't think working in non-profit is necessarily going to burn me out.

I think I can do it, but I have to figure out how. It's almost a response to that cultural expectation of burnout. If that's the expectation, how am I going to address it? This is where I want to be and I don't think it has to be that bleak.

I remember a lady who worked in the Programs department at the Max. We had a lot of conversations about staying grounded and doing the work that we do. It was an important time because the institution was such a bleak place for me. We talked behind those locked doors and she lightened the place. She'd been working in the field for a long time and had a great sense of humor. She talked about her clients, but it was never negative or labeling. She talked about how tough it was, but she focused on, "This person has been through so much and it makes sense that he would be on crystal meth". She had a different way of talking. She built up compassion rather than hardening.

Drawing threads from learning about self-care in the intake program, Brenna takes an intentional approach to being grounded. Acknowledging her contribution to situations, she engages in self-conversation as a form of reflective practice. Dewey (1938) writes about reflective practice as an opportunity to inquire into and deepen experiential learning. Schön's (1983) seminal writings on reflective practice develop these ideas as ways for professionals to integrate theory and practice, recognizing the cyclical pattern of experience and conscious application of experiential learning. As a reflective practitioner, Brenna inquires into her experiences, creating opportunities to engage in continuous learning. Through experience and reflection, she restorys what it means to be a helper by deemphasizing the significance of giving, sharing leadership in the helping relationship, and acknowledging the others' autonomy. As such, being grounded supports who Brenna hopes to be for both clients and herself.

Composing a Hope to Be Effective and Capable

Storying herself as a responsible, reflective reintegration counsellor, Brenna composes a hope to be effective and capable in her work. Perceived ineffectiveness seems to act as a threat to her self-story about being a helper, which is partially supported by emphasizing client successes. Brenna takes her work with people seriously, recognizing the significance of shared experiences with the people she works alongside. She evaluates her work holistically, acknowledging multiple stories coexisting in a single circumstance. Brenna defines effectiveness as more than simply good client statistics; it is also evidenced by the personal impact experienced by clients.

I hope to be effective and capable. My hope is that no matter where I am in life, I'm able to do a good job. That includes being there for my clients, as well as doing the actual day-to-day paperwork and file management. If I'm in an effective space, then I'm better set up to help and to make change. If I'm functioning in an ineffective space, like if I'm not grounded, then that lowers my chances of impacting my clients. When I think about being effective and capable at work, I'd like my clients to look back on our work as a positive thing, tough maybe, but helpful. It encourages me and helps me to know that I'm doing a good job. Sometimes this work isn't so tangible. Working with something concrete, like accounting, it's easier to see the mistakes! Here, I don't always know if I'm doing something effective. Sometimes our success stories are things like a client having less suspensions or moving out without committing any more crimes. But being effective is beyond the numbers of how many clients move out successfully and don't go back to jail; there's also the feedback from clients. If somebody picks one of the good-looking stats, I hope that person is able to speak to the relationship we built too. If I passed away,

they're the things I hope people would say at my funeral. That's more important to me than the stats.

In her worklife with individuals on parole and probation, Brenna composes a hope to be effective and capable. As her story touches the stories of others, she acknowledges how both she and her clients emerge changed. Recognizing multiple, possible stories about being effective and capable, Brenna defines effectiveness as the positive, relational impacts experienced by clients alongside positive measurable outcomes.

Tensions Between Who I Am and Who I Hope to Be

Through our conversations, Brenna shares tensions between her life circumstances and who she hopes to be that shape the way she composes her stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). She approaches these tensions with a sense of self-compassion as a professional in an ongoing becoming-process. Brenna speaks with uncertainty about how she will live out the details, which is fitting as hope is characterized as positive expectation alongside uncertainty (Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; Flesaker, 2008; Flesaker & Larsen, 2012; Nekolaichuk, Jevne, & Maguire, 1999). These conversations hold strong becoming-qualities, filled with both expectancy and uncertainty.

As I move forward, I hope to get better at all of these things. It's a process, refining and readjusting. I used to do a lot of overtime, but it isn't really overtime to me. It's part of who I am, but it doesn't work as often anymore because I'm recently married. That shifts things. I have to figure out how to be a good worker, knowing that when my shift is done, as much as possible, I need to go home. Now, if someone needs to talk to me fifteen minutes before my shift ends, do I say, "Okay, you got ten minutes". Sometimes I

text my husband and say, "I'm going to be late because my client came to me with something pretty major." So I weigh it out. Do I potentially damage a relationship by showing that I'm not interested or only giving the person ten minutes to talk? I have to weigh out the fact that my husband may be ticked because I'm home late against supporting a client. How often do I say, "Yes," to a client but, "No," to my husband?

Tension exists between my hope to be a good student and my work, especially with the practicum piece. And there's tension around generally taking care of myself. I have that helperness, so even when I'm not at work, I tend to help others. Who I hope to be at work involves being grounded, but I need alone-time to get that. But being married, doing school work, and coming to work, there's not much time for that. I have these ideals as a wife, a student, a worker, and a generally healthy person, and there's a lot of tension as I decide what gets sacrificed. Usually it's the alone-time, because that one's the easiest to sacrifice. Deciding what the priority needs to be at each moment is challenging.

The tensions between Brenna's current abilities and hoped for self act as a threat to her hope. Hope can act as a motivational force which offers the possibility of disappointment if it remains unrealized. Snyder and colleagues (Snyder et al., 1991) define hope as the process of thinking about one's goals, along with the motivation to move toward (agency) and the ways to achieve (pathways) those goals. Referring to the colloquial expression, "Where there's a will, there's a way", Snyder likens agency, the goal-directed energy, to the *will* and pathways, the perceived routes to reach goals, to the *ways* (Snyder, 1995). Using Snyder's terminology, although Brenna possesses the *will power*, she lacks the *way power*, due to limited resources like time and energy. She

describes her perception that one area must be sacrificed to prioritize another, creating a lose-lose situation. Brenna balances on the edge of self-expectations which threaten hope when she cannot reach them, as she struggles to compose a new piece of her worklife story.

As my energy gets stretched, I have a little less hope for the future. I wonder, "Can I really make it?" With my husband, I wonder how the sacrifices I make to ensure I do well in school affect him. Sometimes, my hope to complete school drops, because I'm tired and I'm stretched and there's tension between my husband and I and I have to pull off a shift at work. And sometimes because of that, I don't work well with my clients. So my hope of being grounded and compassionate drops. And after I finish my master's, there's the whole piece about registering as a psychologist. My hope for registering is a little less, because I wonder if he can handle me doing what needs to be done.

It's tricky to solve those tensions and decide when to put more effort into one area or the other. My work is just as important as my home life. Maybe it's because I worked as a single person longer than I worked as a married person. A lot of times your identity is your work, at least for me. It's a bit to sort out, shifting from someone who works here to someone who's married and works here. So one of my hopes is to be able to be married and work. I hope to re-identify myself, because I'm in a bit of a flux. I need to figure out those roles and still be happy.

Although tensions exist between Brenna's expectations and the constraints of her time and energy, she continues to identify hopeful possibilities. Brenna seems uncertain about how to compose this new piece of her worklife story, as the re-storying process to weave marriage into her stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) remains

incomplete. Taking a process-oriented, becoming perspective, she notices the potential for hope even though her worklife tensions remain unresolved. This process-oriented, hopeful approach allows Brenna to explore the deeply meaningful meeting places between aspects of her self and work.

Representing Who I Hope to Be

Brenna uses a light metaphor in her story about who she hopes to be in relation to her work as a reintegration counsellor. Symbolically, light acknowledges the presence of darkness. It is not possible to cast out darkness by removing darkness; instead, the introduction of light pushes darkness away. Through our conversations, Brenna shares the ways she seeks to offer light, including educating others to change perspectives on offenders, offering hope to clients for the possibility of life change, and showing authentic caring and compassion.

What I hope to be is a little bit of a light for people. I hope to send a message that you can change your life; things can be different and life doesn't have to stay the same. Change is possible. I believe things can be better for our clients. They can stay out of jail, stay away from addictions, have a better family life, and all that kind of stuff.

Focusing on the power of relationships, Brenna hopes to be part of the change process for individuals. As a single part of a larger team and many larger social structures interacting with individuals on parole and probation, the stories Brenna composes alongside her clients may have a subtle or a strong impact. Regardless, she remains able to witness and be part of their change.

Reflections

The stories Brenna composes about who she hopes to be and become in relation to her work with individuals on parole and probation exhibit temporal qualities of change and development over time and experience. She admits, “I don’t think who I hope to be at work now is the same as when I started in the field or even when I started my master's”. With ongoing experience, Brenna shifts and recomposes her hope stories. Actively engaging in reflective practices, like self-monitoring, self-care, and continuous learning, she continues composing stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) that support the growth of who she hopes to be and become. One prominent thread weaving throughout Brenna’s worklife involves being a helper, although what it means to be a helper shifts with time and experience. Her early helper-story involves giving to others to remediate perceived deficits. Over time, Brenna restorys her helper-identity, moving out of the lead role in the helping relationship and into acknowledging others’ contributions and autonomy. Drawing from her experiences, she composes hopes to be compassionate, knowledgeable, well-trained, a teacher, a support for others, grounded, and effective and capable within her work. Looking into the future, Brenna anticipates more change as she weaves increasingly intricate stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Although she does not story strong links to her early life regarding the decision to become a reintegration counsellor, Brenna draws threads from her early values that inform who she hopes to be and become in relation to her work. She composes stories with a sense of unfolding as she shares her belief in a larger purpose or plan for her life which guides her worklife decision-making.

Chapter 8: Looking Inward, Outward, and Across: Examining the Connections

The narrative accounts presented in this inquiry were offered with the expectation that readers would draw meaning from reading and reflecting upon them. In this chapter, I laid my reflections across the participants' co-composed narrative accounts and alongside related academic literature. While each participant's narrative account was unique, potential connections existed between the narrative accounts and the larger body of relevant academic literature on caring and compassion, vocational calling, narrative identity-making, hope, compassion fatigue, burnout, self-compassion, and compassion satisfaction. While reviewing narrative accounts with Brenna, she expressed both surprise and interest as we discussed the potential connection points that I perceived between her experiences and related academic literature. For me, this was a reminder that the understandings gained through research practices were comprised of human experiences. Witnessing Brenna's engagement with the drafts reaffirmed, for me, the power of contextualized stories and their ability to reach others with situated knowledge. As I share the understandings I co-composed through the narrative accounts and the exploration of potential connections between the narrative accounts and related academic literature in this chapter, I hold hope that readers can say, "Yes. That resonates with my own experience". On the other hand, readers may say, "No. That does not fit with my experience," opening the possibility to explore alternate stories and understandings.

The following chapter offers an opportunity to reflect on the possible connections between the preceding narrative accounts and related academic literature. Addressing these connections, I sought to hold the narrative accounts Chandra, Paul, Brenna, and I co-composed at the forefront of my mind. Within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry

space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), I approached the relevant academic literature while simultaneously holding the understandings I co-composed through the narrative accounts. Reading, rereading, and writing the narrative accounts, I recorded notes about the similarities and differences that I perceived between the participant narrative accounts and larger social, cultural, and institutional stories. I often felt overwhelmed, wondering, "How can I write about all of these connections?" However, I came to realize that I was not responsible for making every possible connection explicit; it was impossible. I was reminded that one reason stories were so powerful was that they encouraged individuals to reflect upon their own experiences and understandings, as they related to the story. With these ideas in mind, I drew attention to the particular points of connection, similarity, and difference that I perceived between participant narrative accounts of who they hope to be and become, in relation to the larger bodies of academic literature on caring and compassion, vocational calling, narrative identity-making, hope, compassion fatigue, burnout, self-compassion, and compassion satisfaction. As such, I invite readers to consider the threads I perceived in this chapter, while also reflecting upon the connections they made in their own lives and understandings.

