

Examining the role of an arts-based program
in enhancing care workers' capacity to respond
to children and young people

by

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Abstract

Psychosocial arts-based programs with children are widely recognised, but little research exists on arts therapy based professional development programs for care workers who work with vulnerable children and how the programs might enhance the capacity of care workers to respond effectively to the needs of the children. The purpose of this study was to examine a professional development experiential workshop program that uses arts-focused, active methods to understand how participants experience core dramatherapy processes and how arts methods influence care workers. The study used a multiple case study design, which included practice led inquiry and pre- and post-workshop interviews with two different groups of care workers. Data was analysed using theory-informed thematic analysis. The findings suggest that through participation in the program most participants reported new understandings of themselves, the young people they work with, and their professional practice. The analysis showed the importance of group processes and climate for enhanced learning. Further analysis revealed that participants' experience of the three specific arts-focused/active methods were important in effecting reflection, thereby resulting in new insights such as recognising the importance of feeling validated, and affirmed in their work, awareness of power dynamics between adult and child, and the importance of intentionally working in relationship with children. The implications of the findings are discussed in relation to professional program development. It is suggested that arts active methods can enhance the capacity to think and feel in the here and now, and that applied practice and theory of dramatherapy can support understanding of how change, through core underlying processes, happens through arts practice.

Declaration

I, Kirsten Dana Meyer, declare that the PhD thesis entitled “Examining the role of an arts therapy based program in enhancing care workers’ capacity to respond to children and young people” is no more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole, or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.



This thesis has been professionally copy edited by Dr Rachel Le Rossignol according to the Australian Standards for Editing Practice. Specifically the standards applied included D1, D3 to D5 and E1, E2 and E4. These standards relate to appropriate academic editing, including clarity of expression, spelling, punctuation and grammar, and ensuring the document meets the examining university’s format, style and sequencing requirements.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my goddaughter Aimée (21/4/1991-10/5/2006)
and to all young people who, for one reason or another, have felt unheard,
misunderstood and disconnected.

Acknowledgments

I feel overwhelmed to have finally reached this stage, and enormously privileged to have had the support I have had. This research 'is' because of those who have made it possible, in small and significant ways. I would like to begin by acknowledging the lands on which my privilege was born and has travelled—South Africa and Australia—and the traditional owners of these lands. I hope I continue to walk consciously and carefully.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In this chapter I begin by situating myself as the researcher and outlining the contexts within which the research was developed. I then outline the research rationale, focus, aims, questions, process and thesis structure.

Situating Myself as Researcher

I am a white South African currently living in Australia. I am a dramatherapist by training. I carry with me a history of privilege and an uncomfortable past in a country built on racial inequities. I trained in the United Kingdom in the late 1990s and returned to South Africa to play a part in developing a new democracy. While taking part in the Health Professions Council of South Africa Board examination in order to register as an arts therapist, I met an art therapist and together we co-founded Zakheni Arts Therapy Foundation. Later, with the assistance of a play therapist, we developed the Firemaker Program, which is the focus of this research project.

Now situated/dislocated in a new place, Melbourne, Australia, as a PhD candidate, I look back on my dramatherapy training and practice and ask: How might we practice from a political position that is both transformative and ethical? Like other critical feminist arts therapists (Hadley, 2013; Hahna, 2013; Hogan, 1997; Sajjani, 2012) I recognise my training as part of a dominant narrative, and that I cannot keep my professional role separate from the political. I do not claim to be an innocent, neutral author or player in the history of South Africa—it is my history. I have colluded and opposed; and I am both complicit and subversive. I equally do not claim the work of Firemaker to be ‘making’ a difference to others, thus leaving me feeling more comfortable about my past. Rather, I wish to explore how Firemaker is an attempt to

think, dialogue and engage with the role of professional development in a world facing uncomfortable complex social, cultural and political dynamics. In thus reflecting, I am fully aware of the way in which reflexivity and research can centre my voice, a white heteronormative voice. However, my move to Australia has meant social and cultural dislocation that has been discomfoting in many ways. The discomfort has brought into focus some tensions and challenges about my taken-for-granted roles and identities, as well as opened possibilities for rethinking identities and roles, especially in relation to arts practice in the context of social transformation (Meyer, 2014).

My professional work is rooted in arts-based practice, finding ways of expression and transformation that written words alone cannot do. I have been an arts practitioner (actor and director), drama and creative arts teacher, applied drama community facilitator, professional trainer, dramatherapist and supervisor. It is these communities of professional roles I bring with me to my new role as researcher. Having said that, the primacy of my experience and practice as a dramatherapist, professional trainer and supervisor, facilitating experiential group work using the creative arts, is what informs this research.

Group work has been at the core of my dramatherapy training and practice. Methods in facilitating these groups are all action/arts-based and include object work, image making, movement, role-play and storytelling. I know, through dramatherapy research and practice (Jones & Dokter, 2008) that these methods facilitate moments of insight or transformation at different levels for participants.

So why research something I already feel I 'know'? Firstly, as I am always *in* practice I wanted to be able to observe the process of Firemaker in more detail and depth from the vantage point of researcher. I was interested in what it is that makes the

Firemaker workshop spaces generative, transformative and important to the people who participate in them (including myself). What is it about these practices that enables new insights and understandings, and why do they eventuate in this specific interactive context? While this study is not therapeutic in intention, the primary mode of enquiry employs dramatherapy methods and theory (Jones, 1996, 2008, 2012). Jones' (1996) writing on dramatherapy theory and practice influenced and shaped the development of the Firemaker methods and, in turn, informs my understanding of how the arts can bring about change.

I am both a practitioner and a researcher, interested in alternative modes of enquiry. I align myself with research practitioners who seek methods that are socially engaged, ethical and transformative, both in their method of inquiry and their outcome (Finley, 2011; Hadley, 2013; Hahna, 2013; Hogan, 1997; McKenna & Woods, 2012; Sajnani, 2012; Sonn, 2009; Watkins & Shulman, 2008). Drama educationist, Taylor (2012), refers to an emerging “community of renewal and reconstruction in the Western world” (p. xv): the past two decades have seen traditional forms of research challenged and other/alternative forms of inquiry sought that “shake the foundations of traditional empiricism and objectivism” (p. xv). Taylor (2012) contends that the focus is no longer on the object (or what can be seen) but on “the transaction between the living human being and what is to be grasped, what is to be learned” (p. xv). Finley (2011) also calls for researchers to “employ methodologies that inspire and facilitate progressive social action” (p. 437). With this in mind I sought an approach that might positively impact the lived realities of young people and those who work with them.

Contexts

While the Firemaker program was conceptualised and implemented for care workers in South Africa, this research specifically focuses on an adapted version of it, run as a professional development program for youth workers in the Australian context. The Firemaker was conceptualised in response to a social context (Meyer, 2014) that both challenged the Western training perspective of the arts therapists involved as well as providing a model of working that is ethically dialogical and extends beyond the individual to the collective.

This study is positioned as ethical and socially engaged research, consistent with Finley (2011), who argued that “the ultimate value of the research derives from its usefulness to the community in which the research occurs” (p. 435). The study is also situated within the context of changing identities of arts therapists (see Chapter 2) and, as Sajnani (2010) suggests:

enlarging the therapeutic space to include community specific locations, usefully blurring the boundaries between public and private by calling for accountability, situating the encounter between client and therapist in sustainable partnerships and participatory practices, and in reformulating the purpose of therapy as facilitating an individual and/or group’s capacities to identify, analyse and address, the internalised, relational and systemic dynamics which limit the full arc of their desires. (p. 194)

Research Rationale

The 21st century has been described as an age of supercomplexity (Barnett, 2008) where the world is fluid, and complexities of human behaviour and social

interactions are self-evident (Barnett, 2008; Jarvis & Gouthro, 2015). Despite the global ongoing debates and arguments for and against professionalisation, the roles of those working in the child and youth sector are many and varied, and they are tasked with working with children and young people in a changing, supercomplex, fluid global age (Barnett, 2008).

The past decade has seen an increase and renewed global interest in the practice of applied arts in multiple contexts in response to the challenges of globalisation, ongoing social, economic and racial inequalities, human rights abuses and conflict (Jones, 2012; McNiff, 2011; Prior, 2010; Sajnani & Kaplan, 2012). Global arts-based interventions with children affected by trauma and/or considered at risk, are widely recognised for their resilience building capacities (Coholic, Lougheed, & Cadell, 2009; Landy, 2010; Malchiodi, 2008; Sajnani & Johnson, 2014). In supporting resilience, the arts respond to children's emotional needs in that they encourage both non-verbal and verbal expression of feelings in safe and age appropriate ways; for example, through a drawing or a character in a story. Socially, the arts encourage interaction and relationship building, fostering a sense of belonging, connectedness and empathy (Cattanach, 1994).

Despite global growing interest in the use of the arts in psychosocial support of vulnerable children, research has predominantly focused on children as beneficiaries (Coholic et al., 2009; Mueller, Allie, Jonas, Brown, & Sher, 2010). However, less is known about the effectiveness of the arts in professional development programs that support and contribute to care workers' capacity to respond to the children they work with (Coulsen, 2009; Ho et al., 2012; Van Westrhenena & Fritz, 2012). Support is here defined as an intentional stance aimed at facilitating a space for care workers to: 1) reflect on their work and the interactions with children, 2) encourage a playful internal

attitude, 3) engage with the perspective of the child/young person, 4) develop creative and critical responses, 5) express themselves and 6) develop the skills to use arts in their own practice.

Even less research exists on how arts therapy's practice and theory (specifically dramatherapy) might bring about change in professional development programs, or how and why this change happens. Change is here defined as: 1) perceived change in thoughts/feelings about self, 2) perceived change in thoughts/feelings about the child/young person and interaction with them, and 3) perceived change in knowledge and/or practice.

How then may an arts therapy based professional development program influence care workers' capacity to respond to children/young people in a complex and changing global context? What changes might happen for the participant and what would this change look like? Much dramatherapy research and literature on the processes of change has centred on clinical case studies or vignettes written by therapists themselves (Cassidy, Turnbull, & Gumley, 2014; Jones, 2008, 2010). Research that focuses on participants' experiences of dramatherapy techniques is scarce but necessary if we are to gain more insight into the processes involved in change (Cassidy, 2014; Dokter & Winn, 2010).

This research sets out to examine participants' experiences, evident in what they say, do and think in relation to specific dramatherapy techniques used as research-focused interventions. These techniques are image making, using clay and a box, object work and body sculptures. The aim is to examine participants' responses to these techniques and to establish if any change occurs in the context of their work with children and young people. This research further attempts to challenge/rethink the

clinical boundaries of dramatherapy, questioning if the therapeutic understanding of change can be applied to community arts and non-clinical settings, and how this might further arts practice and understanding.

At the heart of this thesis is the core question: What do creative arts therapists have to offer communities in need of social justice that extends beyond the individual clinical aspects of health care? Social justice refers to social action that is responsive to “those who have been silenced and marginalised, and in the service of more equitable forms of social transformation” (Stevens, Duncan, & Hook, 2013, p. 8) including children and young people. It also refers to the responsibility of practitioners/arts therapists to confront their own positions of power, race and privilege (Sajnani, 2012) through reflexive practice that encourages discomfort.

I will examine the Firemaker Project as an example of how a changing global context is challenging arts therapists to address contextual social realities by collaborating across specific disciplines and practices. I am further concerned with seeing how Firemaker may help practitioners address the inherent professional and ideological dilemmas generated by the community implementation of an essentially therapeutic model.

Research Focus

This research focuses on the Firemaker Program, developed in South Africa by creative arts therapists to skill youth and child care workers to provide psychosocial support, through the arts, to children and young people affected by poverty, violence, loss, conflict and HIV. The Firemaker is a unique program underpinned by arts therapy theory and methods (notably art, drama and play) to skill care workers, through

experiential learning, to use the arts to build resilience in vulnerable children. The Firemaker aims to give care workers practical insight and equip them with simple, creative tools to enhance their work with children. It has been running for 15 years, supported by a combination of informal program evaluation, based on illustrative case study, as well as formal evaluation (Higson-Smith, Mulder, & Zondi, 2006). In addition, the program has been piloted in Zimbabwe, Lebanon and Brazil.

The Firemaker has a monitoring and evaluation system in place and anecdotal evidence suggests that participation in the program not only gives care workers renewed confidence and skills in working with children, but allows participants a space to express their feelings, feel listened to and acknowledged. It is also said to build trust and provide a forum for collective peer support. To address the problem of how best to understand the nature and impact of the work a formal evaluation (formative and summative) of the program was carried out by the South African Institute for Traumatic Stress (Higson-Smith et al., 2006). The reported findings included that:

the Firemaker has increased the care workers' enjoyment of their work, their sense of competence in work with children, and ultimately their self-esteem. All care workers described how the training had improved the way in which they relate to children (p. 55).

The limitation with this evaluation was that it took place over three days and consisted of individual interviews with care workers who had attended the first pilot of Firemaker, as well as observations of ad hoc video recordings of the training, taken by facilitators. The data did not represent a complete record of the training, nor did it seek to examine more deeply the underlying processes responsible for the care workers' change/shifts in relationship to the children. While the aim of Firemaker is to promote

the resilience and psychosocial wellbeing of emotionally vulnerable children, this research project focused on documenting, describing and analysing what core processes are at work. Additionally, it investigated the impact the Firemaker training had on the care workers' own well-being and the quality of their interaction with the children in the program.