Stories to Live By: Caring and Compassion

Composing who they hope to be and become in relation to their work with individuals on parole and probation, Paul, Brenna, Chandra, and myself shared hopes to be caring or compassionate. *Caring* and *compassion* are deeply meaningful, nuanced terms. Dictionary definitions were helpful to identify commonly understood aspects of experiences of caring and compassion. *Caring* was characterized as a state of mind in which one was troubled or concerned or had thought or regard towards an object

("Caring," 2014). *Compassion* was described as a feeling of deep sympathy for another who was stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate that suffering ("Compassion," 2014). Educational philosopher, Nel Noddings (2013) characterized caring as engrossment in others, regard and responsiveness, and desire for the other's well-being (p. 19). However, individuals learned about caring and compassion primarily through experience, not textbooks, by receiving and giving care and compassion.

Within the co-composed narrative accounts, each participant drew from stories of being cared for and offering caring as they composed their hopes to be and become in relation to their work. In fact, Noddings (2013) introduced the idea of *chains of caring*, where past caring experiences set the stage for future caring. Paul drew threads of compassion from early experiences of ostracism and receiving care from his parents and a concerned teacher that he wove into his work with marginalized individuals. Brenna shared how she learned about caring and compassion through her experiences of Christian faith and by witnessing a family member's struggle with alcoholism. Chandra also drew threads of caring and compassion from witnessing family members' struggle with alcohol and raising her siblings. For me, experiencing the power of being heard and attended to in relationships with Juniper and several other influential women in my life gave me experience to draw from that helped me to care for others. These individual stories sat alongside larger social, cultural, and institutional narratives describing what it meant to be a caring helping professional.

Outlining a model of caring for counsellors, Skovholt (2005), a leader in the field of counsellor development, proposed that maintaining an ability to care rested at the heart

of the helping professions. Similarly, outcome studies in counselling consistently concluded that the relational process was a key element in positive client outcomes (Wampold, 2001). In examinations of the factors that contributed to client change in therapy (Asay & Lambert, 1999; Hubble, Duncan, & Miller, 1999; Norcross, 2010), the therapeutic relationship, characterized by empathy, positive regard, warmth, and genuineness, was one of the largest contributors to client change. Through their narrative accounts, the participants composed stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) that emphasized caring and compassion. Interestingly, the academic literature mirrored their lived experience.

As counsellors care for a succession of individuals throughout their careers, they engaged in an ongoing process of connecting and letting go. Skovholt's (2005) Cycle of Caring model described this series of professional attachments and separations. As I read and reread the participants' narrative accounts, I noted a number of processes that Skovholt outlined in his model, including the recognition of past experience on present actions and developmental shifts in professional boundaries and counsellor identity, over time. Skovholt's model is well-respected and well-known in the field of counselling psychology. Outlining the Cycle of Caring, Skovholt identified three phases: empathic attachment, active involvement, and felt separation. Empathic attachment involved forming professional attachments with another person. Active involvement encompassed the agreed upon course and activities of the professional relationship. Finally, felt separation was the letting go of the active emotional burden and richness of the professional relationship. Skovholt noted that "the ability to make positive attachments,

to provide a relational process, and to do it over and over again defines mastery" (p. 82), a process that the participants in this inquiry engaged in throughout their worklives.

The Cycle of Caring (Skovholt, 2005) offered one framework to understand how counsellors developed expertise in professional caring over time and with experience. Within this framework, Skovholt emphasized how counsellor's histories and past experiences with attachment and separation influenced the way they engaged with the Cycle of Caring in their professional relationships. Counsellors drew from past and present experiences of connection and letting go to compose worklives where this process was sustainable. Finding, "the line between professional underattachment (i.e., not caring enough) and professional overattachment (i.e., caring too much)" (Skovholt, 2005, p. 88) could be difficult. Participants described how their approach to caring for clients shifted throughout their worklives. In my own narrative account, I shared how I entered Hope Mission with a desire to "save and fix people". I experienced the joy and pain of connecting with clients, while slowly composing a balance between caring for clients, respecting their personal responsibility and capabilities, and acknowledging my own limits. My own worklife metaphor shifted towards being a traveler on a shared journey with clients, "offering a hand and painting a vista which might have been missed". Similarly, Brenna shared how her worklife metaphor of a bridge shifted from "shouting, 'Come on, come on!'" from the other side of the bridge to walking side-by-side at the client's pace. She learned to engage with clients in a responsive manner that acknowledged each of their contributions and limits in the relational process. Paul described how mentoring from other chaplains as an intern allowed him experiences to "cut my teeth and figure out what it meant to work with a guy who did eighteen years in

prison". Over time and experience, Paul also learned how to connect with local faith communities in meaningful dialogues, moving from "screaming on a soap box" to engaging in discussions about the realities of inviting individuals on parole and probation into their communities.

While the Cycle of Caring (Skovholt, 2005) offered a useful framework to examine how counsellors developed the skills to manage shifting connections in helping relationships, it lacked the ability to describe how helping professionals composed their stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Missing were the lived stories and the contextual understandings of the experiences reintegration counsellors brought to their ability to connect with others, to work together, and, ultimately, to let go of the formal helping relationship. While Skovholt emphasized how past experiences influenced the way counsellors engaged with the Cycle of Caring in their professional relationships, his research focused on aggregate data sets losing the rich nuances and practice details of how individuals composed the ability to connect and separate in therapeutic and sustainable ways. As discussed previously, Chandra, Brenna, Paul, and I learned about caring through experiences where care was more or less available. In the current inquiry, Paul, Brenna, and I co-composed rich narratives about the contextualized, ongoing process of learning how to connect and separate from clients. We each shared the importance of talking with colleagues and workplace mentors to process the dynamic experience of connecting and separating from clients to compose personally meaningful stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). In addition, each of us used metaphors to illustrate the personalized understanding we composed over time and through experience. In my narrative account, I became a traveler sharing a journey. Brenna walked side-by-

side across a bridge with her clients. Paul stepped down off the soap box. Returning to the three dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), these experiences built and shifted over time, across place, and within relationships.

Stories to Live By: Vocational Calling

Although most commonly used in religious contexts, scholarly interest in the concept of vocational calling has been increasing (Dik & Duffy, 2009). Definitions of vocational calling commonly described an approach to work that weave together a sense of meaning and purpose for individuals, alongside service to society or a higher power (Dik & Duffy, 2009; Duffy, 2006; Duffy, Allan, & Dik, 2012). Within counselling psychology, Dik and Duffy conceptualized vocational calling and its relationship to current and future work experiences by identifying three features. First, motivation for the work stems from an external source, like a higher power or recognition of social needs. Second, constancy exists between an individual's overarching sense of meaning and purpose in life *and* work. Finally, a vocational calling brings focus to how an individual's work could contribute to society in positive ways.

The participants in this inquiry shared a sense of vocational calling, in relation to their work with individuals on parole and probation. Each participant shared experiences of feeling *called* to help others, which they carried into their worklives. In my own narrative account, I described an embodied sense of *knowing* and *rightness* that accompanied the recognition of being called to become a counsellor. Drawing threads from my experiences of giving and receiving help and support, I composed a personally meaningful worklife where I could offer these experiences to others. Similarly, Chandra, Paul, and Brenna also storied their callings as a way to live out their faith and make

positive contributions to the world through offering care, respect, and hope. Chandra shared her belief in being led by God, “where I needed to go and to what I needed to do”. Paul described a sense of calling, not only for himself, but for all Christians to act as agents of healing who “go out into the darkness and search for the lost and the broken”. Brenna described her belief that her skills, talents, and opportunities were orchestrated as part of a larger plan for her life. Drawing from health professionals’ accounts of compassion fatigue, Austin et al. (2013) noted that “the call inherent to compassion –‘to make a difference’ – resonates with the collective vision of many health professionals, which is a deeply held hope to make a positive difference in the lives of those suffering” (p. 171). Similarly, the participants in this inquiry composed stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) where they lived out their sense of vocational calling.

Although traditionally used in religious contexts, discussions about vocational calling are also relevant in non-religious contexts (Steger, Pickering, Shin, & Dik, 2010). Vocational calling in life is associated with several positive benefits. A sense of meaning in life was related to vocational calling (Steger & Dik, 2009; Steger et al., 2010), as was life satisfaction (Steger & Dik, 2009; Steger & Kashdan, 2007). Those with a perceived vocational calling were also more likely to seek challenging work (Steger et al., 2010), have greater job security, and believe in social justice (Davidson & Caddell, 1994). When faced with disheartening or challenging situations, Chandra, Paul, Brenna, and I seemed to turn back to the meanings, purposes, and encouragements offered by our vocational callings. In the midst of career uncertainty, Chandra shared how her belief in a greater purpose and plan for her life helped her to maintain hope in the midst of uncertainty: "Believing that there’s always a reason helps me to make some sense out of confusing

situations". Also facing uncertainty as she navigated the tensions of managing her marriage and her career, Brenna held onto her belief in a larger purpose and plan for her life where she would find a way to use her skills and talents. "There was that sense of: “I am where I need to be". Paul described returning to a sense of being called to work with individuals on parole and probation, for himself and his former staff: "Being a Christian ministry, there’s a sense of a calling to this work. I question what it means to wrestle through that calling. There are situations that aren’t just emotional; they also present theological issues". In my own narrative account, one of the things that kept me going, especially when I was exhausted, disheartened, and overwhelmed, was a belief that I began this journey for a purpose: to use my talents to serve God and show care to others. As such, a sense of vocational calling offered another thread, with which to compose satisfying, meaningful, and coherent stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999).

Composing a worklife around threads of vocational calling held the potential for negative impacts, alongside positive benefits. Experiences of work overload and stress can coexist with passionately living out a vocational calling (Duffy et al., 2012), as individuals strove to give their best while facing seemingly never-ending experiences of human suffering. Commitment to a vocational calling also had the potential to negatively impact interpersonal relationships (Hernandez, Foley, & Beitin, 2011). Brenna described living with tensions in her own life as she sought to passionately live her career alongside her marriage. She shared the difficulty of navigating practical responsibilities, like leaving work on-time and building trusting, professional relationships with clients, alongside commitment and caring for her husband and her work. Through her narrative account, she reflected on shifts in her identity-making as she sought to compose stories of

being both married and called to her work. In my own narrative account, I shared fears and anxieties as I imagined possible stories where I squandered my talents and failed to live out my vocational calling. While this fear motivated, it also took a heavy toll on my energy and personal resources. As such, composing stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) drawing from threads of vocational calling seemed to both generate and consume energy.

Living a story of vocational calling was a work in-progress, rather than a finished product. In a qualitative study of counselling psychologists, having a vocational calling was viewed as an open-ended process (Duffy et al., 2012). In the study, psychologists described openness and enthusiasm for growth and change in the ways they enacted their perceived callings over time. Similarly, identity is also a storied life composition, woven across time, place, and relationships (Clandinin & Huber, 2002; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Drawing threads of vocational calling into stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) was an ongoing, fluid process. Although the stories of how participants lived out their vocational calling shifted over time, experiences of feeling called seemed to offer threads, with which they composed meaningful stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Reflecting on the experience of feeling called, psychologists (Duffy et al., 2012) also identified connections between vocational calling and identity with statements like, “My identity feels so wedded to [my calling]” (p. 302) and “[My calling] does still feel very intertwined with me” (p. 299). In the current inquiry, Paul described his calling to help and support individuals on parole and probation shifting from individually-oriented work to systems-oriented work. Although the content and focus of his work shifted, he continued to create a sense of continuity in his work by composing

ongoing stories about helping people in different ways. In addition, both Chandra and Brenna described openness to living out their vocational callings in different settings as time progressed. They told themselves stories about living out their vocational callings, with a sense of coherence (Carr, 1986), regardless of the setting. In my own narrative account, my vocational calling to help others and act as a counsellor shifted over time, as I moved from working with individuals on parole and probation to becoming a psychologist working with a diverse population, addressing many different issues and concerns. As such, the meaning and service aspects of a vocational calling (Dik & Duffy, 2009; Duffy, 2006; Duffy et al., 2012) could be transformed into increasingly complex and multifaceted patterns over time.