Arguably, it is through the intentional use of specific dramatherapy processes such as play, embodiment, dramatic projection, active witnessing, distancing/empathy and life-drama/art connection (Jones, 1996) that the program seeks to foster the qualities that may enhance the care workers' capacity to respond to children, and so improve the quality of interaction.

Research Aims

By using a practice led, arts-based approach, this research set out to: 1) examine the care workers' experiences of participation in methods of the Firemaker Program, and 2) explore how participation in this program influences the care workers' understanding of their role as care workers, as well as their interactions with children. The research aims to build knowledge and generate insights into how the arts therapies might contribute to and enhance the care workers' capacity to respond to children and young people. A second aim is to further develop theory about the relationship between the dramatherapy process and practice, and community professional development programs.

Research Questions

1. Does participating in the Firemaker program influence care workers' thoughts and feelings about the children and their roles as care workers?

2. What role can the arts therapies, in particular dramatherapy, play in developing the care workers' capacity to respond to children and young people?
3. How can arts therapy methods play a role as research-focused interventions?

Significance of Research

This research has social significance in addressing the need for professional development programs for care workers that incorporate arts methods to purposefully enable creative, critical reflective practice on their work with children and young people. In this regard, it has the potential to inform how future programs are designed and implemented. It also has potential significance for teacher training programs and parent-child interventions.

Secondly, this research focuses on the effects of the program on the care worker. Thus, while the program itself focuses on the psychological welfare of the children and young people, it is hypothesised that the care workers do indirectly benefit in terms of their ability to engage differently in their interaction with their clients and to respond more adaptively to emotionally challenging transactions.

Thirdly, research demonstrating the effectiveness of community focused arts therapy based interventions that enhance child care workers' capacity to respond to, and thus impact on, the psychosocial well-being of children and young people is needed to build understanding and knowledge of arts learning as practice.

Fourthly, this research has significance for the development of the arts therapies, in particular dramatherapy, in terms of how understanding of change through the arts can be applied to community arts and non-clinical settings, and how this might further general arts practice. I turn now to clarify how specific concepts are understood for the purposes of this thesis.

Definitions

Arts Therapy

For the purpose of this research ‘arts therapy’ is the umbrella term for the practice of art therapy, dramatherapy, dance movement therapy and music therapy, while acknowledging each modality as a separate discipline. The Firemaker was collectively conceptualised and developed by a dramatherapist, an art therapist, a play therapist and, later, a music therapist. Each arts modality is represented separately in the program and is acknowledged as such, with appropriate supporting theory. Despite recognising the autonomy of each discipline, the program is intentionally a collaboration between modalities.

Note regarding the spelling of dramatherapy: I have chosen the British spelling of dramatherapy as one word, but where relevant have used the American locution drama therapy when quoting American authors.

Who is the Child and Youth Care Worker?

While the Firemaker grew out of a specific context, for the purposes of this thesis the term care worker denotes both formal and informal, professional and non-professional individuals responsible for the psychosocial care of children or young people, i.e. counsellor, community worker, youth worker, mental health professional, health worker, child care educator, and educator. In effect, the term designates anyone who is responsible for directly working with ‘at risk’ children or young people. These are young people faced with extraordinary challenges and who are in need of support to help them cope with the adversities faced by family, economic, social, political and

cultural environments, e.g. HIV infection, poverty, conflict, discrimination, and violence (Wood, Ntaote, & Theron, 2012).

Who is the Child/Young Person?

While this research does not set out to research children's experiences, the child/young person is central in that it is the child/youth care workers relationship with them that is under examination. In the current global context there are multiple terms given to children/young people who, because of multiple complex familial, social, economic and/or political reasons, find themselves the focus of and/or in need of care or support through social services. These are contested terms in that the child/young person is problematised and labelled, for example, 'at risk', 'vulnerable', and 'disengaged', without recognising the resistant responses of the child/young person as potentially already positively adaptive (Bottrell, 2009; Ungar, 2011). Nevertheless, for the purposes of this thesis, a vulnerable child or young person is defined as someone from birth to approximately 20 years of age who is adversely affected by one or all of the following health related contexts—family, social, economic, cultural, or political—and is in need of support for various reasons. While some children/young people might need individual psycho-social support, the wider social political context needs to be taken into consideration, for example, in working with groups of children or young people who have experienced racism. For the purposes of this thesis and brevity the term 'young person' will be used throughout to refer to anyone between 0 and 20 years.

Professional Development

For the purposes of this thesis, professional development refers to programs offered to both professionals (as defined by the Western context) and paraprofessionals,

who are all doing front-line human service work in complex social contexts (Barford & Whelton, 2010). The professional development system recognises that while training is mandatory, there are limitations to this. Trained professionals or paraprofessionals, faced with changing social contexts, needs and standards of professional practice, will continuously be required to acquire new skills over the course of a career. McNiff (2005) reminds us that the relevance of contemporary professional education is “dependent upon its willingness to meet new challenges and go to places where troubles in the human condition exist” (p. xii).

Arts-Focused Active Methods

In dramatherapy practice, methods are all active and experiential (BADTH, 2016; Jones, 2008; NADT, 2016). For the purposes of this research study, the term ‘arts-focused, active methods’ refers directly to the three research intervention methods that were used to gather data specifically relevant to the care workers’ relationship to/with the young person. These do not ordinarily form part of the Firemaker, they were designed to intentionally examine the care workers’ relationship with the young person.

Thesis Structure

Chapter 2 provides a background to the Firemaker Program. It explains the significance of the South African context for its conceptualisation and implementation, as well as examining its core methodology. Additionally, this chapter provides details on how the program has evolved, highlighting key challenges for Western trained arts therapists.

Chapter 3 explores literature relating to the role of professional development programs in the 21st Century, necessary to prepare professionals to deal with

uncertainly, complexity and ambiguity. Literature within this context is then reviewed, specifically relating to the professional development of child and youth care workers. The benefits of the arts, specifically the arts therapies, to care workers in these programs is further explored. Finally, I review literature pertaining specifically to the field of dramatherapy and how change in this treatment modality is understood. The literature reviewed illustrates the complexity of the research field traversed in this study.

Chapter 4 is the first of the methodology sections. It outlines the epistemological stance of the research, the theoretical perspective, and dramatherapy practice perspectives that form part of the methodological framework.

Chapter 5 outlines the qualitative research methods employed in the data collection and analysis.

Chapter 6 presents the first of two findings chapters. The findings are centred upon two aspects of the research. The first (Chapter 6) consists of participants' experiences of the Firemaker program and the second (Chapter 7) consists of analysis of core change processes involved in the three arts-focused, active methods used, as reported by participants.

Chapter 8 further discusses the findings and details the theoretical, practice and methodological implications of this research study.

In Chapter 9, the concluding chapter, the challenges and limitations of the study are outlined, and recommendations for future research are presented.

Chapter 2: Background and the Firemaker Program

This chapter will focus on the Firemaker program, a project developed by Zakheni Arts Therapy Foundation. Before discussing the program and its specific context, some wider consideration of the contemporary role played by the arts therapies internationally is required. A specific issue in this regard is how arts therapy contributions may be enlisted to serve the wider needs of groups and communities, rather than solely individuals. Special permission was sought from Intellect Publishers to use some content from the original pre-copy version of an article, published during my candidature (Meyer, 2014).

Rupture to Arts Therapists' Identities

In recent years, faced with the need for larger scale interventions, many arts therapists have begun collaborative work with community artists and organisations in order to support the development of community health and wellbeing (Coombes, 2011; Kaplan, 2007; McNiff, 2011, 2014; White, 2006). Central to debates about what arts therapists have to offer is the potential to move beyond individual therapy into a more collective space to facilitate social justice and change through arts practices (Jones, 2012; Landy, 2010; McNiff, 2011; Sajnani & Kaplan, 2012).

The past 60 years has seen the professionalisation of the arts therapies, encompassed by multiple tensions around and between identities, professions and practices about who has legitimate “rights” to engage with arts and healing (Jones, 2012; Lees, 2010; McNiff, 2014; Prior, 2010, White, 2006). The significance of ethics and appropriate cultural practice are highlighted by these tensions, especially in contexts where power, privilege, race and exploitation are present (Jennings, 2009; Sajnani,

2012). As Coombes (2011), a music therapist, asserts, our practice has “traditionally, insulated itself from the cultural context in which the work takes place” (p. 1) and, I would argue, the social and political contexts too. With the widening of the arts therapy community and global mobility there has been a “rupture” (p. 1) to that culturally comfortable seal (Coombes, 2011; Pavlicevic, 2004) which has meant that arts therapists have been pushed to acknowledge “that in order to work appropriately and successfully within another context, a wider meaning of music therapy must be applied” (p. 1). There is a current growing body of arts therapies literature questioning how these traditionally “Western therapeutic practices addressing the psychological and intrapsychic wounds of individuals” (Hocoy, as cited in Kaplan, 2007, p. 21) might offer a more social justice-orientated agenda by understanding and addressing how the cultural, social, economic and political contexts within which we work influence us and our clients (Jennings, 2009; Johnson & Emunah, 2009; Kaplan, 2007; Sajnani, 2012; Sajnani & Kaplan, 2012).

So while there is this current push to re-examine our professional identities, ironically, we need to be reminded of the hybrid nature of our modalities. As Jones (2012), a dramatherapist, points out, dramatherapy developed from existing forms of applied drama practice and within changing socio-cultural-political contexts. Dramatherapy is rooted in the values and practice of Augusto Boal (Emunah, 1994; Jones, 1996; Landy, 1994), and a “significant value he brought to theatre activism was that individual change is linked to social change, and that internal distress can be understood as a reflection of one’s social and political context” (Sajnani, 2012, p. 188). In a way the profession has come full circle and currently there are new gaps and new challenges for the future identity of all arts therapists, raising the question for me: What

do arts therapists have to offer communities in need of social justice that extends beyond the individual clinical aspects of health care?

Sajnani (2012) asserts that dramatherapists have the skills and the knowledge to challenge wider ideologies and social practices, thus potentially making them socially responsible and aligned with critical theorists, who challenge various injustices and work to design social redress programs. It also means arts therapists are well positioned to provide a resource for communities regarding how programs are implemented and supported in an ethical manner. However, in acknowledging that we need to apply a wider meaning of what the arts therapies are, there are added considerations and responsibilities that come with it (Coombes, 2011; Kalmanowitz & Potash, 2010; Meyer, 2014).

The Arts Therapies in South Africa

South Africa, it can be argued, is one such context that has demanded a wider understanding of the arts therapies. With its pre and post-colonial and racialised history, South Africa has emerged as a dynamic but troubled young democracy. It has multiple and widespread challenges, including social, racial, gender and economic inequities, violence, poverty, unemployment and high levels of HIV and AIDS.

The arts therapies, while recognised since 1990 at state level through registration with the Health Professions Council of South Africa, are relatively new in the South African context. Until 2015 the only government-recognised arts therapy training program was in music therapy. However, within the last two years a Masters in dramatherapy has been established. There are approximately 40 state registered art, drama and dance therapists, who all trained outside of South Africa, mainly in the UK and USA. As well as training in a privileged Western paradigm, access to arts therapy

for the broad population is extremely limited. Therapists (the majority white and English first language speaking) are not typically equipped to directly run arts therapy groups with vulnerable culturally and linguistically diverse indigenous African children.

It is within this context that the Zakheni Arts Therapy Foundation (ZATF) was formed in 2001. ZATF is an example of arts therapy practice symbolising the unavoidable rupture to professional identity in the face of colonisation and ongoing inequalities. The organisation has gone through enormous changes over the last 15 years, mirroring to some extent the macro socio-political changes in the country around racial transformation. To follow, I reflect as an ‘insider’ (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013) and draw on my personal and professional practice experience, as well as my knowledge and experience of the organisation and Firemaker program, to illustrate some of the challenges. I further reflect on the underlying methodology of the program.

Zakheni Arts Therapy Foundation.

As mentioned in Chapter One, I co-founded Zakheni Arts Therapy Foundation, a not-for-profit, non-government organisation, in 2001, with an art therapist. I was co-director until 2010, after which I remained a member of the board until December 2016. The vision of Zakheni Arts Therapy Foundation was “to provide psychological, emotional and social support to improve the well-being of children, adolescents & adults through a therapeutic relationship using the Arts Therapies” (Zakheni Arts Therapy booklet, 2002, unpublished).

The organisation began with the acknowledgement of white privilege and how this privilege afforded two arts therapists the opportunity to train overseas. While we wanted arts therapies to be accessible for the majority of South Africans, not just the privileged few, with our initial intention to ‘do good’, we were also aware of the

problematic nature of this, playing out as white liberal women helping the so called 'other' in our own country. In the first two years of the organisation's life, direct art and dramatherapy individual and group services were offered to hearing-impaired children, children and adolescents living with HIV and inmates at Johannesburg Central prison. These first two years were our formative years. The team of arts therapists struggled with what we did not know, we grew and we understood very quickly that therapy, as we knew it, the clinical practice we were trained to deliver, was not going to go far enough. What we had started, while well intentioned, seemed to pose many more difficult questions and challenges in South Africa with its colonial and Apartheid history and the unequal racialised structures embedded in society at all levels. As committed as we were to the original vision of Zakheni, the first two years of the organisation's life most certainly ruptured the comfortable cultural seal (Coombes, 2011; Pavlicevic, 2004) within which we had been trained to practice.