Stories to Live By: Who I Hope to Be and Become

My research puzzle was two-fold. Firstly, what are the experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors? Secondly, what stories do they tell about who they hope to be and become in relation to their work with individuals on parole and probation? My understanding of identity was narratively-informed, situated within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space of time, place, and relationships (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative conceptions of identity emphasized the individual as the active composer of identity through experience, in relation to larger social, cultural, institutional and temporal narratives (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Clandinin, Steeves, & Caine, 2013). Narrative understandings of identity, or stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999), emphasized that identity evolved over time, in relationships with oneself, others, and the environment (Steeves, Clandinin, & Caine, 2013). Connelly and Clandinin conceptualized stories to live by as the threads that linked knowledge, context,

and identity, allowing them to be understood narratively. Clandinin et al. (2006) understood identity as "a unique embodiment of each [person's] stories to live by, stories shaped by knowledge composed on landscapes past and present in which [each person] lives and works" (p. 9). Connelly and Clandinin characterized stories to live by as the storied compositions that "define who we are, what we do, and why". They asserted that understanding professional practice in narrative terms could not be separated from the development of identity.

Stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) were composed experientially, situated in the context of past and present, personal and professional contexts. As such, the stories individuals told about, and to, themselves shifted over time and across place. Participants in this inquiry shared how their stories to live by shifted, over time and with experience. In my narrative account, one of my prominent stories to live by involved being a competent professional. When I reflected upon my early experiences as a reintegration counsellor and a graduate student, I remembered frequently feeling unsure about what to do in my work. Reflecting upon the ongoing process of development, I saw how I gained confidence and expertise through experiences with clients, supervisors, colleagues, and professors. Through these experiences, I chose to move away from work primarily with individuals on parole and probation to embrace a broader range of practice in my ongoing story to live by as a competent professional. Brenna wove a story to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) that emphasized caring for herself so that she could continue to live out her hope to care for others. In the intake program, she learned about the necessity of taking care of herself by taking breaks and accepting her limitations. Rather than accepting a self story about the need to practice perfectly at work or

succumbing to pressure from clients and colleagues to meet every need, Brenna chose to compose her own story to live by about caring for self in order to care for others. To honor the importance of different areas in her life, especially work and family, Chandra sought to compose a story to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) about being balanced. This balance shifted over time, as both her family and her career changed. Although she anticipated changing her career for increased prestige and salary, she chose a new path that was "healthier for me" and allowed her to invest more time and energy into her family. Finally, Paul composed a story to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) about helping others and creating positive change that shifted from individual to systems-level work. Through his experiences, he realized that actions taken at higher organizational and institutional levels offered different possibilities to support individuals on parole and probation. Each participant's stories to live by were unique, woven from personally meaningful threads of experience to create storied understandings about themselves. With ongoing experiences, participants continued to compose and recompose their stories to live by.

Drawing threads from psychologically-informed literature on counsellor professional identity development, this topic was typically framed under the broader subject of counsellor professional development. Taking a developmental perspective acknowledging growth over time and through experience, counsellors were theorized to move through phases of development, from novice to expert (Orlinsky & Rønnestad, 2005; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003; Skovholt & Rønnestad, 1992). Drawing from their experiences, counsellors encountered new situations, solved problems, made mistakes, reflected, and composed a unique, experientially-informed approach to counselling.

However, experience did not simply equate with longevity or the passage of time. "Experience means living through actual situations in such a way that it informs the practitioner's perception and understanding of all subsequent situations" (Benner & Wrubel, 1982, p. 28). As counsellors developed, they drew threads from different experiences to compose a personally recognizable, professional identity (Skovholt & Rønnestad, 2003).

Through our narrative accounts, Brenna, Chandra, Paul, and I described the ongoing, dynamic process of composing our identities, or stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999), as reintegration counsellors. Over time, these stories gained complexity through formal and informal educational experiences (Dewey, 1938) with clients, colleagues, professors, and supervisors. In their model of counsellor development, Skovholt and Rønnestad (2003) noted a number of common experiences for novice counsellors, which Brenna, Chandra, Paul, and I shared. With time, we drew from formal and informal educational experiences in the classroom and with clients, supervisors, and colleagues to compose personally meaningful ways of working and acting that represented who we hope to be and become. Brenna and Chandra shared early worklife stories of how they developed professional boundaries, a common facet that Skovholt and Rønnestad identified in early counsellor development. Brenna shared how one professor inspired her to compose authentic, therapeutic, and professional boundaries. Chandra described how she navigated the tensions between stories of distance in correctional cultural and her own maternal caring stories to compose personally and professionally meaningful boundaries. With respect to another commonality, Brenna and I also shared about our early glamorized expectations of success and feeling pressure to make no

mistakes, another common early counsellor experience identified by Skovholt and Rønnestad. Through conversations with colleagues, both Brenna and I began to focus on subtle, more-frequent client successes, rather than life-changing, 180° turnarounds. Brenna also learned to be easier on herself when she made mistakes, like forgetting to give clients resource printouts. Through my clinical supervisory experiences, I also learned to share and view my mistakes as learning experiences, rather than simply errors. In one additional commonality to Skovholt and Rønnestad's work, Paul described his early approach to working with churches and community groups as characterized by black and white thinking and quick formulation of problems and solutions much as Skovholt and Rønnestad described in their model. Over time, Paul described a softening to his approach that incorporated self-reflection and understanding the complexities of working alongside individuals in the process of reintegration. As such, each participant drew threads of storied experience from their personal and professional contexts to compose a story about who they hope to be and become in relation to their work.

Stories to Live By: Hope

I saw hope as one of the central threads with which the participants wove together their worklives in relation to this inquiry. Using the word *hope* in the research puzzle, I sought to explore "What are the experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors?" And, "What stories do they tell about who they hope to be and become in relation to their work with individuals on parole and probation?" Drawing from my previous academic and personal understandings, I responded to the possibility of a hope-seeking orientation (Jevne, 2005; Jevne & Nekolaichuk, 2003) as one way participants made sense of their world. Within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space

(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), we co-composed a view where participants drew from experience to compose personally-meaningful and contextual understandings of hope.

A Hope-Seeking Orientation

In the participants' narrative accounts, I drew attention to references regarding dominant, social stories (White & Epston, 1990) of burnout, compassion fatigue, and self-sacrifice in the helping professions. Instead of subscribing to these dominant stories that reintegration counsellors would be burnt out by their work or that they must be wholly selfless, Brenna, Chandra, Paul, and I chose to seek and compose counterstories (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) of hope and possibility to shift taken-for-granted understandings to sustain ourselves and others. Similarly, in my master's research, a basic interpretive inquiry exploring work-related hope for five reintegration professionals (Flesaker, 2008; Flesaker & Larsen, 2012), I was struck by the tenacity with which the participants in my master's study sought and utilized hope in their work. Despite the often heart-wrenching and seemingly helpless situations those participants faced with clients, each one related her attempts to identify glimpses of hope for both herself and her clients (Flesaker, 2008; Flesaker & Larsen, 2012). I termed this inherently hopeful work perspective or *workview*, a hope-seeking orientation (Jevne, 2005; Jevne & Nekolaichuk, 2003). This hope-seeking orientation provided a framework for the participants in my master's study's hopeful beliefs, processes, and practices. Woven into that orientation were participant beliefs that hope was both necessary and available for both clients and themselves (Flesaker, 2008; Flesaker & Larsen, 2012).

Ronna Jevne (2005; Jevne & Nekolaichuk, 2003), a prominent hope scholar, also proposed the idea of hope as an orientation to life. She offered hope as "*an orientation*,

and *hoping* as *a search behaviour, as a way of orienting ourselves as we search for that which will enable the optimal physical or emotional survival*" [italics in original] (2005, p. 269). Additionally, viewing hope as an orientation to the world recognized that individuals composed their own narratives of experience around hopes that the participants and I came to understand within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) of temporal, contextual, and relational factors.

Other researchers examining hope in the helping professions identified a similar perspective on hope. In the field of rehabilitation, A. Collins and Kuehn (2004) characterized a hopeful orientation as "looking forward to something with desire and confidence, or having an expectation of something desired" (p. 176). Further, in a case study of a domestic shelter worker, Bernard (2000) illustrated her participant's hopeful worldview, "as a lens from which she can view the world" (p. 71). Bernard noted that experiencing her work through a hopeful lens allowed her participant to view human nature in a positive manner and upheld her belief in the ability to create positive change.

Participants in the current inquiry also shared aspects of this hope-seeking orientation through their own stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Being individuals who sought and found hope became part of the stories they told to and about themselves. Seeking and emphasizing small successes (Flesaker, 2008; Flesaker & Larsen, 2012) offered one way for participants in the current inquiry to engage in a hope-seeking orientation. "Instead of focusing solely on life changing successes or transformations, participants used their hopeful perspective and found a multitude of seemingly simple glimmers of hope, everyday" (Flesaker, 2008, p. 82). Early in our worklives, both Brenna and I had opportunities to engage in conversations with

colleagues about acknowledging small successes. As reintegration counsellors, we typically shared our clients' journeys for a short time. During this time, it was rare to witness a complete turnaround in a client's life, due to the many years and attempts change often takes. However, workplace cultural and institutional stories about seeking and celebrating small successes in clients' lives seemed to support our hopeful stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) in the possibility of change and our work. We chose to compose stories about ourselves as people who sought and found success, in many forms. Recognizing the significant impact of these successes, Brenna proposed using the word *subtle* rather than *small*, to highlight her belief that changes may not be perceived as *small* in the context of an individual's life.

In the current inquiry, participants also shared their beliefs in future possibilities for change, even if change did not occur in the present moment. As a psychologist, I saw illuminating the hope of currently unrecognized possibilities as a key part of my work. In the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), it was important to explore how participants reached into the past, present, and the future to compose their worklife stories. Recognizing the ongoing composition of worklife narratives allowed the participants and I to acknowledge the temporal contexts of our work from the past, to the present, and the future. The practice of recognizing possibilities and the belief that failure was not the end were previously identified ways for reintegration counsellors to sustain hope at work (Flesaker, 2008; Flesaker & Larsen, 2012). Obstacles and setbacks were recognized as inevitable parts, rather than the end, of each person's life journey. In the current study, discussing her deeply held belief in individuals' ability to change, Chandra composed a determined belief that "if change

didn't happen this release, maybe it would happen the next release". Even when facing perceived failures, Chandra continued to search for potential hopes in the situation. Similarly, Brenna's worklife representation of crossing bridges acknowledged that taking steps forward and backward was part of her journey with clients. Returning to a journey metaphor, I acknowledged how looking to future possibilities continued to sustain my ability to remain hopeful, "because this journey of being and becoming has not yet reached an end". Paul used phrases like "restoration of people", "building of healthy communities", and "incorporating those who are on the outside to bring them inside", each connoting an ongoing, additive process of hopeful change. Within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), looking towards a future of ongoing, but presently uncomposed, stories seemed to offer opportunities for both counsellors and clients to maintain hope. Furthermore, temporal qualities, like a future-orientation, are commonly identified in conceptualizations of hope (Benzein, Saveman, & Norberg, 2000; Cutcliffe, 1997; Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; Dufrane & Leclair, 1984; Gaskin & Forté, 1995; Stephenson, 1991). As such, acknowledging how the ongoing composition of hopeful stories spanned the past, present, and anticipated future, helped to situate this process within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space.