After the first two years, in 2003 one of our first donor organisations, HopeHIV, invited us to present at a conference on the art and dramatherapy groups with children living with HIV. Care workers attending the conference expressed the need for professional development and creative techniques and skills to use in their psychosocial support work. The Firemaker Program developed from this conference and is an example, I believe, of arts therapists being socially responsive, and so Zakheni's primary work evolved into something other than traditional therapeutic services. However, it has come with enormous responsibilities, challenges and constant critical reflection and questioning of our values and goals and, indeed, the very ambitious scope of what we set out to do. Recently (2015) the Zakheni Board voted to change the vision and name to Zakheni Transformative Arts Centre, in an attempt to be more inclusive of other applied arts practices and South African indigenous knowledge systems.

As the Firemaker was conceptualised in the context of offering skills to those working in the psychosocial support of children, I now briefly outline this context before further discussing the Firemaker Program.

Psychosocial care in South Africa.

Indicators of social and community disruption, loss and trauma are abundantly present in South Africa (Cluver, 2011; Garcia, 2008; Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna, Jama, & Puren, 2010; Liang, Flisher, & Lombard, 2007) and as a result innumerable children have been left to fend for themselves or in the care of inadequately resourced welfare organisations (Killian & Durheim, 2008; Seedat, Nyamai, Njenga, Vythilingum, & Stein, 2004). Within this context there has been the emergence of a paraprofessional workforce within local communities to supplement the formal social structures (Linsk et al., 2010; Swanzen, 2011). These paraprofessionals are usually referred to as care workers. It is for this group of people that Firemaker was originally conceptualised and developed.

‘Psychosocial’ is a broad concept that is used in many different contexts, with seemingly varied definitions. Essentially it refers to the relationship between psychological (internal) and social (external) factors (Henley, 2010; Killian, Van der Riet, Hough, O’Neill, & Zondi, 2008). Psychosocial programs in South Africa are typically structured to enhance children’s psychological and social wellbeing and to help them express difficult feelings, process grief, build self-esteem and emotional-social resilience, develop positive nurturing relationships and reclaim their history and identity (Higson-Smith, et al., 2006; REPPSI, 2014; Rutter, 1999).

Many organisations in South Africa are currently training care workers in methods of ‘psychosocial’ care (Linsk et al., 2010; Mueller et al., 2010). As pointed out

by Higson-Smith et al. (2006), who conducted a formal evaluation of the pilot Firemaker program:

Care and support for children infected and affected by HIV and Aids is without doubt one of the most important challenges facing South African service providers at this point in our history. The size of the epidemic in South Africa means that the bulk of this work must be carried out by community workers who do not have the benefit of many years of tertiary education. It is thus essential that within every community a pool of people able to engage with and care for children is developed. Therapeutic methods that draw on play, art and drama provide appropriate and effective ways of working with children and must be an important part of the skill base of these community workers (Higson-Smith et al., 2006, p. 64).

There is an enthusiastic growth in interest for the use of the arts in psychosocial support of vulnerable children in Southern Africa, for example, the Tree of Life Project and Hero's Journey (REPPSI, 2014). Arts-based interventions with children affected by trauma are widely recognised for their resilience building capacities (Coholic et al., 2009; Landy, 2010; Malchiodi, 2008). In my experience, current South African training in the use of arts for psychosocial support has been mostly formulaic, focusing on the implementation of specific techniques in routinised ways. Care workers undertake the training and then implement techniques without attention to the underlying processes, interpersonal dynamics, or specific limiting contexts (Coulsen, 2009). I turn now to specially focus on the Firemaker program.

The Firemaker Program

Firemaker Background

Firemaker, as noted earlier, was conceptualised in a team including a dramatherapist, an art therapist, and a play therapist. The three practitioners were integral to developing it into its current form; as well as facilitating the program to many diverse groups of care workers over five years. Firemaker evokes the tradition whereby communities would gather around fires to share stories and connect with one another. It also resonates with the statement that the “pilot light of health exists within all of us” (Emunah, 1994, p. 6), representing the fire of hope, health and creativity. In attempting to provide a safe space for both personal healing and collective transformation, the “fire” is kindled and rekindled, nurtured and sustained (Meyer, 2014).

Firemaker vision.

The vision for the program was conceptualised to enhance the psychosocial wellbeing of children in the context of HIV and AIDS, poverty and conflict, through the creative arts. The aim was to equip care workers with creative arts tools in the psychosocial support and care of children with the intended outcome that once care workers were competent in using the creative arts tools, they would be equipped to working with children by: 1) building relationship and trust; 2) building internal strengths, both in the child and the care worker; 3) assisting the children to express feelings around issues affecting their lives; and 4) increasing awareness of the importance of care for the care worker.

In implementing the program, ZATF's goal was to work in partnership with each child-focused organisation, in order to understand each community's specific needs and to provide ongoing evaluation and supervision after training to care workers in order to support the development of their creative work with children. Higson-Smith et al. (2006), in their formal evaluation of the pilot program, developed a partial program logic model (Table 1) summarising the original Firemaker vision. It is valuable in that it highlights the overall 'vision', however it also presents the ambitious vision of the project.

Table 1: Partial logic model of the Firemaker Project

PARTIAL LOGIC MODEL OF THE FIREMAKER PROJECT		
Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training is accessible. • All participants have equal power in the project. • Care workers identify and express their own needs. • Building on existing personal capacities. • Building on existing shared cultural capacities. • Training uses multiple modalities (incl. experiential). • Trainers model healthy and thoughtful process. • Opportunities for emotional expression. • Opportunities for personal growth. • Development of story-telling skills. • Practical skills development. • Increased knowledge of children affected by HIV/Aids. • Teaching practical self-care strategies. • Identification of support structures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paradigm shift in care workers with respect to caring for children affected by HIV/Aids. • Care workers have a broader range of skills (incl. creative art based skills). • Care workers are more confident. • Care workers are more emotionally healthy. • Care workers are more reflective and thoughtful about their work. • Organisational context and culture in which care workers function is improved. • Improved group process among care workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lives of children affected by HIV/Aids are enhanced. • Paradigm shift in the thinking of families and communities regarding children affected by HIV/Aids.

(Higson-Smith et al., 2006, p.23)

Formal evaluation.

The South African Institute for Traumatic Stress conducted a formal independent evaluation (formative and summative) of the pilot program (Higson-Smith et al., 2006). Space precludes a detailed consideration of this evaluation, but importantly for this research project it is important to acknowledge the ongoing challenges of what we set out to do as well as the ongoing questions for which there are no simple solutions. Six complimentary data sources were identified for the evaluation including: self-report of the care workers, observation of training sessions, review of training manuals, observation of creative art sessions with children, naturalistic observation of the HIV/AIDS Prevention Group's operations, and interviews with a panel of experts in the field.

Higson-Smith et al. (2006) described the program in the following way, underlining the inherent challenges:

The project requires a transfer of skills from the traditional pool of practitioners using creative arts therapies to a larger pool of community care workers. This is not a simple undertaking for several reasons.

1. The creative arts therapies comprise a broad and extremely varied range of therapeutic techniques, not all are appropriate to the target population.
2. Creative arts therapists have extensive training in psychology and/or social work and thus have a rich knowledge base on which to draw.
3. It is important to select techniques which are sufficiently sophisticated to have a significant therapeutic benefit, but safe enough to minimize the possibility of harm.

4. It was necessary to develop models of training, ongoing development, support, mentoring and supervision that would enable care workers using creative arts techniques to continue to develop in a healthy manner. (Higson-Smith et al., 2006, p. 2)

While highlighting areas that could be developed (e.g. length of training, inclusion of child development theory, careful selection of care workers, culturally appropriate activities, partnering with organisations), the report concluded:

Zakheni's vision challenges all South African mental health and welfare professionals to look critically at their work, and to search for more effective, culturally embedded ways of building psychosocial care in our country. The Firemaker project is meeting a real need of South African communities and the care workers that serve them. The Zakheni Arts Therapy Foundation should continue to find ways to make such skills available to care workers in South African communities. (Higson-Smith et al. 2006, p. 1)

Chronological development of Firemaker.

After the evaluation, the Firemaker underwent many stages of development, and continues to change. The chronology illustrates the challenges across time and the nature of the workshops undertaken. I have included a table as an appendix (Appendix A) to give an overview of the timeline of the development of Firemaker at various stages from 2003 through to 2016. The table captures what we were doing across the thirteen year period. What began as a three day workshop, with participant care workers from a number of different organisations, developed into a 12 day workshop run over a year with care workers from the same organisation.

Current Model of Practice

Partner organisations

ZATF partners with a suitable child focused organisation. Some organisations are situated in urban areas and others rurally, with varying degrees of access to a range of resources and support. Most are NGOs and do not have the resources to fund professional development training. Up to date all Firemaker training programs that have been run, have been funded externally by a number of different national and international donors. In many cases where possible, partnering organisations have offered some form of reciprocity in the form of a training venue or refreshments.

ZATF has a process in place whereby a partnership is formed involving an expression of interest (see Appendix B) by an organisation to take part in the training, after which ZATF sets up a meeting to further clarify organisational needs and suitability for Firemaker, for example the organisation offers ongoing psychosocial groups for children. If it is agreed that the program will proceed, a contract is signed between ZATF and the partnering organisation. Care workers are recruited/selected by their organisation and then each asked to fill in an application form (see Appendix C). This is so that the facilitators can prepare accordingly for the workshops.

Participant care workers

The groups are closed and consist of carefully selected care workers (maximum 15) within various child service organisations who undertake to do the training. All care workers are involved in psychosocial support work of children and the Firemaker is intended to build on the skills and knowledge they already have.

Nearly all participant care workers are adult women and speak a number of languages of which English is at least their second to fifth. Formal educational differences exist amongst care workers, with some not having completed school and others achieving professional and/or non-professional qualifications (an ongoing consequence of the unjust and unequal educational system entrenched by Apartheid). Significantly most care workers live in the same community as the children they work with, and are personally affected by similar adversities.

Arts therapist facilitators

Each set of workshops is facilitated by two government registered arts therapists who supervise and mentor care workers in the weeks between the workshops. Facilitators are required to write reports on group process and care workers' engagement with the activities and give feedback to Zakheni around any significant learning, issues or concerns about what worked or did not work. Facilitators also take part in formal supervision sessions called 'reflective practice' in their facilitation pairs as well as in a larger group with the wider pool of trainers. These are usually run by an outside allied health professional.

Monitoring and evaluation

ZATF has a rigorous monitoring and evaluation system in place. After each workshop, each participant care worker is invited to complete an evaluation form (see Appendix D). Each arts therapist facilitator is also required to write a report. This data is then collated by the ZATF management team after each workshop and used in donor reports as well as for monitoring the workshops. All participants receive a certificate of attendance at the end of the program.

The current program outline

Currently the program consists of a series of four three-day intensive block workshops spread over eight months.

Workshop 1—wellbeing

Workshop 2—introduction to the Firemaker method: play and arts techniques and processes

Workshop 3—consolidation of Firemaker method and arts techniques and processes

Workshop 4—the application and deepening knowledge and practice of techniques learnt.

The most recent addition to the Firemaker has been the Wellbeing workshop. Introduced in 2010 this workshop emphasised the need to practice self-care. Based on the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the workers, the Wellbeing workshop became imperative as a ‘space’ for the care workers to process their feelings around their work. It was also a time to reflect on the importance of self-care, before focusing on learning new skills.

Each workshop begins with play activities and engaging care workers in spontaneous creative play, freeing them up to do more complex drama and art activities. Typically, the first day of each workshop intensive consists of play activities. The second and third days lead into drama, music and art activities. Each workshop builds on and deepens techniques from the previous one. Most of these arts activities draw on local culture or have been adapted for and from the South African context. The structure

of the Firemaker has evolved and changed over the years into its current form as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Firemaker program: Aims, activities and guiding concepts

	Workshop 1: (3 days)	Workshop 2: (3 days)	Workshop 3: (3 days)	Workshop 4: (3 days)
	Wellbeing	Introduction to the Firemaker method	Consolidation of Firemaker method	Application of Firemaker method
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To equip Care Workers with knowledge and awareness of the emotional impact of child and youth care work. -To develop self- insight and awareness through experiential processes. -To equip Care Workers with practical tools in self- care. -To recognise when to self- refer for professional mental health support and identify a resource list of organisations that offer counselling. -To create an awareness of organisational dynamics and the impact of this on individual staff members and on health care practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To establish a working contract and create a safe working space -To introduce play techniques, developmental stages of play, listening and safety -To introduce FM model of resilience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To consolidate methods from intro workshops -To build on tools and techniques from intro workshop -To explore application of FM within work contexts -To introduce basic facilitation skills to implement activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To deepen and refresh FM techniques -To look at using techniques responsibly -To offer psychosocial programming support and facilitation planning -To put systems in place so that FM becomes part of the organisation
Guiding concepts:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Self-care and the impact of work on mental health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Psychosocial development linked to play -Model of resilience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Containment -Session planning -Group work and facilitation skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Group work and facilitation skills
Main activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Group contract -Working with clay around self in workplace -Making mandalas -Making a life journey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Making a safe space -Puppet making -Working with stories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Working with objects -Improvisation and drama games -Creating a story and acting it out -Creating musical instruments -Body sculpts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Role play -Care workers 'facilitate' an activity -Psychosocial programming -Supervised practice

Source: Firemaker workshop plans (cited in Meyer, 2014)

Core Principles of the Firemaker Program

Psychological, social ecological model

Firemaker is a response to widespread social realities and inequities resulting from a particular history. It recognises that the post-colonial and apartheid historical and political context—which privileged race, class and access to education—has also played a role in restricting access to welfare resources. It also recognises the significance and importance of the space for care workers to share stories of their lived realities. For many it is the first time they are able to voice their experiences in this way, and to have the opportunity of being listened to and heard. Firemaker acknowledges the therapeutic importance of this as well as its role in broader social and political transformation. In so doing, Firemaker acknowledges and directly addresses the care worker's life experiences as equally significant as the child's within the social, political and cultural contexts past and present.

Collaborative

Firemaker works in alliance with community organisations, establishing an ongoing relationship based on the needs of the organisation and the care workers, and offers ongoing supervision and mentoring. Care workers and organisations' feedback on process and techniques are central to the ongoing evaluation of the program.

Multi-disciplinary

Firemaker recognises the strength in cross-collaboration and multiple perspectives. It provides care workers with experiences in multiple arts forms: art, drama, movement and music. It borrows from models developed in education (Dahlman, 2007; Kolb et al., 2001), health (Ungar, 2011) and the arts (Emunah, 1994; Jones, 1996; Landy, 1994) and represents an arts program that integrates arts as learning and arts as therapy. Many activities have been adapted to incorporate local cultural practice and meaning, through consultation with care workers in communities.

Fire metaphor, creating safety

Each day of each workshop begins in a circle with a symbolic fire in the centre, highlighting the importance of and the setting up of a safe space in which to work. A safe/contained space is vital for a process to emerge in which trust can be developed between facilitator and participants, so that expression and communication of feelings can be encouraged. This is established in Firemaker through the metaphor of fire, in which there is a ritualised lighting and extinguishing, symbolising beginning and end. Participants sit around the imaginary fire and reflect and think about feelings, hopes and fears. The fire metaphor also serves as acknowledgement of, and continuity with, previous generations who have gathered to narrate their experiences around similar fires. Often the ritualised beginning/ending will be accompanied by song and dance, spontaneously happening in group, and sometimes with prayer (Christianity in South Africa is widespread). The fire also represents the use of arts practice in ways that are emotionally and psychologically safe.

Process and play

The Firemaker is different to other current psychosocial training programs in that it does not provide a formulaic directive approach to working with children who are emotionally vulnerable. Rather, it engages the care workers in experiential creative processes with ample reflection time and space. So the care worker takes part in the arts activities/processes that they might later use in groups they run with children.

Experiential learning (Ho et al., 2012) gives participants embodied knowing of what it feels like to do an activity, as well as creating space for care workers to understand their own difficulties and emotional responses to the work. In all the arts activities the focus is on the process of engaging in the art form, not the end product. This allows individual

variation of expression as well as accommodating preferences for working in a particular form. Firemaker recognises that nothing is fixed and that the program, like the participants and the social-political context surrounding it, are evolving and changing all the time.

The arts are seen as extensions of play, existing on a continuum. Each workshop begins with play activities and engaging care workers in spontaneous creative play, freeing them up to do more complex drama and art activities. The structure and content of Firemaker is built upon a developmental play model (Cattanach, 1994; Slade, 1995). Within this framework, play is central and considered to be the means through which human attachment and development happens. Firemaker acknowledges and recognises the significant body of knowledge and research into the use of play and the creative arts with children who have been traumatised (Landy, 2010; Malchiodi, 2008). Within the arts therapies, creativity and the ability to play are seen as significant to a person's (child and adult) overall psycho-social wellbeing. Firemaker engages and encourages care workers to play in order to both feel and understand the importance of play.

Supplementary theory

Care workers receive a manual of activities with supplementary theory, providing understanding of the purpose and intention of techniques, and when to use them. The workshops are supplemented with relevant theories of psychosocial development (Henley, 2010; Killian et al., 2008) and developmental play theory (Cattanach, 1994; Slade, 1995).

Reflective practice

In each workshop and in the post workshop supervision sessions care workers are encouraged to think about themselves in relation to their work, understand contexts, psychosocial support, trauma recovery and what the arts can and cannot do. They are encouraged to know their therapeutic limitations and that of the art forms, and refer children on to more skilled professionals if necessary. They are also encouraged to recognise the importance of their own well-being and self-care.

Facilitators also attend reflective practice supervision sessions to help critically engage with issues of facilitation, as well as those of class, privilege, race and prevailing social inequities between their lives and those they work with. Creating spaces for critical reflexivity brings together opportunity for personal understanding, reflection and healing, with social justice and transformation built into it as the ultimate goal (Kaplan & Sajjani, 2012).

Ethics

Care workers are recognised as core members of the community within which they live and work. By taking part in Firemaker (through voluntary informed consent) they are invited to enter a long term “sustainable process of critical dialogue” (Watkins & Shulman, 2008, p. 263) about themselves and their work. Ongoing supervision and mentoring reinforces this principle as do reflective practice supervision sessions for facilitators. The program content is dynamic and is adapted according to needs of particular communities.

Summary

In summary, Firemaker was set up to provide care workers with:

1. Experiential learning of play and the arts, with relevant supporting theory

2. Skills to implement arts activities in their psychosocial work with children/young people
3. Space for personal and professional reflection

Structure and Methodology

Firemaker is informed by arts therapy practice and theory that are central to the experience of it. These elements involve:

1. Setting up a safe space: contract, circle, arts materials, opening closing rituals, basic set workshop session structure
2. Working in relationship with facilitator and other group members
3. Working over a number of months with time in between each workshop to practice new skills learnt
4. The use of arts activities with an understanding of purpose and outcome

Outcomes

Despite the content, duration, care worker selection, workshop outlines and training protocols, as highlighted by the formal evaluation (2006), as well as workshop evaluation forms and anecdotal evidence, the ultimate outcome of Firemaker for care workers is that there seems to be an improvement in their response to the children they work with. As noted by Higson-Smith et al. (2006):

The interviews with care workers (21) clearly demonstrate that the FP has increased care workers' enjoyment of their work, their sense of competence in work with children, and ultimately their self-esteem. All care workers

described how the training had improved the way in which they relate to children. (p. 55)

Attitudinal shift

The researchers who conducted the interviews go on to state that they in particular noted the changes to care workers' attitudes towards childhood and children and that during the interviews care workers had spoken "about how they had come to better understand that nature of childhood and now appreciated that children need times of concentrated attention from adults, as well as time to play and express themselves freely" (Higson-Smith et al., 2006, p. 55). They noted too that attitudinal change takes time and that ZATF "should continue to challenge traditional norms which exclude and over-regulate children" (Higson-Smith et al., 2006, p. 55).

Experiential learning

The report by Higson-Smith et al. (2006) further noted that

It is likely that the participants' experience and enjoyment of their own creativity and playfulness laid the foundation for the change in attitudes described in the previous section. It is important that experiential learning remain at the core of the Firemaker Project's pedagogical approach. (p. 56)

Arts techniques

The researchers also reported on the arts techniques, saying that "every care worker took the view that the creative arts techniques taught in the Firemaker Project were adding quality to the lives of children in their care" (p. 51) and that this in turn kept children occupied, which reduced the stress on the care worker. However, the researchers noted that while care workers were able to offer reasons why participation

in creative arts techniques is helpful for children in general “almost none of them were able to reflect in greater depth on the work that they were doing” (p. 51).

One of the biggest concerns over the years has been regarding ‘safety’ of the arts methods and the question of the arts being used as ‘therapy’ by unqualified practitioners (Kalmanowitz & Potash, 2010). It is interesting to note that in the evaluation, the researchers noted the following:

The work observed by the researchers and described by the care workers in their interviews is certainly extremely safe. Care workers do not feel that they have to be therapists and are not threatening children by probing areas which are distressing to children. In fact, it may be more appropriate to ask whether the work is not being kept too safe. (p. 62)

However, how the workshops are run, I believe is critical for maintaining safety. This is what the arts therapist offers that is perhaps different to a generalist trainer: a deeper understanding of how the arts work in both learning, process and therapy. What began very definitely as thinking we were offering training in the therapeutic use of arts methods, has evolved into an approach that offers and encourages a space that is playful and creative.

These report findings are significant as they evidence how Firemaker, through experiential methods, introduces playfulness into the care workers’ lives, which in turn influences how they might respond to the children they work with. The emerging questions for this research project around how participation might influence care workers’ thoughts and feelings about those they work for, and what the processes of change are, highlight the need for theory and research to inform practice.

In this Chapter I have detailed the context and background to the Firemaker Program, as an example of arts therapists and the care workers in Firemaker having to re-think how they practice. It presents the Program as experienced from 2003 through to 2016 as a dynamic model of practice that demands an awareness of the socio, cultural and political influences around it. The core need for care of the carer is a strong theme of the chapter. I have further attempted to outline the methodology, methods engaged in the practice of the Firemaker and the core underlying principles of the Program. These principles and the practice of Firemaker bring arts as learning and arts as therapy together, while acknowledging the inherent challenges and ambitious nature of doing so.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

This chapter will review literature relating to arts therapy based professional development programs that not only skill but support care workers to respond to the challenges of their work environments in caring for and working with children and young people. It will ask what the role of professional development is, and what role the arts, specifically the arts therapies may play in these programs. The value of professional development and the specific use of the arts therapies for professional development are the two core issues to be addressed in this chapter

In determining the role of professional development, the review will examine the core elements of effective professional development programs. Further, it will examine literature on the use of action-based methods, drawn from the dramatherapy supervision literature, that aim to encourage a playful 'internal' attitude for the care worker and thereby enhance the reflective capacity and imagination of the care worker and deepen their practice.

In determining the role that the arts therapies, specifically dramatherapy, may play in professional development programs, the review will identify how specific core processes present in a traditionally therapeutic context might be expanded to understand change and the conditions for change in arts-based professional development programs.

Further it will review literature relating to research in the arts therapies by exploring some of the tensions and conflict in the emergent field of arts in health and the arts therapies. The review will highlight gaps for new potential directions and research. Lastly it will consider literature relating to the ethics of skilling non-arts therapists in some of the practices of the arts therapies.

The Role of Professional Development

The 21st century has been described as an age of supercomplexity (Barnett, 2008) where the world is fluid, and complexities of human behaviour and interactions are self-evident (Barnett, 2008; Jarvis & Gouthro, 2015). In an age that is geared towards post positivism emphasising assessment, fixing with an emphasis on knowing, and finding solutions quickly, professional education practitioners and recipients “expect[s] its learners to develop clearly articulated skills related to workplace needs” (p. 64). This positivist framework, it is argued, does not adequately prepare many professionals with the ways to deal with uncertainty, ambiguity and complexity, that are needed in our current time (Barnett, as cited in Jarvis & Gouthro, 2015).

Faced with “globalisation, rapidly evolving technologies and shifting workplace contexts” (Jarvis & Gouthro, 2015, p. 64) the professional development system recognises that while training is mandatory, there are limitations. Trained professionals, faced with changing social contexts, needs and standards of professional practice will continuously be required to acquire new skills over the course of a career. In addition professionals and practitioners need to be prepared to “develop the capacity to work in fluid, changing, and uncertain circumstances” (p. 64). Part of developing this fluid capacity is an ability to “make visible the oppression and inequities that have been taken to be the natural order of things” (Hadley, 2013, p. 374). That is the ability to recognise and to be vigilant at all times, especially in considering the “experiences of those who are not in advantaged groups” (p. 380) and the invisible socio-cultural and political systems that support subjugation of these groups.

The term ‘professional’ is contested in critical theory literature, especially in the fields of feminism, disability studies, critical theories of race, and queer/sexuality

studies. These paradigms all seek to expose the underlying power that is “infused in all our relationships” (Hadley, 2013, p. 375). Critical theory challenges dominant Western ideology that privileges certain groups according to their race, gender, age and ability. The term professional grew out of these dominant narratives by privileging the position of the all-knowing trained person equipped with expert advice. Training, in many education institutions and disciplines, is not necessarily designed to equip professionals to see privilege and positioning in relation to those they work with (Hadley, 2013). This inherently creates a power imbalance between professionals and those they work with and if we are to seek a world that is more socially just then critical theory concepts help us to “challenge ideology, contest hegemony, unmask power, learn liberation and practice democracy” (Brookfield, cited in Hadley, 2013, p. 374).

Professional development programs can be defined as opportunities to deepen practice through learning new skills and knowledge, and developing new insights. Participating in such programs is a “multifaceted process” (Keller-Dupree & Perryman, 2013, p. 232.) which involves often experiencing initial insecurity, working to assimilate learned theory to applied knowledge, and finally defining areas of growth to achieve competence as a professional (Skovholt & Ronnesatd, 1992; Thompson, 2004). Jarvis and Gouthro (2015) identify the need for skills, individual wellbeing and “developing creative, critical and self-reflective capabilities they will need to deal with ambiguity and complexity” (p. 67).