Taken in concert, Jevne (2005; Jevne & Nekolaichuk, 2003), A. Collins and Kuehn (2004), Bernard (2000), Flesaker (2008; Flesaker & Larsen, 2012), and the current inquiry wove a rich, multifaceted story that emphasized a valuable role for hope in reintegration counsellors worklife stories. In her discussion of hope as a life orientation, Jevne's (2005; Jevne & Nekolaichuk, 2003) emphasis on enabling physical and emotional survival seemed well-suited to inquiring into experiences of identity-making

for reintegration counsellors through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work. Storying themselves as individuals who sought and found hope allowed the participants to acknowledge and potentially soften or transform the impact of difficult situations to find even subtle hopes and possibilities with the potential to protect against burnout and compassion fatigue. Perceiving experiences through hopeful stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) seemed to offer Chandra, Paul, Brenna, and I alternate ways of storying the difficult situations we faced in our worklives. Introducing a hopeful perspective did not negate the frustration, tragedy, or sadness in a situation. It created possibilities for the participants to envision and engage with chosen futures alongside experiences of pain, uncertainty, and despair. A hopeful orientation offered reintegration counsellors an additional perspective to draw from to support themselves at work, allowing them to seek and create meaningful stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) even when they faced challenging work situations.

Dominant Stories and Counterstories: Compassion Fatigue, Burnout, Self-Compassion, and Compassion Satisfaction

Chandra, Paul, Brenna, and I each shared stories about reactions from others when they learned about our work as reintegration counsellors. The reactions, "How can you do that type of work?" or "I could never work with those people" highlighted storied social expectations about working with individuals on parole and probation. These social stories included some awareness of the personal and professional difficulties and perceived hopelessness of working with individuals convicted of criminal offences. Often, these storied understandings portrayed the expectation that reintegration counsellors must be worn down by their work, leading to experiences of burnout and

compassion fatigue. White and Epston (1990) noted that when dominant stories were commonly accepted they exerted power over individuals and institutions. However, through our narrative accounts, the participants and I also shared counterstories (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) of self-compassion and compassion satisfaction, composing richer, more complex worklife stories to live within.

Compassion Fatigue and Burnout

A large body of academic literature supported social expectations that working as a counselling professional can negatively impact counsellors (Craig & Sprang, 2010; Orlinsky & Rønnestad, 2005). Concepts such as burnout (Maslach, 1982; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; I. Thompson, Amatea, & E. Thompson, 2014) and compassion fatigue (Austin et al., 2013; Figley, 1995, 2002b; Samios, Abel, & Rodzik, 2013; Sprang, Clark, & Whitt-Woosley, 2007) continue to receive significant attention. Maslach (1982) defined burnout as "a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment" (p. 3). Burnout is characterized by cynicism, psychological distress, feelings of dissatisfaction, impaired interpersonal functioning, emotional numbing, and physiological problems (Fothergill, Edwards, & Burnard, 2004). Symptoms of burnout could occur within compassion fatigue; however, compassion fatigue primarily described symptoms of secondary traumatic stress (Bride, Radey, & Figley, 2007). Compassion fatigue consisted of common post-traumatic symptoms including nightmares, intrusive thoughts, and physiological reactivity from the impact of working with trauma survivors, including individuals on parole and probation.

Interestingly, in our narrative accounts, Chandra, Paul, Brenna, and I acknowledged the personal and professional impact of reintegration work on who we are

and who we are becoming. However, the stories we composed about ourselves were much more complex than simplified social expectations might suggest. Stories of challenge rested alongside storied compositions of hope within our stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Alongside stories of the difficulty, challenge, and personal and professional costs of reintegration work, the participants and I composed counterstories (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) to sustain ourselves and our work. Resistance to preordained scripts or dominant academic stories offered a beginning-place for the composition of meaningful narratives (Clandinin, Steeves, & Caine, 2013). Witnessing burnout in the field motivated Chandra to compose a balance between her life inside and outside of work. Similarly, Brenna prioritized self-care and composed a hope to be compassionate to subvert the dominant stories of burnout that she witnessed in her field. Storying desensitization as a protective mechanism, Paul shared his hope to remain sensitive and connected to his work. I also shared my hope to be present, in response to the persistent, often overwhelming, pull on my attention and resources. These counterstories (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) lived alongside stories of compassion fatigue, burnout, and stress. Our stories of hope did not seek to minimize or ignore experiences of compassion fatigue, burnout, and stress. However, they offered alternate perspectives and possibilities to widen the spectrum of possible experiences as we composed our stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Describing her work, Brenna seemed to capture a common sentiment portrayed by the participants stating, “This is where I hope to be and I don’t think it has to be that bleak”.

Self-Compassion

Stories of self-compassion offered counterstories (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) to some dominant worklife stories which participants shared through their narrative accounts. An innovator in the area of self-compassion research, Neff (2003) drew from a Buddhist framework, defining self-compassion as:

> being open to and moved by one's own suffering, experiencing feelings of caring and kindness toward oneself, taking an understanding, nonjudgmental attitude toward one's inadequacies and failures, and recognizing that one's own experience is part of the common human experience. (p. 224)

Studies suggested that self-compassion protects against anxiety and depression (Neff, 2003; Neff, Kirkpatrick, & Rude, 2007) and facilitates adaptive stress management and resilience (Leary, Tate, Adams, Allen, & Hancock, 2007; Neff, 2003). Using other forms of narrative research, Patsiopoulos and Buchanan (2011) examined counsellors' use of self-compassion. In that study, the authors described three main themes, including counsellor's self-compassionate stances in-session, relational ways of being in the workplace, and finding balance through self-care strategies. In the current study, participants shared that taking a stance of acceptance towards themselves and others allowed them to recognize their humanness, strengths, and limitations. Brenna described how she learned to "be easier" on herself over the course of her work by acknowledging and accepting her limitations. Storying the process of her own professional growth and development as she composed her stories to live by, Brenna allowed herself to hold her imperfections alongside the knowledge that she did her best in the context of the situation. In my poem, *Who Do I Hope to Become?* I brought kindness to my deep desire to care for myself, even though I rarely took these actions. In these ways, both Brenna

and I offered compassion to ourselves, as well as to others. Neff's work resonated with these experiences when he suggested that self-compassion could act as an antidote to self-criticism as individuals approached their perceived limitations and inadequacies.

Compassion Satisfaction

Compassion satisfaction offers yet another counterstory (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) for reintegration counsellors, alongside more dominant stories (White & Epston, 1990) of compassion fatigue and burnout. Compassion satisfaction referred to the pleasure counsellors derived from doing their work, including helping others (Stamm, 2005) effectively. Acknowledging that individuals composed meaning in their worklives, compassion satisfaction offered another way for counsellors to protect themselves against the potential negative impacts of working with clients experiencing trauma and marginalization (S. Collins & Long, 2003; Craig & Sprang, 2010; Samios et al., 2013; I. Thompson et al., 2014). Experiences supporting compassion satisfaction included camaraderie with colleagues, witnessing and remembering client recovery, assisting the community, and receiving support from colleagues and supervisors. Positive reframing, which involved seeking a positive perspective on a negatively perceived situation, was one way that counsellors built compassion satisfaction (Samios et al., 2013). Paul, Chandra, Brenna, and I each acknowledged the positive benefits of being a helping professional, alongside the potential negative impacts. Paul storied his actions as *a healer* as a way to create personal redemption and self-healing. Chandra acknowledged the satisfaction she felt when others recognized the work she did. Brenna's early learning that "success was measured by the small things" helped her to compose a worklife filled with satisfying moments. Finally, witnessing moments where I recognized my own

development into a capable professional and my clients' growth and change offered many deeply satisfying experiences. Returning to the idea of the hope-seeking orientation, highlighting meaningful experiences seemed to offer participants ways to create satisfaction and benefit, alongside difficulty in their work.

Reflections

Within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), I approached the relevant academic literature while simultaneously holding the understandings I composed through the narrative accounts. Reading, rereading, and writing the narrative accounts, I recorded notes about the similarities and differences that I perceived between the participant narrative accounts and larger social, cultural, and institutional stories. In this chapter, I presented my reflections on these shared threads and invited readers to draw from their own experiences to make new connections. While each participant's narrative account was unique, acknowledging these potential connections allowed for ongoing individual, academic, institutional, and social dialogues to foster continued inquiry and growth.

This chapter offered an opportunity to reflect on the possible connections between the preceding narrative accounts and related academic literature. Holding the co-composed narrative accounts of Chandra, Paul, Brenna, and myself at the forefront of my mind, I drew attention to the particular points of connection, similarity, and difference that I perceived between participant narrative accounts of who they hope to be and become and the larger body of academic literature. Specifically, I noted shared threads between the participants' narrative accounts and academic literature on caring and compassion, vocational calling, identity-making, hope, compassion fatigue, burnout, self-

compassion, and compassion satisfaction. Reflecting on these threads, I described the deeply meaningful stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) that participants composed in relation to their work.

Chapter 9: Closing Reflections: Looking Backward, Looking Forward

After living with this narrative inquiry for so many years, it felt hard to bring this process to a close. This final chapter offers an opportunity to step back from the inquiry and reflect on the process, as a whole. First, I return to the research puzzle, around which this inquiry was composed. Next, I offer recommendations for professional practice inspired by the inquiry process. In closing, I identify potential limitations to this inquiry for readers to take into account as they considered utilizing these understandings in other contexts.

Looking Backward: Returning to the Research Puzzle

Reflecting on this inquiry in its entirety, after five years of living with it felt like a formidable task. Returning to the research puzzle allowed reflection back on the questions that brought me to this inquiry, while acknowledging my own growth, understanding, and changes occurring during this span of time. Reflection also offered the opportunity to look forward into future possibilities. The research puzzle for this inquiry was two-fold. Firstly, what are the experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors? Secondly, what stories do they tell about who they hope to be and become in relation to their work with individuals on parole and probation? The use of the word *hope* in the second question was significant, as I sought to highlight what was both meaningful and sought after by each participant. Together, I utilized these questions to co-compose understandings of hope and identity-making alongside four reintegration counsellors, including myself.

To explore participant experiences of identity-making and hope, I used the questions "Who do you hope to be and who do you hope to become in relation to your

work with individuals on parole and probation?" One of the understandings I gained through research conversations and writing my own narrative account was that the division between *being* and *becoming* was somewhat artificial. Both participants and I struggled with the distinction between being and becoming, as we discussed our hopes. Our conversations and my writing floundered, at times, as I sought to tease out differences between hopes to be and hopes to become. The question, "Who do you hope to be?" had a future-oriented, process quality. The connotations of hope as a future-oriented word allowed the present-tense *be* and future-tense *become* to flow together in temporal continuity. Returning to Crites (1971) idea that only the present moment existed, but was experienced through "tensed modalities" (p. 301) allowed the past to join with the present and anticipated future. Some of the hopes named by participants revealed a strong sense of *becoming*, acknowledging the uncertainty and fluidity that was part of the participants' identity-making processes. In my own narrative, I shared how my hopes to engage fully in a balanced and present life possessed stronger becoming-qualities. Brenna also shared how her hopes to become a teacher and a registered psychologist reflected stronger becoming-qualities, as these hopes were not yet realized. After Chandra left her job at the House, she also reflected, with uncertainty, into her ongoing process of becoming. These future becoming-oriented hopes tended to exist on a continuum where participants saw threads of these hopes in their current worklife, alongside future hopes to weave these threads into more-established patterns.

In some sense, identity, understood narratively, was always a process-oriented, *becoming*-project. Participant worklife identities remained, "multiple, fluid, and shifting [as they] continuously composed and re-composed [stories to live by] in the moment-to-

moment living" (Clandinin et al., 2006, p. 9). At the intersection of shifting temporal, contextual, and relational axes, participants told emerging stories about themselves and others. In ever-shifting personal and professional contexts, participants continued to compose stories of hope and identity. The recognition of these multiple, fluid, shifting qualities, reminded me why I selected narrative inquiry as a relevant approach to explore hope and identity-making. Hope and identity were not fixed, objective concepts when understood narratively. Rather, they were the products of lives composed and recomposed in relation to experience, over time. The three-dimensional inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) encouraged me to reflect inward and outward, backward and forward, and in place. Embedded within this approach was the understanding that life was a becoming-process, actively created in-context, as identities were "composed, recomposed, told, retold and lived out in storied ways on storied landscapes" (Clandinin, Murphy, Huber, & Murray Orr, 2010, p. 82). Holding these reflections in mind, I acknowledged that this inquiry represented a moment in time, frozen, while Paul, Chandra, Brenna, and I continued the ongoing process of composing worklife stories and living out who we hope to both be and become.

Looking Forward: Informing Practice

Co-composing narrative accounts with Paul, Brenna, Chandra, and myself allowed me to immerse myself into our worklife experiences. Within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), I constantly looked backward and forward, inward and outward, and in place. As the inquiry drew to a close, I sought to offer the understandings I co-composed through this process by returning to more broadly consider to reintegration counsellors, employers, and larger institutions.

Recommendations from academic research offer a bridge between research practice and professional practice. Reflecting on the understandings gained by the current inquiry, I suggest recommendations for both reintegration counsellors and their professional communities. These considerations included exploring possibilities to compose counterstories (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) about working with individuals on parole and probation, raising awareness of hope-seeking practices, and creating space to ponder becoming-oriented questions to compose future-oriented, anticipatory stories.

The participants, nested within contexts threaded with institutional and social narratives, asserted that working with individuals on parole and probation was challenging, demanding much of counsellors both personally and professionally. In many situations, *the glass is half-empty* and *the glass is half-full* perspectives both possessed merit; however, each perspective potentially altered the counsellor's abilities and options for addressing the situation. In the field of rehabilitation, A. Collins and Kuehn (2004) noted that, "hope acts as a buffer that prevents individuals from experiencing hopelessness and depression when they are faced with loss, failure, unexpected challenges, and lack of success" (p. 182). Similarly, te Riele (2010) argued that hope was a crucial resource in work with individuals who were "marginalized, disadvantaged or excluded" (p. 35), likely both for the client and the counsellor.

Hope-seeking approaches, like emphasizing subtle successes and recognizing the ongoing process of change appeared to offer reintegration counsellors ways to sustain themselves at work (Flesaker, 2008; Flesaker & Larsen, 2012). The capacity and interest in continuing to work with marginalized populations could be influenced by the reintegration counsellor's abilities to weave meaningful threads of hope into their

worklife identity-making. Participants shared about the importance of professional relationships to gain support and step back from their work to look with different, potentially hope-seeking, perspectives. Creating work environments where reintegration counsellors were encouraged to seek moments of hope, either alone or with others, could help them to compose hopeful stories about themselves, clients, and situations. Composing stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) about oneself as a person who sought hope or lived with a hope-seeking orientation (Flesaker, 2008; Jevne, 2005; Jevne & Nekolaichuk, 2003) could offer possibilities to transform professional practice by bringing awareness to experiences of hope and possibility, alongside challenge and frustration. In turn, a hope-seeking orientation could support reintegration counsellor's ability to continue offering their caring, passion, and expertise to clients, colleagues, and the community.

Through personal, professional, and larger socio-cultural narratives, participants situated themselves, and were situated by others, in relation to the world. At different times, these narratives were congruent or dissonant, challenging the participant's sense of hope and identity-making. White and Epston (1990) proposed that commonly accepted, dominant stories exerted power over individuals, communities, and institutions. When faced with dominant stories of burnout and compassion fatigue, composing counterstories (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) of hope, vocational calling, self-compassion, compassion satisfaction, and self-care, among many others, offered ways for reintegration counsellors to resist presumed frustration and hopelessness. These counterstories offered possibilities for reintegration counsellors to undermine dominant stories, not by simply replacing them with other dominant stories, but by inviting new, personally-meaningful interpretations

and conclusions. Exploring the negotiation of tensions within narrative inquiry, Clandinin, Murphy, Huber, and Murray Orr (2010) highlighted how counterstories shed light on the cracks or fissures within dominant stories where spaces to co-compose counterstories (Lindemann Nelson, 1995) could be created. As such, reintegration counsellors would likely benefit from the creation of safe spaces where they could compose, share, and hear meaningful counterstories. Safe spaces could include, but were not limited to, interagency consultation groups or sharing circles. Similarly, Clandinin and Cave (2008) noted the importance of creating pedagogical spaces for medical residents to "develop their own stories by which to live as doctors through narrative reflection on their interwoven personal, professional and cultural stories as they are shaped by, and enacted within, their professional contexts" (p. 765). In their inquiry, residents were invited to write, share, and collaboratively inquire into their clinical experiences to continue composing meaningful stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). In my experience, poetry offered a powerful way to explore my own process of composing and recomposing worklife stories. Arts-based approaches may offer additional possibilities to write, paint, or sculpt possibilities for counterstories, creating opportunities for exploration while maintaining separation to protect client confidentiality.

With the question, "Who do you hope to be and become in relation to your work with individuals on parole and probation?" I sought to acknowledge the aspirational and orienting qualities of hope. Touching on identity-making through the lens of hope, this question inquired into identity-making with the noun *who*, while also highlighting hope by illuminating the qualities that participants valued and strove towards. While these,

anticipatory stories may be unformed and vague (Crites, 1971), they offered threads for individuals to connect themselves to future possibilities. Representations of future work selves offered one way individuals could imagine significant hopes and aspirations in relation to work (Strauss, Griffin, & Parker, 2012). Imagining a hoped-for future work self may provide a compass for individuals (Fugate, Kinicki, & Ashforth, 2004) as they seek to compose their worklives. As such, creating opportunities for reintegration counsellors to pose and ponder questions about their hopes for being and becoming seemed vital to the ongoing composition of meaningful stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) and compassion satisfaction (Samios, Abel, & Rodzik, 2013). Posing questions like "How do you hope others would describe you in relation to your work?" or "What stories, images, or metaphors represent who you hope to be?" may assist reintegration counsellors in the composition of their stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). When faced with challenges and tensions, becoming-oriented stories may offer opportunities to acknowledge the difficulties of the present, while recognizing that possibilities remained for growth and change.

In a sociocultural climate focused on fiscal responsibility, efficiency, and statistical outcomes, questions may rise about the value of posing questions like, "Who do you hope to be and become in relation to your work with individuals on parole and probation?" However, Reissman and Speedy (2007), narrative researchers in the field of social work, disagreed. In their review of narrative research in the counselling professions, they questioned "Given that 30 years have passed since the 'narrative turn' began to reshape the social sciences, and given contemporary preoccupations with identity construction, why is there so little research reflecting these trends within social

work?" (p. 446) and, by extension, the helping professions as a whole. As such, creating opportunities for reintegration counsellors to pose and ponder questions of hope and identity-making in relation to their work offered valuable opportunities to foster health and well-being, while keeping knowledgeable, experienced professionals engaged in the field.

Acknowledging Boundaries and Limitations

Engaging in narrative inquiry allowed the participants and I to co-compose intimate and contextualized understandings of experience. The richness and depth of these understandings mean that readers must reflect upon how they will weave the threads of understanding they composed from this inquiry into their own contexts, at different times and with different people. The inquiry was limited to the understandings that the participants and I brought to the inquiry process. Each of us arrived at the research conversations, not as a blank slate, but as a richly woven tapestry. Drawing from my formal and informal educational and practice experiences, I chose to focus on certain aspects of participant stories, pose questions, and pursue statements in additional detail. Several influential ideas that I acknowledged included my beliefs about the significance of hope for helping professionals and the connections between hope and identity-making which I anticipated would be lived out across participant lives, rather than limited to work. I also entered our conversations with a curiosity about, and belief that, participants' career choices would draw from their early experiences. Finally, I wondered if participants might be tempted to tell me what they thought I wanted to hear, rather than the understandings they created from their experiences. We engaged in discussions about this possibility, including recognizing the co-composed, mutually influential nature of the

research conversations and the subsequent narrative accounts. After numerous drafts, meetings, and thoughtful revisions, I was confident that the narrative accounts reflected a genuine exploration by each participant of their experiences of identity-making through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work, at that moment in time.

I remained aware that memory is an important part of composing and recomposing the stories we live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Memories were recalled from the present circumstance, which changed with each retelling. Acknowledging the influence of experience and temporality on narrative construction, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) wrote, “What we may be able to say now about a person or school or some other is given meaning in terms of a larger context, and this meaning will change as time passes” (p. 19). Narrative inquiry pays attention to, “temporal dimensions and address temporal matters; they focus on the personal and social in a balance appropriate to the inquiry; and they occur in a place or a sequence of places” (p. 50). As experience builds upon experience, individuals actively compose understanding in relation to these contexts. Using a relational methodology, I sought to compose intimate, contextualized understandings, rather than external, objective retellings. While this may, at times, have altered the transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of the understandings from this inquiry, the experientially-situated nature of this knowledge also increased the power of these worklife stories. Narrative inquiry "privileges individual lived experiences as a source of insights useful not only to the person himself or herself but also to the wider field of social science generally" (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 49). By co-composing complex, multifaceted narrative accounts within the

three-dimensional inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), I offered the contexts, within which, the inquiry occurred. Readers who are interested in drawing the understandings they composed from this inquiry into different contexts with different people, must acknowledge the situated nature of this knowledge and take these contexts into account.

Finally, the use of personal and professional narratives may be perceived as a limitation to this inquiry. To call someone's account a *story*, has, at times, connoted thoughts of children's tales or make believe. However, the study of experience as narratively composed carried great strength because it offered a powerful opportunity to explore the ongoing composition of hope and identity. Stories have an incredible ability to impact lives. Hearing a story can inspire, motivate, offer previously unseen possibilities, build connection, and alter the course of human lives. As such, the stories that participants shared offered a powerful catalyst for change on intimate, personal levels and on grand, social levels.

Reflections

Analysis of the word *research*, suggested a process of inquiry and an ongoing exploration: a *re-search*. This narrative inquiry involved engaging in an ongoing process of inquiring into storied experience, co-composing understanding through the writing and negotiation of narrative accounts, and reflection upon possible similarities and differences with relevant academic literature. Looking inward and outward, backward and forward, and in-place, I wove together many threads to co-compose a narrative about experiences of identity-making for reintegration counsellors through the stories of who they hope to be and become in relation to their work. My hope for this inquiry was that it

would inspire readers to pose questions, which encouraged further re-search and inquiry into their own stories and understandings. I walk away from this narrative inquiry a changed person. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) noted, no one leaves a narrative inquiry unchanged. I will carry the experiences I co-composed alongside the incredible participants in this inquiry, my supervisor, and my doctoral committee into my own ongoing, ever-shifting worklife composition.

References

Acker, G. M. (1999). The impact of clients' mental illness on social workers' job satisfaction and burnout. *Health and Social Work, 24*, 112–119.

Asay, T. P., & Lambert, M. J. (1999). The empirical case for the common factors in therapy: Quantitative findings. In M. A. Hubble, B. L. Duncan, & S. K. Miller (Eds.), *The heart and soul of change: What works in therapy* (pp. 33–56). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Austin, W., Brintnell, E. S., Goble, E., Kagan, L., Kreitzer, L., Larsen, D., & Leier, B. (2013). *Lying down in the ever-falling snow: Canadian health professionals' experience of compassion fatigue*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Averill, J. R., Catlin, G., & Chon, K. K. (1990). *Rules of hope*. New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.

Baddeley, J., & Singer, J. A. (2007). Charting the life story's path: Narrative identity across the life span. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 177–202). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Bateson, M. C. (1994). *Peripheral visions: Learning along the way*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Bateson, M. C. (2001). *Full circles overlapping lives: Culture and generation in transition*. New York, NY: Random House.

Batson, C. D., & Shaw, L. L. (1991). Evidence for altruism: Toward a pluralism of prosocial motives. *Psychological Inquiry, 2*, 107–122. doi:10.1207/s15327965pli0202_1

Benner, P., & Wrubel, J. (1982). Skilled clinical knowledge: The value of perceptual awareness, part 2. *Journal of Nursing Administration, 12*, 28–33.

Benzein, E., Saveman, B. I., & Norberg, A. (2000). The meaning of hope in healthy, nonreligious Swedes. *Western Journal of Nursing Research, 22*, 202–219.