Professional Development of Child and Youth Care Workers

Literature shows there is a need to support those working with children and young people (Coulsen, 2009; Krueger, 2007; Swanzen, 2011; Van Westrhenena & Fritz, 2012). Support has been identified as occurring in three ways: as skills training

through professional development, as care for the carer programmes with a focus on the care worker's wellbeing, and in the use of clinical supervision. While 'caring for the carer' programmes are increasing (Orner, 2006), there is little research showing how professional development programs might include wellbeing components into them as well as opportunities to critically reflect on the socio-political context that might impact the care workers' interactions with the children they work with (Ferreira & Ebersohn, 2011). Privileged positioning of the adult youth worker is another added complexity and awareness of the potential power dynamics in the child/adult interaction is important (Jones, 2009; Kellet, 2010).

Supervision is considered mandatory for many professions, including those who work with children and young people. Much of this supervision is about recognising and maintaining professional standards of practice, safety of the child and case management. Again, this is a practice of power. In this work a supervisor oversees the practice of the child and youth care worker, but not necessarily in a way that seeks to explore or uncover or unmask the supervisor's or the practitioner's own privileges and how they work to maintain subjugation of children who come from groups that are not advantaged by the system or dominant narrative.

What is the relationship between worker and child?

Literature in all fields of working with children and young people, emphasises the importance of the relationship between worker and child (Barford & Whelton, 2010; Krueger, 2007). At the core of psychosocial developmental theory is the leading principle that all development happens within the context of relationships with other human beings (Fonagy & Target, 2005) and less so that development is made up of a series of challenges that we master as we grow (Higson-Smith, 2006). The first

principle implies that human relationships (with parents, siblings, and extended family, peers or caring adults outside the family) are central to our development and this is supported by the extensive body of knowledge on attachment theory (Ainsworth, 1989; Bowlby, 1988; Slade, 2005). The second principle suggests that children of different ages face different kinds of developmental challenges, and that an earlier developmental loss is likely to lead to further delay later on in life (Bowlby, 1973; Bretherton, 1992). Most child and youth care worker relationships with young people are not therapeutic in a formal sense, however Rodd and Stewart (2009) argue that building relationships with young people has both therapeutic and educative value. They found that the relationship formed uses counselling skills but is not counselling. They highlight that many young people are reluctant to engage in formal counselling, preferring a conversation with an adult as “the unique developmental relationships that youth workers form with young people become important instruments and media for young people to ‘try out’” (Krauss & Suandi, 2008, p. 5).

In creating relationship, anyone working with children and/or young people is expected to have core competencies that cut across cultural contexts (including skills and knowledge about child development) and personal attributes (warmth, approachability, trustworthiness, empathy, interpersonal skills) (Jonas, 2012; Keller-Dupree & Perryman, 2013). In creating core competencies for youth workers who work in out of school care programs, Jonas (2012) describes a collaborative group process of refining the core competencies needed in youth work, which are: “to build caring relationships, cultural competence, manage behaviours, understand stages of development, structure activities, and youth workers as community resources” (Jonas, 2012, p. 23).

Further, while some competencies come through formal and/or professional training, as detailed earlier, recent literature suggests training doesn't necessarily equip professionals to deal with complexity, ambiguity and especially the unknown. The tension of needing to know when working with other people (Jones, 2008) is complicated in a world that is always moving and in flux. Literature in supervision addressing the helping professional shows that the qualities most valuable to their ongoing practice are self-awareness, deepened learning and practice, development of reflective capacity (to be playful and open to possibilities) and the ability to imagine oneself and other together (Jones, 2008).

Working with children or indeed any client requires self-awareness (Jones, 2008; Keller-Dupree & Perryman, 2013) and a reflective capacity which is arguably the most significant competency as it requires learning to tolerate ambiguity (Deaver & Shiflett, 2011). So, while developing relationships has been identified as key to working with children and youth, training and workplace contexts do not necessarily support the core values of ambiguity and supercomplexity.

The literature further indicates there is limited research on how participation in the arts as part of professional development for child and youth care workers has the potential to influence their reflective capacity, understanding of role and quality of relationship with child. Literature (Ho et al., 2012; Van Westrhenena & Fritz, 2012; Wood, Ntaote, & Theron, 2012) suggests that shifts occur but does not clearly explain the underlying processes of these changes, and more research is needed on this. The literature also indicates there is limited research on the role of arts therapies in professional development programs in enabling these shifts to occur.

Benefits of Participating in Professional Skills Development Programs

What this research aims to do is to look at the unintentional effects of professional development skills training. Coulsen's (2009) study showed that by participating in skills development programs there were other benefits for the care workers that need to be highlighted. Firstly the training impacted the individual care workers in the following ways:

1. There was an improvement in the psychosocial wellbeing of the care workers. The training provided them with a healing process and the opportunity to redress past hurts. They further learnt how to deal with grief and help others deal with grief.
2. There was an improvement in their ability to manage work pressures better i.e. maintaining professional boundaries between themselves and the child, as well as utilising supervision more effectively.

Secondly, Coulsen's study suggested that the training impacted on their work with children in the following ways:

1. Care workers felt inspired to continue to work in the community.
2. There was an improved understanding of the children's feelings.
3. The training increased their confidence in working with children.
4. Referral practice increased the quality of response to the children. More community care workers were able to recognise when a child was at risk of harm and refer on appropriately.

What the study did not address is why or what it was about the training that enabled these changes to occur. Was it just about participating or about something else? Coulsen's study (2009) did not try to highlight why or how these changes took place. More in depth understanding of the processes at play would be valuable in understanding more about how programs like this are implemented.

As Firemaker was conceptualised as a skills professional development program for professionally educated or non-trained facilitators I turn now to consider the role of arts in professional development programs. I will then review literature specifically that uses arts therapies in development and support of care workers.

Arts-Based Professional Development

Use of creative activities has long been part of group practice. The benefits of participating in arts programs, for both children and adults, have been widely documented (Liebmann, 2008; Malchiodi, 2008; Mendel, 2015) including development of interpersonal communication skills, emotional expression, learning through the arts, reflective capacity, self-awareness and problem solving. The arts have always been powerful ways of marking, celebrating and mourning life's events; helping to draw individuals together, and giving them a sense of participation and belonging. As part of any community the arts have the ability to bring people together and promote social interaction and cohesion (Kaplan, 2011; McKenna, 2013).

Substantial theory and knowledge exists concerning how the arts can be used to educate (Bolton, 1980; Heathcote, 1979), raise awareness, work for social action and justice (McNiff, 2011; Sajjani, 2012), resist political ideologies (Boal, 1985; Freire, 1970) and heal (Emunah, 1994; Jones, 1996; Landy, 1994; Malchiodi, 2008). These theories and practices provide evidence on how the arts have the ability to create community, challenge structures, encourage imagination and creativity, and promote psychological change. The arts involve ways of doing, thinking, sensing and feeling that offer the opportunities to express and explore what can't be conveyed in conventional language (Malchiodi, 2008; McKenna & Woods, 2012; McNiff, 1998; Mendel, 2015). The arts awaken us to new ways of feeling and being in the world that

are emotionally rich: the making and viewing of art becomes an engagement with a way of knowing that is *empathic* and *emotional* as well as *skilful* (McKenna, 2012, p. 77).

The role of the arts in professional development and education programs has also been on the increase (Cawthon, Dawson, Judd-Glossy, & Ihorn, 2012; Jarvis & Gouthro, 2015). In a thematic review of literature on arts and professional education across disciplines, Jarvis and Gouthro (2015) identified the specific contribution the arts can make to professional education and development generally. They argue from a critical social perspective with the focus on what has historically been “pragmatic, with learners expected to develop clearly articulated skills related to workplace needs” (p. 64). I contend that their framework does not adequately prepare them to deal with the ambiguity and complexity that is needed in the current time of supercomplexity (Barnett, as cited in Jarvis & Gouthro, 2015).

By identifying five categories of how the arts are used in professional education and development Jarvis and Gouthro (2015) suggested the arts may be one way of engaging learners in developing the “creative, critical and self-reflective capabilities they will need” (p. 65). Importantly they identified two related themes that cut across all five categories:

First, the arts support professionals to develop a more sophisticated epistemological understanding that helps them recognise that knowledge is constructed; that there can be many right solutions to professional challenges. In this way the arts appear to help professionals cope with change and uncertainty. Second, some educators consciously use arts to help professionals develop a critical understanding of their work, unmask oppressive practices and understand and express their own concerns about

injustice. Others use their work in a more humanistic framework to develop empathy and insights into the needs of marginalised populations, but do not have an explicitly political intent. (p. 65)

All five of the categories they identify in the literature are significant to the Firemaker and this study. They are:

1. Learning to use arts in professional practice
2. Using arts to illustrate complex concepts and dilemmas
3. Arts for empathy and insight
4. The role of the arts in the construction of professional identities and discourse
5. Arts, self-awareness and interpersonal skill development.

While the review by Jarvis and Gouthro (2105) did not focus on those who work with children and young people exclusively, it focused on professionals in a wide range of disciplines, concluding that:

the use of the arts in professional studies challenges learners to think about their clients/patients, as well as colleagues, as complex human beings, and helps them to deal with uncertainty and ambiguity that characterises modern workplaces. Through arts-based approaches professionals may become more self-reflective about their roles and identities, and develop more empathetic or humanistic approaches to everyday practices in the workplace. (2015, p. 76)

While addressing the role of arts generally and what they promote, including opportunities for professional and personal development, Jarvis and Gouthro (2015) also highlighted the importance of the group in the learning process. What their review did not address is how the arts work and specific key elements of the programs that

make them effective. However, it did make a strong point for the use of arts in professional development and education that reframed the notion of what it means to learn (Webster-Wright, 2010).

There is abundant literature available on the use of arts as pedagogy for both children and adults (some of this is detailed in Chapter 4: Methodology), but as the Firemaker was informed by arts therapy theory and practice, I did an initial literature search of arts therapy programs used in professional development and found very little, outside of music therapy (Bolger, 2012; Coombes, 2011) specifically for those working with children/young people. This is not surprising given the traditional Western therapeutic paradigm within which the arts therapies professions reside, as well as the scarcity of research practice amongst arts therapists generally. I will discuss this later.

How does one apply a clinical therapeutic practice to a non-clinical setting that involves some skills transfer as well as psychosocial support? In the same way that I challenge professional education of those who work with children I too must challenge my own professional identity. My work and life as a dramatherapist is challenged in these non-clinical settings and this is outlined earlier in Chapter One.

Arts Therapies and Professional Development of Child/Youth Care Workers

I turn now to review specific professional development programs that have utilised the arts therapies to both skill practitioners in the use of the arts in their practice as well as to provide opportunities for personal development. The goal is to highlight the key effective elements of these programs that the arts therapies facilitate. Training those who work with children and young people is ultimately about increasing their skill

base, while keeping the children and young people safe. While there might be a need to transmit arts therapy skills to community members affected by psychosocial adversity, there is also the question of the arts being used as “therapy” by unqualified practitioners (Kalmanowitz & Potash, 2010). In the literature reviewed below, the programs are not training participants to be arts therapists, however they are using arts therapy methodology to run workshops and in some cases skill participants to use arts in the psychosocial support of children/youth.

What is unclear from most of the programs reviewed, is that there is no clear articulation of what is meant by ‘arts therapy’. There are many terms/key words used, for example: expressive arts, art therapy, creative arts therapy, role play, dramatherapy, music therapy, dance therapy, therapeutic arts. It is often confusing and not always clear how these modalities are being used and indeed what they are. Also, many of these programs are not run by arts therapists, challenging the nature of the profession and the professional identities of the workers even more. Further the definitional challenges point to possible misunderstandings and blurring of boundaries, which makes the need for clear articulation of roles and further research a necessity.

Arts Therapies in Professional Development

Skills development.

Over the past decade literature specific to the field of music therapy has begun to emerge and address how this approach engages in and employs community music therapy models with a view to skilling community workers to work creatively and therapeutically with music with children and adults (Bolger, 2012; Coombes, 2011; Pavlicevic, 2004). This is especially relevant to contexts where there is no music therapy training per se. As noted by Coombes (2011) in ‘Project Bethlehem’, set up to

train educators and health workers in the therapeutic use of music in the West Bank, this way of working not only benefitted the children but also the “staff teams” (p. 18).

Coombes also noted that while the training was run in various sites, there were different outcomes. Most benefitted but many staff were found to not necessarily apply skills taught due to lack of time and confidence, as well as cultural considerations. In her paper, Coombes further asserted that “it will be interesting to learn what impact this had on other areas of their work” (p. 18), suggesting further research is needed.

Kalmanowitz and Potash (2010) offered a training model in the sensitive use of art making, clearly articulating that they are art therapists offering art therapy skills to non-art therapists and highlighting the ethical implications of this. Their model includes the following:

1. Exploration of art materials, in which participants are encouraged to explore as many different art materials as possible and be creative with them.
2. Structure around how activities are facilitated to reduce anxiety around non-directive processes, and reinforce containment and safe expression.
3. Interpretation—not offering but rather giving participants ways of looking at an image.
4. Application to setting.
5. Group processes and counselling skills.

They also offered training guidelines and dilemmas including: the participant context, choosing the appropriate level of theory, respecting the art image/work, maintaining an educational stance, and the importance of supervision. They conclude that:

training in the use of art specifically is also about remaining close to the art process, as this is what we have to offer. If we keep these two principles in mind, we believe training non-art therapists in the sensitive use of art making will remain authentic and clear (p. 25).

Personal, community and social development.

Ho et al. (2012) evaluated how a three day expressive arts therapy based program could help teachers affected by the trauma of an earthquake become aware of their own personal strengths while feeling more capable in their teaching roles. Their program emphasised the combination of arts-based activities, experiential learning and a strength based approach to enhance teachers self and teaching efficacy. Following Kolb's (2001) four-stage model of experiential learning the program included:

1. concrete experience: experiencing the arts forms.
2. reflective observation: of their experiences with the arts activities.
3. conceptualisation: thinking about how to apply experiences to the classroom.
4. experimentation: applying skills learnt to real life practice context.

Their findings suggest the arts encouraged “emotional expression, hope and a positive attitude to life” (p. 67). They argued that the teachers’ self-efficacy was found to increase most significantly and that the arts played a role in enabling stress reduction, building self-confidence, creating new perspectives and encouraging problem solving. As a result of the increase in self-efficacy, stronger relationships between teachers and students were promoted, enhancing the general efficacy of their roles as teachers. Ho et al. (2012) explained the improvements as related to the design of the program, which included both experiential and theoretical components, focussing on skilling teachers in

the expressive and communicative aspects of the arts rather than the therapeutic ones. Through modelling “empathic understanding rather than active therapeutic interventions to demonstrate to teachers how they can support their students” (Ho et al., 2012, p. 70) trainers were able to demonstrate this. Ho et al. (2012) also mentioned the importance of active listening to promote supportive group work and reflection on “their positive experiences of mastering the basic skills” (Ho et al., 2012, p. 70) as part of the process. It is an example of a professional development program that is designed on therapeutic principles but presented as an “educational training program for skill enhancement rather than personal healing” (Ho et al., 2012, p. 72). However as much of the literature highlights, there are effects on participants’ wellbeing.

Van Westrhenena and Fritz (2012), conducted research to explore the experiences of professional hospice workers taking part in creative arts therapy workshops aimed to skill and provide “self-healing” (p. 34). Through individual interviews, focus group interviews and observations of workshops, the researchers found that the arts “facilitated communication and self-care and improved the wellbeing of the professional hospice workers” (p. 34). Themes they identified were creativity, importance of self-care, importance of maintaining professional boundaries and being able to say no, massage was the most popular activity, and the importance of group support in dealing with personal trauma. While the workshops in Van Westrhenena and Fritz’s (2012) study were set up to provide skills training, no mention was made of skill enhancement. It also wasn’t clear what arts activities were used nor how they might have enabled the improved wellbeing of the hospice workers. In addition, Van Westrhenena and Fritz’s (2012) insights serve as an example of how confusing arts terms can be, notably the use of creative arts and expressive art therapy. Their paper did

not make clear what was meant by arts therapy and the main finding was that massage was helpful in self-care.

The literature around support programs for teachers is valuable because it highlights the challenges faced by people working in these contexts and the need for training that is not only skills-based but that supports workers. Wood, Ntaote and Theron (2012) showed, in their South African study addressing the Resilient Educators (REds) program, how an interactive, informative and practical training, consisting of nine modules and multidisciplinary collaboration using participatory (experiential) strategies such as “asset-mapping, art therapy, music therapy, gestalt work, role play, debate and discussion” enabled the “sharing of knowledge and experiences between participants and facilitator”, and thus “resilience enhancing changes were envisaged with the participants” (p. 430). They concluded that the REds program had positive personal and professional consequences for participants. On a personal level, participants felt less negative emotions such as depression and hopelessness in the context of HIV. On a professional level, the participants mentioned they had developed “more tolerant attitudes towards the teaching of orphans and vulnerable children” (p. 438). By just having access to the program as reiterated by Coulsen (2009), they suggested that the REds program developed “resilience promoting attachments, positive meaning of the challenges faced and alternatives for problem solving” (Wood, Ntaote, & Theron, 2012, p. 438). These findings testify to the value of supporting those who work with children and young people, who are challenged by personal and professional trials of social adversities. Significantly Wood, Ntaote and Theron (2012) noted that self-reflection was an important part of the program, however, while the study used multiple participatory strategies, they did not explain what arts therapy processes were used, how they were used, nor account for the transformative role the arts might have

played in the program. More detailed outline of theory and practice underpinning these models would support further discourse and greater understanding of what processes are at work.

Keller-Dupree and Perryman (2013) specifically looked at the role of an expressive arts therapy group in female counsellor development and found that “each stage of counsellor development was noticeable, allowing a theory to emerge that an expressive arts group may be a beneficial experience for female counsellors-in-training to achieve personal and professional growth” (p. 232). This study identified the group process as significant in achieving personal and professional development. Through the group process, participants discovered their own creative process, were less afraid, and able to create more intimate connections within the group. Significantly they found that participants demonstrated their development through use of the arts in the group for example: initially seeking guidance from the facilitator, then transitioning from experiencing “heightened levels of anxiety and creative inadequacy to discovering a personal awareness of values and beliefs within the group , to facing new levels of growth and competency” (p. 230).

Kapitan, Litell and Torres (2011) examined PAR community-based art therapy in Nicaragua, and illustrated how creative art therapy “functioned as an important vehicle for creating capacity for communities to effect change by strengthening and transforming the critical consciousness of their members” (p. 72). Their results showed the “creative potential of ordinary people to use creative art therapy to generate knowledge and to advance their social goals and transformation” (p. 72). Their research is an example of how art therapists are challenged to think and practice differently in contexts that are not Western. They also highlighted the culture-bound biases of the art

therapy profession “that may be masked in assertions of professionalism or ethical standards” (Hocoy, cited in Kapitan, Litell, & Torres, 2011). They conclude that:

The resulting Nicaraguan contribution to art therapy theory and practice is not primarily as a mental health intervention, which is understandable in a society that has no professionalized health care system. Rather, our cross-cultural collaboration conceptualizes creative art therapy as an emancipatory process for strengthening the development of the whole person—the psychoeducational, spiritual, relational, and political—that in turn exerts a positive transformational impact on a person’s family, community and oppressive societal structures. (Kapitan, Litell, & Torres, 2011, p. 71)

Daher and Haz (2010), who researched the use of an arts psychosocial intervention with unemployed women in a context of poverty, ran an arts group over four days and also found the program impacted the women’s wellbeing through the expression of feelings and instillation of hope: “they reported an effect of well-being during the intervention as well as in their homes’ (p. 332). While this program was not a professional development program and did not claim to operate from an arts therapy perspective, the researchers do explain how the change comes about using the processes of projection, revelation and integration. This program, as with the Kapitan, Litell and Torres (2011) work noted above, had a transformational impact on participants’ family and community. This highlights some really important questions around the Western notion of arts therapy in contexts where arts and healing have always been integral to community development. It raises questions around the legitimacy and place of the arts therapy professions in the first place.

Core Outcomes and Elements of Arts Therapy Professional Development

Programs

In an attempt to identify core outcomes of professional development programs using the arts therapies as training methodology for professional development, the studies above point to the following five central assumptions, as also outlined by Gouthro and Jarvis (2015) in their research on the use of arts in professional development:

- 1) The arts work to increase self-awareness and self-confidence
- 2) The arts offer emotional and artistic expression, as well as relaxation
- 3) The arts instil an increased sense of purpose in the workplace, and hope
- 4) The arts offer new perspectives/insights (individual or collective)
- 5) The arts offer an increased skill base in some cases

In identifying these core outcomes, the literature reviewed above suggests that change/shifts happen through the arts and in different ways. Despite differences, the core elements of the programs include the creation of safety and trust, creativity, self and group reflection and participatory active engagement through arts activities.

I turn now to examine dramatherapy literature on the underlying processes of change and how these might be valuable in theorising and thinking about how change happens in arts-therapy based professional development programs.

Dramatherapy

Dramatherapy and Active Methods

What defines dramatherapy practice is the use of active methods as supported through the following definitions by two international professional associations:

Dramatherapy has as its main focus the intentional use of healing aspects of drama and theatre as the therapeutic process. It is a method of working and playing that uses action methods to facilitate creativity, imagination, learning, insight and growth. (British Association of Dramatherapists, 2016)

Drama Therapy is an active, experiential approach to facilitating change. Through storytelling, projective play, purposeful improvisation, and performance, participants are invited to rehearse desired behaviours, practice being in relationship, expand and find flexibility between life roles, and perform the change they wish to be and see in the world. (North American Drama Therapy Association, 2016)

Dramatherapists commonly use active methods in their practice and supervision of other therapists. The literature reviewed earlier all refers to the use of experiential arts activities as ways of engaging participants. These active, experiential methods involve individuals and people in the group enacting or doing embodied activities. These individual and the group are actively feeling and thinking with the result being possible new insights, new relationships or new ways of responding.

The use of active methods is not unique to dramatherapy and draws on the work of Jacob L. Moreno (1953), known as the originator of action methods (Fox, 1987; McLaughlin, Freed, & Tadych, 2006). Moreno developed sociometry (the measure of relationship), psychodrama (the drama of the individual) and sociodrama (the drama of the group). Each of these methods share common themes with the emphasis on acting

and action; relying on the interplay (action) of people playing roles (Fox, 1987; McLaughlin, Fredd, & Tadych, 2006). In addition, there is an emphasis on creativity and spontaneity that “propels the individual towards an adequate response to a new situation or a new response to an old situation” (Moreno, 1953, p. 42).

Moreno’s methods were role based and “provided opportunities for taking roles (exploring roles), playing roles (role training) and creating roles (expanding roles). They also allow for the processing of thoughts and feelings” (Moreno, 1953, p. 2). His methods have been extended and developed extensively in experiential learning and education, particularly in the exploration of and development of work related roles (Sternberg & Garcia, 2000).

Drawing on Moreno’s active methods, research into dramatherapy practice and supervision shows the most common methods used by dramatherapists are image making, small object work and role play (Jones, 2008). I have outlined these in detail in Chapter 4: Methodology. Not only is the use of image making, object work and role play a research method in this study, they are also, very importantly for this study, the vehicle of connection between participant child/youth worker and the child/young person they are working with. It is the action that facilitates reflection, and particular active methods when used in particular ways “can access issues and processes in a way that words alone cannot do” (Jones, 2008, p. 54).

Action facilitates reflection: The third relationship.

In supporting youth workers there is a third relationship always present albeit invisible. This is the valency between the worker and the child/young person. How youth workers form relationships and think about/reflect on their interactions is crucial to their work and how they connect to the child/young person. So being able to make

connections to the child in the workshops or supervision is important. One process of creating connection is to facilitate reflective practice through active methods encouraging playfulness. It does not necessarily refer to the actual use of play activities with the young person, but more to the attitude the worker brings to the work, an internal playfulness. This is important in that it enables the worker to be open to possibilities, opportunities and new insights (Jones, 2008).

The importance of reflective capacity.

Reflection plays a significant role in this study for the participants who take part in Firemaker as a means to facilitate their reflective practice. As mentioned one of the key concerns of this study is the way/s in which connections to the children/young people are made by the care worker through the creative arts processes. Reflection is therefore a key component of this research as it is concerned with how the arts might facilitate the participants' reflection on their work and clients.

Literature on reflection is addressed largely through and in the fields of nursing, social work, learning and education, and psychotherapy. The capacity to reflect on one's actions has been linked to new perspectives resulting in potential new ways of responding (Kapitan, 2012). The significance of a reflective space for child/youth workers is that it might encourage a playful 'internal' attitude so that they may remain open to meanings and possibilities (Casement, cited in Jones, 2008) that may emerge in relation to their work with the child. Developing an internal playfulness results in learning to tolerate ambiguity (Deaver & Shiflett, 2011). How this playfulness and reflection is facilitated through arts active methods, will be discussed in the next section.

It is through the process of reflection on their actions that the practitioner learns skills from recalling the past or preparing for the future (Dokter, 2008). This reflection on action involves conscious thinking about actions (a significant part of supervision) and problem solving (Dokter, 2008). As a reflective practitioner the care worker obtains knowledge by doing and reflecting on what they have done. Donald Schön's (1983) fundamental contribution to the field of reflective practice is exceedingly significant, in that it includes not only reflection on action but reflection-in-action (Dokter, 2008; Heron, 1992; Thompson & Pascal, 2012).

Importantly these methods allow participants' to "remain in a playful relationship with the material" (Jones, 2008, p. 55). All active methods are underpinned by play and creativity (Moreno, 1953; Sternberg & Garcia, 2000), to which I now turn.

Play and Creativity as Transformational

Central to Firemaker are the theories and concepts of play and creativity. Firemaker celebrates play and creativity as central to the psychosocial development and learning of the child, but also to the development and learning of the adult care worker.

As outlined earlier creativity and playfulness are valuable in building resilience in children, but also valuable to development of the child and youth care worker who is often faced with difficult challenges in complex contexts. Theories on creativity and the arts as a way of knowing will be covered in more detail in Chapter 3 under Methodologies. What follows is an outline of play and creativity as transformational, drawing from the arts therapies and other disciplines relevant to understanding child and youth care workers' potential shifts when used purposefully in professional development programs.