Bergsma, A., & Ardelt, M. (2012). Self-reported wisdom and happiness: An empirical investigation. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 13*, 481–499. doi:10.1007/s10902-011-9275-5

Bernard, S. (2000). *Experiences of hope in a domestic shelter worker: A case study* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

Botella, L., & Gámiz, M. (2012). Narrative assessment in psychotherapy: A constructivist approach. In P. Caputi, L. L. Viney, B. M. Walker, & N. Crittenden (Eds.), *Personal construct methodology* (pp. 247–267). West Sussex, UK: Wiley.

Botella, L., & Herrero, O. (2000). A relational constructivist approach to narrative therapy. *European Journal of Psychotherapy: Counselling & Health, 3*, 407–418.

Bride, B. E., Radey, M., & Figley, C. R. (2007). Measuring compassion fatigue. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, *35*, 155–163.

Bruininks, P., & Malle, B. F. (2005). Distinguishing hope from optimism and related affective states. *Motivation and Emotion, 29*, 327–355.

Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (2004). Life as narrative. *Social Research, 71*, 691–709.

Bruner, J. (2005). The narrative creation of self. In L. E. Angus & J. McLeod (Eds.), *The*

handbook of narrative and psychotherapy: Practice, theory, and research (pp. 3–14). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Bryant, F. B., & Cvengros, J. A. (2004). Distinguishing hope and optimism: Two sides of a coin or two separate coins? *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 23*, 273–302.

Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. (2005). *Tri-council policy statement: Ethical conduct for research involving humans 2014.* Retrieved from http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2-2014/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf

Canadian Psychological Association. (2000). *Canadian code of ethics for psychologists* (3rd ed.). Ottawa, Ontario, Canada: Author.

Caring. (2014). *Dictionary.com Unabridged.* Retrieved from http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/caring

Carr, D. (1986). *Time, narrative, and history*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Cheavens, J. S., Feldman, D. B., Gum, A., Michael, S. T., & Snyder, C. R. (2006). Hope therapy in a community sample: A pilot investigation. *Social Indicators Research, 77*, 61–78.

Clandinin, D. J. (Ed.). (2006). *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Clandinin, D. J. (2010). Narrative understandings of lives in and out of schools. *LEARNin Landscapes, 3*(2), 15–20.

Clandinin, D. J., & Cave, M. T. (2008). Creating pedagogical spaces for developing professional identity. *Medical Education, 42*, 765–770. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2923.2008.03098.x

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1995). *Teachers' professional knowledge landscapes*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Clandinin, D. J., & Huber, J. (2002). Narrative inquiry: Toward understanding life's artistry. *Curriculum Inquiry, 32*, 161–170.

Clandinin, D. J., & Huber, J. (2010) Narrative inquiry. In B. McGraw, E. Baker, & P. Peterson (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (3rd ed., 436–441). New York, NY: Elsevier.

Clandinin, D. J., Huber, J., Huber, M., Murphy, M. S., Orr, A. M., Pearce, M., & Steeves, P. (2006). *Composing diverse identities: Narrative inquiries into the interwoven lives of children and teachers*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Clandinin, D. J., Huber, J., Steeves, P., & Li, Y. (2011). Becoming a narrative inquirer: Learning to attend within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space. In S. Trahar (Ed.), *Learning and teaching narrative inquiry: Travelling in the borderlands* (Vol. 14, pp. 33–52). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Clandinin, D. J., Murphy, M. S., Huber, J., & Murray Orr, A. (2010). Negotiating narrative inquiries: Living in a tension-filled midst. *Journal of Educational Research, 103*, 81–90.

Clandinin, D. J., & Rosiek, J. (2007). Mapping a landscape of narrative inquiry:

Borderland spaces and tensions. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 35–75). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Clandinin, D. J., Steeves, P., & Caine, V. (Eds.). (2013). *Composing lives in transition: A narrative inquiry into the experiences of early school leavers*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group.

Collins, A. B., & Kuehn, M. D. (2004). The construct of hope in the rehabilitation process. *Rehabilitation Education, 18,* 175–183.

Collins, S., & Long, A. (2003). Working with the psychological effects of trauma: Consequences for mental health-care workers—A literature review. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, *10*, 417–424.

Compassion. (2014). *Dictionary.com Unabridged.* Retrieved from http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/compassion

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1999). *Shaping a professional identity: Stories of educational practice*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (2006). Narrative inquiry. In J. Green, G. Camilli, & P. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (3rd ed., pp. 477–487). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Craig, C. D., & Sprang, G. (2010). Compassion satisfaction, compassion fatigue, and burnout in a national sample of trauma treatment therapists. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*, *23*, 319–339.

Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory Into Practice, 39*, 124–131.

Crites, S. (1971). The narrative quality of experience. *Journal of the American Academy*

of Religion, 39, 291–311.

Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundation of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cutcliffe, J. R. (1997). Towards a definition of hope. *International Journal of Psychiatric Nursing Research, 3*, 687–690.

Cutcliffe, J. R. (2004). The inspiration of hope in bereavement counselling. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, *25*, 165–190.

Davidson, J. C., & Caddell, D. P. (1994). Religion and the meaning of work. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *33*, 135–147.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 695–727). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

deWaal, B. M. (2008). Putting the altruism back into altruism: The evolution of empathy. *Annual Review of Psychology, 59*, 279–300.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York, NY: Collier.

Dik, B. J., & Duffy, R. D. (2009). Calling and vocation at work: Definitions and prospects for research and practice. *The Counselling Psychologist, 37*, 424–450. doi:10.1177/0011000008316430

Dufault, K., & Martocchio, B. C. (1985). Hope: Its spheres and dimensions. *Nursing Clinics of North America, 21*, 379–391.

Duffy, R. D. (2006). Spirituality, religion, and career development: Current status and future directions. *The Career Development Quarterly, 55*, 52–63.

Duffy, R. D., Allan, B. A., & Dik, B. J. (2012). The presence of a calling and academic

satisfaction: Examining potential mediators. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 79*, 74–80.

Duffy, R. D., Foley, P. F., Raque-Bodgan, T. L., Reid-Marks, L., Dik, B. J., Castano, M. C., & Adams, C. M. (2012). Counselling psychologists who view their careers as a calling: A qualitative study. *Journal of Career Assessment, 20,* 293–308. doi: 10.1177/1069072711436145

Dufrane, K., & Leclair, S. W. (1984). Using hope in the counselling process. *Counselling & Values, 29*, 32–41.

Einstein, A. (1934/2006). *The world as I see it*. Minneapolis, MN: Filiquarian.

Eliott, J. (2005). What have we done with hope? A brief history. In J. Eliott (Ed.), *Interdisciplinary perspectives on hope* (pp. 3–45). Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science.

Eliott, J., & Olver, I. (2002). The discursive properties of "hope": A qualitative analysis of cancer patients' speech. *Qualitative Health Research, 12*, 173–193.

Eliott, J., & Olver, I. (2007). Hope and hoping in the talk of dying cancer patients. *Social Science & Medicine, 64*, 138–149.

Ely, M. (2007). In-forming re-presentations. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 567–598). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Farran, C. J., Herth, K. A., & Popovich, J. M. (1995). *Hope and hopelessness: Critical clinical constructs.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Feldman, D. B., & Snyder, C. R. (2005). Hope and the meaningful life: Theoretical and empirical associations between goal-directed thinking and life meaning. *Journal*

of Social Clinical Psychology, 24, 401–421.

Figley, C. R. (1995). *Compassion fatigue: Coping with secondary traumatic stress disorder in those who treat the traumatized*. New York, NY: Brunner/Mazel.

Figley, C. R. (2002a). Compassion fatigue: Psychotherapists' chronic lack of self care. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 58*, 1433–1441. doi:10.1002/jclp.10090

Figley, C. R. (2002b). *Treating compassion fatigue.* New York, NY: Brunner/Mazel.

Flaskas, C. (2007). Holding hope and hopelessness: Therapeutic engagements with the balance of hope. *Journal of Family Therapy, 29*, 186–202.

Flesaker, K. D. (2008). *Accounts of hope for reintegration professionals working with women on parole and probation* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

Flesaker, K. D., & Larsen, D. L. (2012). To offer hope you must have hope: Accounts of hope for reintegration counsellors working with women on parole and probation. *Qualitative Social Work, 11*, 61–79. doi:10.1177/1473325010382325

Fontana, A., & Frey, J. H. (2005). The interview: From neutral stance to political involvement. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 695–727). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fothergill, A., Edwards, D., & Burnard, P. (2004). Stress, burnout, coping and stress management in psychiatrists: Findings from a systematic review. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry, 50*, 54–65.

Freire, P. (2004). *Pedagogy of hope: Reliving pedagogy of the oppressed.* London, UK: Continuum.

Fugate, M., Kinicki, A. J., & Ashforth, B. E. (2004). Employability: A psycho-social

construct, its dimensions and applications. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour, 65*, 14–38. doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2003.10.005

Gallagher, M. W., & Lopez, S. J. (2009). Positive expectancies and mental health: Identifying the unique contributions of hope and optimism. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 4*, 548–556.

Gaskin, S., & Forté, L. (1995). The meaning of hope: Implications for nursing practice and research. *Journal of Gerontological Nursing, 21*(3), 17–24.

Gergen, K. J. (1999). *An invitation to social construction.* London, UK: Sage.

Gilbert, P. (2009). *The compassionate mind.* London, UK: Constable Robinson.

Goldberg, N. (1997). *Living Color*. New York, NY: Bantam.

Gottschalk, L. A. (1974). A hope scale applicable to verbal samples. *Archives of General Psychiatry, 30*, 779–785.

Gottschalk, L., Bechtel, R., Buchman, T., & Ray, S. (2005). Measurement of hope and associated neuropsychiatric dimensions by the computerized content analysis of speech and verbal texts. In J. Eliott (Ed.), *Interdisciplinary perspectives on hope* (pp. 215–219). New York, NY: Nova Science.

Greene, M. (1995). *Releasing the imagination: Essays on education, the arts, and social change*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Habermas, T., & Bluck, S. (2000). Getting a life: The emergence of the life story in adolescence. *Psychological Bulletin, 126*, 748–769.

Hernandez, E. F., Foley, P. F., & Beitin, B. K. (2011). Hearing the call: A phenomenological study of religion in career choice. *Journal of Career Development, 38*, 62–88. doi:10.1177/0894845309358889

Herrestad, H., & Biong, S. (2010). Relational hopes: A study of the lived experience of hope in some patients hospitalized for intentional self-harm. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Health & Well-Being, 5*, 1–9.

Hubble, M. A., Duncan, B. L., & Miller, S. K. (Eds.). (1999). *The heart and soul of change: What works in therapy*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Huber, J., & Whelan, K. (1999). A marginal story as a place of possibility: Negotiating self on the professional knowledge landscape. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *15*, 381–396.

Jevne, R. F. (1994). *The voice of hope: Heard across the heart of life.* San Diego, CA: LuraMedia.

Jevne, R. F. (2005). Hope: The simplicity and complexity. In J. Eliott (Ed.), *Interdisciplinary perspectives on hope* (pp. 3–45). Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science.

Jevne, R. F., & Nekolaichuk, C. L. (2003). Threat and hope in coping with cancer for health care professionals. In R. Jacoby & G. Keinan (Eds.), *Between stress and hope: From a disease-centered to a health-centered perspective* (pp. 187–212). Westport, CT: Praeger.

Josselson, R. (1996a). On writing other people's lives. In R. Josselson (Ed.), *Ethics and process in the narrative study of lives* (pp. 60–71). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Jossleson, R. (1996b). *Revising herself.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Josselson, R. (2007). The ethical attitude in narrative research: Principles and

practicalities. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 537–566). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kerby, A. P. (1991). *Narrative and the self*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Larsen, D., Edey, W., & Lemay, L. (2007). Understanding the role of hope in counselling: Exploring the intentional uses of hope. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly, 20*, 401–416.

Larsen, D. J., & Stege, R. (2010a). Hope-focused practices during early psychotherapeutic sessions: Part I: Implicit approaches. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration, 20*, 271–292.

Larsen, D. J., & Stege, R. (2010b). Hope-focused practices during early psychotherapeutic sessions: Part II: Explicit approaches. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration, 20*, 293–311.

Larsen, D. J. & Stege, R. (2012). Client accounts of hope in early counselling sessions: A qualitative study. *Journal of Counselling & Development, 90*, 45–54.

Leary, M. R., Tate, E. B., Adams, C. E., Allen, A. B., & Hancock, J. (2007). Self-compassion and reactions to unpleasant self-relevant events: The implications of treating oneself kindly. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 92,* 887–904.

LeMay, L. M. (2014). *A narrative inquiry into teachers' experiences of working with Hope* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

Levant, R. F. (1995). Toward the reconstruction of masculinity. In R. F. Levant & W. S. Pollack (Eds.), *A new psychology of men* (pp. 229–251). New York, NY: Basic

Books.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Lindemann Nelson, H. (1995). Resistance and insubordination. *Hypatia, 10*(2), 23–40.

Magaletta, P. R., & Oliver, J. M. (1999). The hope construct, will and ways: Their relative relation with self-efficacy, optimism, and general well-being. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 55*, 539–551.

Mascaro, N., & Rosen, D. H. (2005). Existential meaning's role in the enhancement of hope and prevention of depressive symptoms. *Journal of Personality, 73*, 985–1014.

Mascaro, N., & Rosen, D. H. (2006). The role of existential meaning as a buffer against stress. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 24*, 168–190.

Maslach, C. (1982). *Burnout: The cost of caring*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Leiter, M. P. (2001). Job burnout. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *52*, 397–422.

McAdams, D. P. (1985). *Power, intimacy, and the life story: Personological inquiries into identity*. New York, NY: Guilford.

McAdams, D. P. (2001). The psychology of life stories. *Review of General Psychology, 5*, 100–122.

McAdams, D. P., & Janis, L. (2005). Narrative identity and narrative therapy. In L. E. Angus & J. McLeod (Eds.), *The handbook of narrative and psychotherapy* (pp. 159–173). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

McLeod, J. (2001). *Qualitative research in counselling and psychotherapy*. London, UK: Sage.

Morse, J. M., & Doberneck, B. (1995). Delineating the concept of hope. *Image: Journal of Nursing Scholarship, 27*, 277–285.

Neff, K. D. (2003). Self-compassion: An alternative conceptualization of a healthy attitude toward oneself. *Self and Identity, 2*, 85–101.

Neff, K. D., Kirkpatrick, K. L., & Rude, S. S. (2007). Self-compassion and adaptive psychological functioning. *Journal of Research in Personality, 41,* 139–154.

Neimeyer, R. A. (1995). Constructivist psychotherapies: Features, foundations, and future directions. In R. A. Neimeyer & M. J. Mahoney (Eds.), *Constructivism in psychotherapy* (pp. 11–38). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Nekolaichuk, C. L., Jevne, R. F., & Maguire, T. O. (1999). Structuring the meaning of hope in health and illness. *Social Sciences & Medicine, 48*, 591–605.

Nelson, K., & Fivush, R. (2000). Socialization of memory. In E. Tulving & F. I. M. Craik (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of memory* (pp. 283–296). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Noddings, N. (2013). *Caring: A relational approach to ethics and moral education* (2nd ed.). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Norcross, J. C. (2010). The therapeutic relationship. In B. L. Duncan, S. D. Miller, B. E. Wampold, & M. A. Hubble (Eds.), *The heart and soul of change: Delivering what works in therapy* (2nd ed., pp. 113–141). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Nunn, B. V. (2005). Getting clear what hope is. In J. A. Eliott (Ed.), *Interdisciplinary perspectives on hope* (pp. 63–67). Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science.

Orlinsky, D., & Rønnestad, M. H. (2005). *How psychotherapists develop: A study of therapeutic work and professional growth.* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Park, N., Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). Strengths of character and well-being. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 23*, 603–619.

Patsiopoulos, A. T., & Buchanan, M. J. (2011). The practice of self-compassion in counselling: A narrative inquiry. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 42*, 301–307. doi.org/10.1037/a0024482

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1991). Narrative and self-concept. *Journal of Narrative & Life History, 1*, 135–153.

Potter, J. (2003). Discourse analysis and discursive psychology. In P. M. Camic, J. E. Rhodes, & L. Yardley (Eds.), *Qualitative research in psychology: Expanding perspectives in methodology and design* (pp. 73–94). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Ratliff, N. (1988). Stress and burnout in the helping professions. *Social Casework, 69*, 147–154.

Reissman, C. (1993). *Narrative analysis.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Reissman, C. K., & Speedy, J. (2007). Narrative inquiry in the psychotherapy professions. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a*

methodology (pp. 426–456). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rønnestad, M. H., & Skovholt, T. M. (2003). The journey of the counsellor and therapist: Research findings and perspectives on professional development. *Journal of Career Development, 30*, 5–44.

Rorty, R. (1999). *Philosophy and social hope.* London, UK: Penguin.

Samios, C., Abel, L. M., & Rodzik, A. K. (2013). The protective role of compassion satisfaction for therapists who work with sexual violence survivors: An application of the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *Anxiety, Stress & Coping*, *26*, 610–623.

Sarbin, T. R. (1986). The narrative as a root metaphor for psychology. In T. R. Sarbin (Ed.), *Narrative psychology: The storied nature of human conduct* (pp. 3–21). New York, NY: Praeger.

Savickas, M. L. (2002). Career construction: A developmental theory of vocational behavior. In D. Brown and Associates (Eds.), *Career choice and development* (4th ed., pp. 149–205). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Savickas, M. L. (2005). The theory and practice of career construction. In S. D. Brown & R. W. Lent (Eds.), *Career development and counselling: Putting theory and research to work* (pp. 42–70). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Scheier, M. F., & Carver, C. S. (1985). Optimism, coping, and health: Assessment and implications of generalized outcome expectations. *Health Psychology, 4*, 219–247.

Schön, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Schwandt, T. A. (1997). *Qualitative inquiry: A dictionary of terms*. Thousand Oaks, CA:

Sage.

Schwartz, R. H., Tiamiyu, M. F., & Dwyer, D. J. (2007). Social worker hope and perceived burnout: The effects of age, years in practice, and setting. *Administration in Social Work*, *31*(4), 103–119.

Singer, J. A. (2004). Narrative identity and meaning-making across the adult lifespan: An introduction. *Journal of Personality, 72*, 437–460.

Skovholt, T. M. (2005). The cycle of caring: A model of expertise in the helping professions. *Journal of Mental Health Counselling, 27*, 82–93.

Skovholt, T. M., & Rønnestad, M. H. (1992). *The evolving professional self: Stages and themes in therapist and counsellor development.* Oxford, UK: Wiley.

Skovholt, T. M., & Rønnestad, M. H. (2003). Struggles of the novice counsellor and therapist. *Journal of Career Development, 30*, 45–58.

Snyder, C. R. (1995). Conceptualizing, measuring, and nurturing hope. *Journal of Counselling & Development, 73*, 355–360.

Snyder, C. R., Harris, C., Anderson, J. R., Holleran, S. A., Irving, L. M., Sigmon, S. T., . . . Harnery, P. (1991). The will and the ways: Development and validation of an individual-differences measure of hope. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 60*, 570–585.

Sprang, G., Clark, J. J., & Whitt-Woosley, A. (2007). Compassion fatigue, compassion satisfaction, and burnout: Factors impacting a professional's quality of life. *Journal of Loss and Trauma, 12*, 259–290. doi:10.1080/15325020701238093

Stamm, B. H. (2005). *The ProQOL manual.* Retrieved from http://compassionfatigue.org/pages/ProQOLManualOct05.pdf

Steeves, P. (2000). *Crazy quilt: Continuity, identity and a storied school landscape in Transition: A teacher's and a principal's works in progress* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

Steeves, P., Clandinin, D. J., & Caine, V. (2013). Stories to live by: Composing identities. In D. J. Clandinin, P. Steeves, & V. Caine (Eds.), *Composing lives in transition: A narrative inquiry into the experiences of early school leavers* (pp. 225–238). Bingley, UK: Emerald Group.

Steger, M. F., & Dik, B. J. (2009). If one is looking for meaning in life, does finding meaning in work help? *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being, 1*, 303–320. doi:10.1111/j.1758-0854.2009.01018.x

Steger, M. F., & Kashdan, T. B. (2007). Stability and specificity of meaning in life and life satisfaction over one year. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *8*, 161–179.

Steger, M. F., Pickering, N., Shin, J. Y., & Dik, B. J. (2010). Calling in work: Secular or sacred? *Journal of Career Assessment, 18*, 82–96. doi:10.1177/1069072709350905

Stephenson, C. (1991). The concept of hope revisited for nursing. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 16*, 1456–1461.

Strauss, K., Griffin, M. A., & Parker, S. K. (2012). Future work selves: How salient hoped-for identities motivate proactive career behaviors. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *97*, 580–598.

te Riele, K. (2010). Philosophy of hope: Concepts and applications for working with marginalized youth. *Journal of Youth Studies, 13*, 35–46.

Thompson, I. A., Amatea, E. S., & Thompson, E. S. (2014). Personal and contextual

predictors of mental health counsellors' compassion fatigue and burnout. *Journal of Mental Health Counselling*, *36*, 58–77.

Truscott, D., & Crook, K. H. (2004). *Ethics for the practice of psychology in Canada.* Edmonton, AB, Canada: University of Alberta Press.

Wampold, B. E. (2001). *The great psychotherapy debate: Models, methods and findings.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

White, M., & Epston, D. (1990). *Narrative means to therapeutic ends*. New York, NY: Norton.

Wykes, T., Stevens, W., & Everitt, B. (1997). Stress in community care teams: Will it affect the sustainability of community care? *Social Psychiatry Psychiatric Epidemiology, 32*, 398–407.

Appendix A

Participant Information Letter

Study Title: Stories of Being and Becoming: Hope, Meaning, and Identity in the Worklife Accounts of Reintegration Counsellors

Keri Flesaker, M.Ed., Doctoral Candidate
Department of Educational Psychology
6-102 Education North, University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB T6G 2G5
(780) 901-3508
flesaker@ualberta.ca

Dear Participant,

My name is Keri Flesaker and I am a doctoral student at the University of Alberta in the Department of Educational Psychology. I began pondering the concept of hope and its role in my own professional worklife and the lives of my clients while working as a reintegration counsellor with individuals on parole and probation. The term, *reintegration counsellor,* describes helping professionals who work alongside individuals transitioning from correctional facilities into the community. These professionals include, but are not limited to, social workers, program leaders, chaplains, elders, and correctional liaisons. In my Masters thesis, I interviewed reintegration counsellors to inquire about experiences that sustained and challenged their hope in their work. While informative, this experience left me pondering the stories left untold which did not fit within the bounds of the interview framework. Desiring to build upon this previous research, I currently hope to engage reintegration counsellors in a longer research relationship, allowing them the opportunity to tell the story of their work with individuals on parole and/or probation. As such, I will be conducting a research study for my doctoral dissertation, beginning in February 2011 and lasting approximately eight months. To participate, reintegration counsellors should have at least four years of experience working with individuals on parole and/or probation. Specifically, I am seeking reintegration counsellors who currently work in community-based rather than correctional settings. Finally, participants should be willing to participate in at least two, potentially more, interviews and review drafts of the written narrative accounts.

The research question for this study is two-fold. Firstly, who do reintegration counsellors hope to *be* and who do they hope to *become* in the context of their work with individuals on parole and/or probation? Secondly, what do these narratives offer regarding participants' understandings of hope, meaning, and identity in-relation to their work? As a participant, you and I will engage in several semi-structured interviews. In these interviews, you will be invited to first share your worklife history as a reintegration counsellor. Next, we will engage in conversations regarding who you hope to be and who

you hope to become in-relation to your work. These interviews will be audio recorded for the purpose of transcription. During these interviews, we will create a timeline detailing your work history with individuals on parole and/or probation and any other significant life events you deem salient to your worklife as a reintegration counsellor. You will be provided with a copy of the timeline upon your request. Next, we will review transcripts of the interview conversations and drafts of the narratives constructed from the interviews. These meetings offer the opportunity to ask questions and offer feedback and clarification to ensure that your voice is represented in a way that honours your intentions. The research findings from this study will be published in a doctoral dissertation, academic journals, and presented at conferences.