Creativity.

Creativity is a complex concept that has generated much debate and theorising in various disciplines over the years (Karkou & Sanderson, 2005). The arts are seen as extensions of play, existing on a continuum, and for most arts therapists, creativity is considered as the central premise upon which health is built (Emunah, 1994; Jennings, 1998; Jones, 1996; Karkou & Sanderson, 2005). The arts therapies build on relevant psychotherapeutic literature that perceives creativity as an expression of positive mental health (Winnicott, 1971; Rogers, 1961). This can be seen in the current global arts-in-health movement (Prior, 2010; White, 2006) in which the benefits of engaging in arts practices are seen as positive to an individual's and community's well-being.

Karkou and Sanderson (2005) defined creativity as “the capacity to find new and unexpected connections, new relationships and therefore new meanings” (p. 53). The focus of creativity in the context of this study is not drawing on the ability of the individual to create an artistic product, but rather on the process of creating or doing something new. This includes risk-taking, making connection, making choices and initiating learning through exploration (Compton et al., 2010, p. 1). Creativity is interwoven with the capacity to be open, playful and spontaneous (Emunah, 1994; Jones, 1996; Kershaw & Nicholson, 2011; Malchiodi, 1998) and is best facilitated in a trusting, non-judgemental safe space. Play and creativity are intrinsically linked, as Landy et.al. (2012) stated: “creative arts therapists know that therapy is, first and foremost, art, an inter-subjective playspace” (p. 50).

Play.

Play has been written about extensively as crucial for children's development, learning and wellbeing (Brock et al., 2009; Bruner, 1976; Cattanach, 1994; Jennings,

1993; Slade, 1954; Sutton-Smith, 1979; Vygotsky, 1978). It is recognised by the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights as the right of every child (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1989).

Play is the language of the child and the natural means through which he/she expresses him/herself and makes sense of the world. Play involves the spontaneous engagement of mind, body and feeling. Literature on the role of play in learning and therapy demonstrates that it develops the intellectual, emotional, social, cultural, physical and psychological capacities of people across all contexts (Bolton, 1979; Jennings, 1999; Slade, 1954; Sutton-Smith, 1979; Wagner, 1979). Engaging in play involves exploration, assimilation, spontaneity, imagination, problem solving, enjoyment, focus on the here and now, and mastery of skills.

Relevant to this study is literature on play that focuses on the personal, social, cultural and emotional development opportunities it offers. On a personal level play provides the opportunity to make choices, and to develop confidence and independence. Importantly it provides access to symbols and metaphors, giving surface to internal conflicts (conscious or unconscious), that can then be worked through, mastered and/or understood (Karkou & Sanderson, 2005; Malchiodi, 2008; Jones, 2007). Socially and culturally, play provides opportunity for building relationships, working with others, negotiating differences, building identity and negotiating belonging. Central to play is the child's experience of what makes sense to the child (Jones, 2007). Play is the expressive language for both children and adults. It is the natural form of expression for children, and with adults takes on other forms such as symbolism or metaphor, or as Jones (2007) said, "the dramatic mode is seen as an adult equivalent of child's play" (p. 162).

Importantly, adults need preparation for engaging in play, including time, safe space, appropriate materials and preparatory experiences (Griffing, 1983). Drama, experiential and action based learning are linked with developmental theories of play. For this reason it is important to briefly outline literature on developmental theories of play.

Developmental theories of play

Play is often described as a series of stages that mark cognitive, social and emotional development. Piaget (cited in Flavell, 1963) linked the development of children's thoughts and ideas at different stages with different types of play. His theory demonstrates how play allows for discovery which in turn leads to development. He theorised that children move from sensory orientated (or practice play) to symbolic play then finally to concrete operational.

Vygotsky (1978) believed children's social and cultural relationships were crucial and introduced the ideas that play and learning created a zone of proximal development, enabling children to develop their potential. Bruner (1976) further developed the idea of discovery learning and that children need experiential activities to be active learners in order to develop their thinking and learning. Current literature on play based learning builds on the fundamental concepts of these theorists, but has extended and adapted where necessary. The following table summarises these core theories on child development through play.

Table 3a: Child development through play

Approximate ages	Developmental stages of play	Psychosocial development
Children develop at their own individual pace and many children who experience trauma can be delayed (this is only a guideline).	How a child's play develops as s/he gets older (based on Jennings, 1990).	What a child is trying to achieve emotionally and psychologically at each stage (based on Erikson, 1993).
Infant 0—1/2 years	Mirroring	Trust
Toddler 1/2—3 years	Sensory play	Independence
Pre-schooler or early childhood 3—6 years	Projective and symbolic play (imaginary)	Initiative
School age or play industry 7—12 years	Group games	Mastery and acquiring skills
Adolescence 13—18 years	Dramatic play	Identity

Source: Zakheni workbook (2012, p. 76)

The significance of play in children's development is that it opens up alternative ways of working with children. It also demonstrates how the arts through play can help in psychosocial support. Developmental theories have previously been criticised for being reductionist and exclusive of social, cultural and political influences on an individual's development (Brock et al., 2009; Rogoff, 2003). It is important to note play spaces (like the arts) are not culturally neutral or free (Rogoff, 2003). However developmental theories of play and how play and drama (active methods) are central to growth and change are significant in that development is seen as occurring on a continuum that continues to the end of life.

In more recent times it has been noted that in resource rich Westernised contexts there is a "relentless diminishing of playful encounters and engagement for children and

young people across our Western society” (Brock et al., 2009, p. xxiii). Some of this has been explained in part by education’s commitment to testing knowledge and more focus on adult orientated activities as opposed to child-initiated activities (Ginsburg, 2007).

Play and drama.

Play and drama have a close relationship where “play is seen as the precursor to drama” (Jones, 2007, p. 166). Drama is thus considered an extension of play and developmental theories of play are integrated with much of the literature on drama in education (Neelands, 1984; O’Neill, 1995; O’ Toole, 1992; Taylor, 2000, 2003, 2012; Wagner, 1999).

The goal is to learn through drama - for example, to explore the world in which a novel is set, to understand a historical event, to experience conflicts between different cultural groups, to see what other walks of life feel like. Drama in education enables participants, either during the drama itself or after the drama in discussion, to look at reality through fantasy, to see below the surface of actions to their meaning. (Wagner, 1999, p. 1)

Drama and play form part of a developmental continuum (Jennings, 1990; Jones, 1996, 2007) as represented in Table 3; a model of dramatic experiencing that is conceptualised along a continuum that develops in complexity and richness in meaning (Slade, 1954).

Table 3b: The Play-Drama Continuum

Early sensory-motor play: sound, movement associated with her body. Imitation of (m)other	Ability to think symbolically: distinguish between self and other—engages in dramatic play (identification and role play)	Separation between natural self-directed play and applied drama	Improvisation and role-play	Extended dramatisation	Theatre performance
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This continuum is valuable in understanding how play and by extension drama and the creative arts support transformational learning and development (Jennings, 1990; Jones, 1996; Mendel, 2015). It is further valuable in how types of play have a developmental progression, starting with embodiment and leading to role play (Jennings, 1990).

Play in dramatherapy.

Literature on play in dramatherapy is relevant to this study as the methods in Firemaker are informed by the practice and theory of play in dramatherapy. According to Jones (2007), dramatherapy “builds upon the healing aspects that are present in the processes of creativity, playing and acting” (p. 15). Playfulness and creativity in the arts therapies are considered central to the possibility of change. All dramatherapy involves a level of play—practical and conceptual—whereby there is a “playful relationship with selves, others and reality” (Jones, 2007, p. 164). Dramatherapy creates a playful relationship with reality to:

enable clients to play with elements of their life - to rework issues, to try out new configurations or possibilities. This can be described as a play shift.

This playful exploration can produce changes, which can be integrated into the client's life outside of dramatherapy. (Jones 2007, p. 191)

Meaning and play.

The content of children's play often involves events they have witnessed or experienced. By playing and re-playing these events (re-enacting them) the child is working through something, either to master a role or feelings or to come to terms with events (Jones, 2007). Essentially play is an opportunity to play with reality without the consequences of reality. The child reproduces the experiences of reality symbolically (Blatner & Blatner, 2000). Winnicott (1971) described play as the potential space within which personal identity and meaning is made in relation to the outside world. Symbolism is the content that connects people together, suggesting symbolism has relational capacity (Karkou & Sanderson, 2005). Through play a symbolic relationship is formed, which has meaning for the child. This symbolic transformation of experience is important in "finding meaning in the world, sorting, solving and resolving, mastering and learning and negotiating a relationship between inner and outer reality" (Jones, 2007, p. 163).

Playfulness.

Central to therapeutic work is creating access to playfulness: "access to playing can form a way of engaging in spontaneity, a route to becoming creative" (Jones, 2007, p. 165), allowing the individual or group to engage with the self, others and life in a spontaneous way. This allows them to "engage creatively and playfully with problematic material where before they have only been able to remain stuck and uncreative in response to problems" (Jones, 2007, p.165).

Enjoyment is a very significant aspect of play (Emunah, 1995; Jones, 2007). Both authors contend that in play the engagement, learning and change is enjoyable. Enjoyment is often a quality we undervalue or do not associate with professional development. So qualities of play are reproduced through games and arts active methods. Many of these activities include: “body play, imitation activities, play with objects, play with symbolic toys, projective work with toys in creation of small worlds, rough and tumble play, make-believe play involving taking on characters, [and] games” (Jones, 2007, p. 168).

Linked to playfulness is the space within which this can happen. Literature on play highlights the importance of a play space that is safe physically, emotionally, psychologically and culturally (Brock, Dodds, & Jarvis, 2013; Jones, 1996). Attention to how this is created is a common feature of all group work and important in developing trust so that participants are free to express themselves. Dramatherapist Robert Landy described the importance of the play space as a “balanced place where thought and action are possible” (cited in Jones, 2010, p. 44).

Core Processes of Change in Dramatherapy

Literature on the core processes of change in dramatherapy is specific and primarily focused on clinical interventions. Jones (1996) provided the original descriptions of a core process and defined it as the process that “aimed to define how dramatherapy is effective” (Jones, 2008, p. 271). However, the underlying core processes of change have much to offer the field of arts in learning, healing and transformation. Their applicability is beyond therapy as they begin to explain how and what change occurs.

The Firemaker program is underpinned by arts therapy processes (drama and art) and developmental play theory (Cattanach, 1994; Slade, 1995) and an explicit theory of how these processes work. Rather than provide ‘therapy’ in its traditional context, it intentionally uses the arts therapies as a method to facilitate learning about the arts in psychosocial support. These processes intentionally engage participants in creative expression and playfulness as a way of creating new insights. Jones (2007) identified and outlined a number of core therapeutic processes to describe the ways in which drama particularly can bring about change. These processes emphasise certain aspects of identity and relationship through the very nature of dramatherapy (Jones, 2007).

These factors include the emphasis on playfulness, on the transformation of identity through drama, on being witness to oneself and others, the idea of the self as constructed through roles, and that a relationship with the arts and with others can be transformative. (Jones, 2007, p. 73)

These processes do not consist of specific techniques or methods but “concern fundamental processes within all dramatherapy” (Jones, 2007, p. 81). And as Jones says they “are not neat categories, rather they are a language to try to describe aspects of a whole” (2007, p. 83). They can occur at any one point in a session and can happen collectively or in isolation (Cassidy et al., 2014). Jones (1996, 2007, 2010) illustrated eight core underlying processes apparent in dramatherapy and they are:

1. Dramatic projection
2. Playing
3. Role play
4. Empathy and distancing
5. Witnessing

6. Embodiment
7. Life-drama connection
8. Transformation

Jones's core processes have been extended by a number of dramatherapists as a way of describing and reviewing dramatherapy as a discipline (Karkou, cited in Jones, 2008) as well as "a way of defining the scope, extent, and whole field of dramatherapy in relation to other disciplines, such as psychotherapy or the arts" (Jones, 2008, p. 271). Some have evaluated these processes through examples of clinical practice (Jones, 2008) in analysing the nature of change in the therapist's work. These processes are explained in more detail in Chapter 4.

More recently grounded theory research on these processes has offered a meta-process model of change to understand "*how* therapists can successfully engage a client in each of Jones' core processes" (Cassidy et al., 2014, p. 363). This meta-process model of change puts working in the "here and now" as central in understanding how dramatherapists attempt to facilitate change for clients. Cassidy et al.'s research (2014) is arguably not new in terms of explaining how learning and change happens. Working in the "here and now" can be linked with the notion of spontaneity as theorised by Moreno (1953), and Mezirow's reflection on action (1998) that facilitates change. Within this context Cassidy et al. (2014) highlighted four further inter-related themes that contributed to their model of change:

1. The way the therapist works alongside their clients, both within the drama and outside it
2. The way in which safety is established in the group

3. The level of choice and control that clients are given within the safety of the group. This means the level to which clients can choose how to engage in the drama and/or group, leading to feelings of control
4. Finally clients take part actively in a session with the group and/or therapist, through experiential techniques

Importantly Cassidy et al.'s research showed the core processes listed above—for example embodiment, witnessing, distancing etc.—do not necessarily bring about change on their own; that there are important conditions necessary for change to take place. Further these authors acknowledged the processes are from clinicians' points of view and that more research is needed from participants' perspectives around their experiences of what processes are at work. My research sets out address both the conditions/foundations that need to be in place for change to happen and the individual core therapeutic processes. These two matters—of the conditions for and the pace of change—are at the heart of this thesis.