Engaging in this study may inform the ways you think about yourself, your work, and the concepts of hope, meaning, and identity in-relation to your professional worklife. An altered level of work satisfaction following the opportunity to discuss and reflect upon worklife in-relation to the constructs of hope, meaning, and identity may be both a potential risk and a potential benefit of participating in this study.

As the primary researcher, I will carry out the field work and subsequent writing. If a transcriber is employed during this project, s/he will be briefed on appropriate ethical standards and required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

You have the right to chose whether or not you will participate in this study. Although the director(s) of your agency/organization (if applicable) will be aware that the researcher may contact employees who fit the participation criteria for the study, they will not be informed regarding your decision to participate or decline. At any time, you can withdraw from this study, without penalty. If you withdraw, the data collected from observations, interviews, and any other activities will not be used. As a participant, you have a right to privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality. All information collected (e.g., audio recordings, interview transcripts, written work) will be sorted and your name will not be associated with it. Participant confidentiality will be safeguarded and anonymity maintained through the use of pseudonyms. In the write-up of the research findings, every effort will be made to eliminate any information that can be linked directly to you or any of your clients. Audiotapes and transcribed data will be secured in a locked filing cabinet and computer files will be password protected. This information will be kept for at least five years following the completion of the study. If you choose to participate, I will be happy to provide you with a copy of the research findings. The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by Research Ethics Board 1 at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Your experience as a reintegration counsellor will be an essential component of this study. For questions or clarification, I may be reached at the contact information listed above. You may also contact Dr. Denise Larsen (research supervisor) at denise.larsen@ualberta.ca or (780) 492-5897 for additional information.

Appendix B

Guiding Interview Questions

Note: These questions represent general areas of interest to explore during research interviews. The researcher will be responsive to the participant's responses during the interview, so additional questions may also emerge during the interaction. These questions will be asked over the course of several interviews.

- Can you tell me about your worklife history with individuals on parole and/or probation?
- What brought you to this field?
- Where there any points you considered leaving this field? Can you tell me about that?
- What brought you back to this field?
- Why have you continued working in this field?
- What does it mean for you to be a reintegration counsellor?
- Are there any other important life events that you think need to be included in the worklife timeline?

- Who do you hope to *be* in your worklife with individuals on parole and/or probation? Can you tell me about that?
- Who else do you hope to be in-relation to your work?
- How do you hope that others identify you in your worklife?
- What informs these hopes?
- Are there any tensions between these hopes?

- Who do you hope to become in-relation to your work? Can you tell me about that?
- Who else do you hope to become in-relation to your work?
- What informs these hopes?
- Does this differ from who you hope to be right now in your worklife? Can you tell me about that?
- Are there any tensions between these hopes?
- Have these hopes changed or shifted over the course of your worklife? Can you tell me about that?
- What would it mean for you to look back on your work and to be the person you hoped to be?

Appendix C

Permission to Use Participant's Work

Project title: Stories of Being and Becoming: Hope, Meaning, and Identity in the Worklife Accounts of Reintegration Counsellors

I understand that a researcher, Ms. Keri Flesaker, from the University of Alberta is requesting to use the work co-created during research interviews for the purpose of research. Original samples will be photographed/photocopied and returned to the participant in a timely manner if requested. I understand that images of this work may be used in the researcher's dissertation / research reports / scholarly publications or in presentations at scholarly conferences. I understand that in discussions about the work, a pseudonym will be used.

FURTHER,

_____ I request return of original artifact(s) to the address provided below:

By signing below, I consent* for my work to be used as stipulated above.

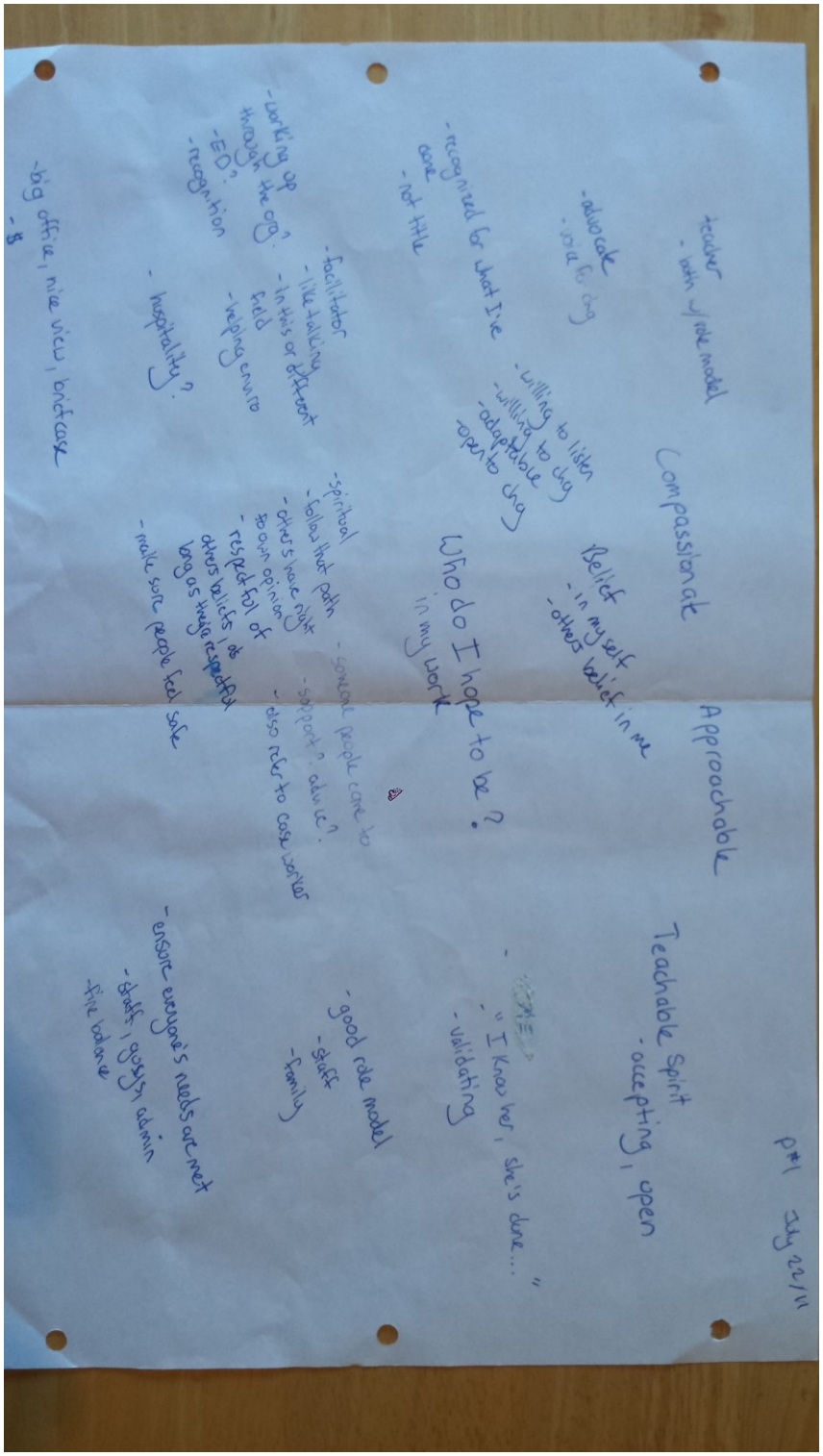
_____	_____
Participant printed name	Participant signature and Date

*I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time by contacting the researcher, Ms. Keri Flesaker at (780) 901-3508 or Dr. Denise Larsen (research supervisor) at (780) 492-5897.

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by Research Ethics Board 1 at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615

Appendix D

Sample of Co-Composed Identity Web



Appendix E

Sample Point-Form Chronicle for Chandra

Volunteer Probation Officer · Working with youth not my passion, but had plenty to offer · Went to school at GMCC: Correctional Services Diploma Program ·

Temporary Absence Program · More contact with inmates and staff · Story of a staff "I didn't want to be" · Environment felt too negative ·

Probation Office · Previously volunteered here · Supervised clients on probation · Enjoyed the office, especially the atmosphere · Met good people I associate with today · Story of the welcoming receptionist ·

The House · Enjoyed what I did · This isn't where I want to stay, but I'm not sure what I want to be · Worked in a halfway house setting with clients on parole ever since ·

Worked with 2 Houses for close to a year · Felt like my home base · Lots of part time work · Some full time case work contracts ·

Full time case workers have their own caseload of 6-10 guys · Ensure they abide by their conditions · Part time caseworkers don't have their own caseload · Oversee the guys when the full time case worker isn't there · Worked a full time nights position for several years, but never got the hang of sleeping days ·

Worked a couple of parole secommends with the CAPS program · Community supervision · Not a PO, classed as parole supervision · PO can do more than a parole supervisor · Got to know guys on parole · Ensure they're following their conditions, providing documentation, watch for escalation · Lots of paperwork · Enjoyed it, but not my passion · Like regular contact with clients and teammenship · Good experience ·

Appendix F

Participant Consent Form

Research Project: Stories of Being and Becoming: Hope, Meaning, and Identity in the Worklife Accounts of Reintegration Counsellors

Principle Researcher: Keri Flesaker, M.Ed., Doctoral Candidate
Department of Educational Psychology
6-102 Education North, University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB T6G 2G5
(780) 901-3508
flesaker@ualberta.ca

Doctoral Supervisor: Dr. Denise Larsen, Ph.D., R. Psych.
(780) 492-5897
Denise.larsen@ualberta.ca

I understand that the purpose of this study is to explore who reintegration counsellors hope to be and who they hope to become in-relation to their work with individuals on parole and/or probation. I am aware that this study will involve the following:

- Participating in several interviews with the researcher to talk about my worklife history with individuals on parole and/or probation and who I hope to both *be* and *become* in-relation to my work as a reintegration counsellor.
- Co-creating a written timeline detailing my worklife history with individuals on parole and/or probation
- Research interviews being audio recorded and transcribed.
- Following the interviews, reviewing interview transcripts and drafts of narrative accounts, so that the researcher and I can ask questions and offer feedback and clarification.
- Identifying interview information that I share with the researcher will be accessible only to the researcher and her doctoral supervisory committee. It will not at any time be shared with anyone, including staff members at my workplace. Although the director(s) of my agency organization (if applicable) will be aware that the researcher may contact employees who fit the participation criteria of the study, they will not be informed regarding my decision to participate or decline.

I understand that all information collected (e.g., audio recordings, interview transcripts, written work) will be sorted and my name will not be associated with it, so as to maintain my privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity. I am also aware that the write-up of the findings will make every effort to not include any information that can be linked directly to me or any of my clients. I understand that all audiotapes and transcribed data will be secured in a locked filing cabinet and that computer files will be password protected. This information will be kept for at least five years following the completion of the study.

I understand that this research is being conducted as a part of Keri Flesaker's program of research to complete a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology with a specialization in Counselling Psychology. I understand that the results from this study may be published in a doctoral dissertation, academic journals, or presented at conferences. I am also aware that this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by Research Ethics Board 1 at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, I can contact the Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615.

I understand that my participation in this study is completely voluntary and I can withdraw my involvement at any time. I understand that I have every right to opt out of this study without any penalty and any collected data will not be included in the study.

Having read and understood all of the above I, _____ _____ agree to participate freely and voluntarily in this study.

Signature of Participant_____ Date__ _____

Signature of Researcher_____ Date _____

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact Keri Flesaker at (780) 901-3508 or Dr. Denise Larsen at (780) 492-5897.

Thank you for your participation in this study. A copy of this consent form and information letter are provided for your records.