Research and the Arts Therapies

With a current global increase of interest in arts-based practice, research and the need for organisations and institutions to provide evidence-based practice has become critical (Jones, 2012; Kapitan, 2010; McNiff, 2012). Jones's (2012) research into dramatherapists' experiences and thoughts on conducting research highlighted the difficulties practitioners have in conducting research on what they do. Reasons he gave were that: many feel they don't have the skills to conduct research as their training did not equip them with the necessary skills; others feel they don't have the adequate language to describe accurately what changes occur and indeed why; and, many dramatherapists feel they are up against the medical paradigm, which favours

knowledge that is defined and measurable. Jones further pointed out that the majority of research carried out by dramatherapists up to date has been qualitative and strongly advocated for dramatherapists to begin to engage with both methods so that there can be advocacy for positions in schools, hospitals to make it more available to wider groups of people. McNiff (2012) concurred when he said “The biggest opportunity and challenge facing art-based research today is getting the people with the most to gain from the discipline to believe in it, become involved, perfect the process and realize the advantages it offers” (p. 5). Both acknowledged the links between everyday practice and research, but noted the relationship is seen as antagonistic because “research and everyday practice are seen as disconnected and embattled in terms of languages, concerns, roles and outcomes” (Jones, 2012, p. 75).

Both eminent practitioners and authors have noted the tensions that exist between the roles of researcher and practitioner, where typically:

professions involving arts in therapy, healthcare and education base their relevance on expanding the process of knowing, communicating and transforming life situations through artistic expression and understanding but yet when it comes to the formal process of conducting research to advance the work, we paradoxically rely on other disciplines. (McNiff, 2012, p. 7)

McNiff went on to argue that while this has resulted in interdisciplinary cooperation, it has meant that the applied arts fields themselves “reinforce the adjunctive status by failing to perceive and implement their unique ways of knowing and communicating as primary modes of research” (2012, p. 7).

Jones recognised the tension between the role of practitioner and researcher as part of the growth of a discipline where there are “naturally created challenging

interactions between its theories, practices, contexts and research” (p. 76). This, he noted, is as an opportunity for the next stage of dramatherapy research “involving creating a greater body of evidence in a way that ensures the relationship between practice and research is vital and mutual” (2012, p.76).

Jones’s (2012) research shows the need for an increased evidence base in the following three ways: 1) research and published research that supports practitioners in making a case for dramatherapy in specific contexts, 2) the need to assist in developing methods to undertake research, and 3) the need to develop client participation in having their voices heard in how change is understood (p. 76). The current research project sets out to address research and published research that supports practitioners in making a case for dramatherapy in specific contexts and the need to develop client participation in having their voices heard in how change is understood.

In closing I re-iterate what the New York dramatherapist Robert Landy (2006) maintained when he noted that the profession of dramatherapy is

too small and too insular. It moves in isolation, separate from its relations in other arts therapies and expressive therapies, in counselling and psychology, in educational theatre and in theatre art... the field has not developed a healthy critical perspective of itself. (p. 139)

Currently there are new gaps and new challenges for the future identity of creative arts therapists, but little has been written about contemporary arts therapy practice and research, and the role it is playing.

This chapter has woven together literature relating to professional development programs for those who work with children using arts therapies as methodology, and to change processes in dramatherapy. The literature illustrates the complexity of the

research field that is traversed in this study. The emphasis on play is diametrically opposed by the positivist or post positivist paradigm that asks researchers to do some of the research for quantification of the work. This chapter serves to identify the main challenges that have beset the researcher, and the literature is given as evidence of the need for the research: this is especially the case in the two settings examined in this study.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology and Dramatherapy Practice Perspectives

As explored in Chapter 3, research in the arts therapies is young but growing (Jones, 2010; Kapitan, 2010; Landy et al., 2012), and is faced with further challenges of the emerging and changing hybrid nature of the profession itself (Jones, 2012; Landy, 2006; Meyer, 2014). Some of these challenges include the call to look outwards towards a more community-based practice with a social justice agenda (Jones, 2010; Kapitan, Littel, & Torres, 2011; Meyer, 2014; Sajnani, 2010, 2012). This research project is focused on understanding care workers' reflections on their capacity to respond to children and youth in their care, when they take part in an experiential arts-therapy based workshop program. It seeks to: 1) examine the care workers' experiences of participation in methods of the Firemaker Program, 2) explore how participation in this program has influenced the care workers' understanding of their role as care worker, and their interactions with children.

Chapter 3 outlined the challenges of running professional development programs for care workers working in difficult social and political contexts. It specifically examined how these programs are run to ensure necessary attitudes and responses of care workers to the children and young people in their care. In this review I critiqued literature that focuses on the significance of a reflective space for care workers that encourages a playful 'internal' attitude, so that they may remain open to meanings and possibilities (Casement, cited in Jones, 2008) that may emerge in relation to their work with the child. I focused on the use of active methods (drawn from dramatherapy) to facilitate care workers to think and feel through and on their actions in the reflective space. The review also outlined the need for research into the potential role the arts therapies can play in professional development programs in facilitating this playfulness

and development of new insight. This research project responds to these concerns by asking:

- Does participating in the Firemaker program impact care workers' engagement with the children and their roles as care workers?
- What role can the arts therapies, play in developing the care workers' capacity to respond to children and youth in their care?
- How best to undertake research of this kind, using arts therapies based methodologies?

In this chapter I explain how the research process was designed and how it continued to emerge and evolve. I outline the epistemological perspective that underpins my research, and in this way provide the context for the methodology and choice of methods employed in this study. I also position myself as a researcher and identify the various roles that I bring to the study as arts practitioner, facilitator, therapist and researcher. This is followed by a description of the Firemaker Program as the model of practice upon which this study is based.

Approach to Inquiry: Epistemology

This study is concerned with participants' experiences of a model of practice that makes use of arts therapy methods and theory. In researching how people make meaning of their complex embodied experience of participating in the Firemaker Program, and how this may lead to new self-understandings in their workplace, it is the lived experience (of the arts methods) and the reflection through and on it (Jones, 2008; Kinsella, 2007, 2010; Mendel, 2015; Mezirow, 1998; Rasmussen, 2014) that constitutes the research model (Kapitan, 2010).

To some extent all research involves making meaning, but in qualitative research it supports the notion that there are multiple realities (Krauss, 2012) in life experience, multiple ways of knowing (Smith, 2005; Timm-Bottos & Reilly, 2015) and that each is equally valid. How meaning is made is dependent on the person, their context and how they “engage with the world they are interpreting” (Crotty, 1998, p. 43) and this is characteristic of a constructionist perspective. The notion of multiple realities and multiple understandings supports Finley’s (2011) idea of ethical and socially engaged research that recognises ‘other’ knowledge systems outside of the Western positivist paradigm (Montero & Sonn, 2009; Smith, 2012). Significance is given to experiences and meaning made both individually and collectively (McKenna & Woods, 2012). Hence a constructionist epistemology underpinned the selection of the theoretical and methodological approaches used for this study.

Theoretical Perspective

Because the current study focuses on participants’ lived experience it draws on the phenomenology tradition in order to look for “core meanings about a common experience” (Kapitan, 2010, p. 136) while avoiding the imposition of prior assumptions about this experience. Kapitan (2010) suggested the process of engaging with arts activities can be formalised into a research model to “address research problems of human understanding” (p. 157). The relationship between experience and meaning has its roots in hermeneutic phenomenological research (Husserl, 2012; Kafle, 2011) in which the focus is on “the way things appear to us through experience or in our consciousness where the phenomenological researcher aims to provide a rich textured description of lived experience” (Kafle, 2011, p. 182). Phenomenology is a common

choice for arts therapists as it involves researching the phenomena of unconscious experience (Kapitan, 2010).

It is also more broadly hermeneutic insofar as participants' words, interactions and creations are subject to disciplined and systematic interpretation to reveal implicit meaning that transcends individual participants' articulated self-understandings. This typically hermeneutic investigation involves consideration of the following three features:

- *Lived experience* that is the starting point and focus of inquiry
- *Expression* of this lived experience in texts, artefacts, or images, which objectify the experience (story, poem, painting, dance, film, interview, narrative or anything that expresses the lived experience)
- *Understanding*, not as a cognitive act but rather as an evolving apprehension of the meaning possibilities revealed by reflecting on targeted personal and interpersonal experiences and processes. (Kapitan, 2010, p. 151)

In summary, the current study is rooted in a practice-led epistemology (Barrett, 2007; Barrett & Bolt, 2010; Heron, 1992; Lees, 2010; Lees & Freshwater, 2008) from a postmodern constructivist standpoint that values multiple realities (Crotty, 1998) and promotes transformation (Lees, 2010). The methodology rests primarily on the principle that engaging in arts activities is the way of knowing. The research design remained flexible throughout the project and creativity, a core concept of the arts therapies in practice and research (Jones, 2008; Kapitan, 2010; Karkou & Sanderson, 2006; McNiff, 1998) also became a key feature of this study. This is evident in the value of multiple methodological perspectives in the research. This next section situates

the researcher before outlining the methodological framework and leading into a discussion on the arts as a way of knowing and meaning making.

Methodological Framework

Practice Led Inquiry

The approach to this study is practice-based: what Lees (2011) referred to as research that builds on the skills of practice “encouraging the use of methodologies that develop naturally out of practice” (p. 9). This approach is also concerned with the social and political contexts within which the study is situated. By doing so it has the potential to contribute to the future development of the profession (Lees, 2011). As mentioned, the primacy of my experience and practice as dramatherapist, professional trainer and supervisor, facilitating experiential group work, using the creative arts, is what informs this research

Barrett (2010) claimed that “practice-led research is a new species of research, generative enquiry that draws on subjective, interdisciplinary and emergent methodologies that have the potential to extend the frontiers of research” (p. 1). Practice-led research (Barrett, 2010; Lees & Freshwater, 2008) is closely related to and informed by social science traditions such as participant observation (Jupp, 2006) and action research (Kapitan, 2010; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). The arts are inextricably linked to practice and it is often difficult to separate out practice from research (Barrett & Bolt, 2010; Finley, 2011; Kapitan, 2010; Prior, 2013). For practitioners in the arts fields, it is an obvious methodological choice, as it allows the researcher to be practitioner, participant and observer. It enables the researcher to both observe practice as well as co-construct knowledge with the participants.

The innovative and critical potential of practice-based research lies in its capacity to generate personally situated knowledge and new ways of modelling and externalising such knowledge while at the same time, revealing philosophical, social and cultural contexts for the critical intervention and application of knowledge outcomes. (Barrett, 2012, p. 12)

While the arts are a defining feature of research in the arts therapies (Kapitan, 2010; McNiff, 1998; Sajnani, 2010) there is disparity on how they are utilised, understood and valued. Within the field there have been a range of theoretical approaches and methods for gathering data (Jones, 2012; Kapitan, 2010; Landy, 2012; McNiff, 1998; Sajnani, 2012). These have included both qualitative and quantitative methods, but mostly qualitative (Jones, 2012; Kapitan, 2010). Kapitan (2010) suggested the arts therapist as researcher brings a particular perspectival lens to research, which involves “using our skills in attending to a life concern as we encounter it” (p. 31). Sajnani (2012) concurred when she wrote about the Artist-Researcher-Therapist as having multiple roles simultaneously informed by their experiences as “scholars and artists” (p. 190).

The arts therapies use creative processes to provide individuals or groups with safe ways of expressing feelings and thoughts in order to promote psychological growth and change. While the arts are central to how arts therapists work and think, they are not constrained by technique alone. Karkou and Sanderson (2005) suggested there is a wide range of definitions for the word ‘arts’ that has allowed for diversity and difference in artistic expression, with the focus more on the process than the product. It is important to note that in the widening of this definition “artistic/aesthetic value judgments are removed and consequently pressures to create something ‘good’ are withdrawn” (p. 51). The primary method of the arts therapist is to “activate the process

of creation followed by reflective technique” (Kapitan, 2010, p. 31) within the context of therapy. The possibility of change is offered through increased insight and self-awareness, working through an art form (Jones, 1996) and in relationship with the therapist, other participants, the environment and surrounding socio-cultural contexts (Kapitan, 2010). This way of working uses the arts as a way of exploring subjectivity and “identifying the connection between symbolism and subjectivity” (Gillies et al., 2005, p. 201). Many clients who seek out the arts therapies find verbal articulation difficult and therefore formal language constraining. Karkou and Sanderson (2005) offered the following definition of the arts therapies:

Art therapies are the creative use of the artistic media as vehicles for non-verbal and/or symbolic communication, within a holding environment, encouraged by a well-defined client-therapist relationship, in order to achieve personal and/or social therapeutic goals appropriate for the individual. (p. 46)

The practice of constantly seeing, creating, relating and interpreting is what differentiates arts therapists from other types of therapists as well as from practising artists (Kapitan, 2010; Karkou & Sanderson, 2005). As Kapitan (2010) noted, it is not so much the uniqueness of methods that arts therapists use but “how they think and what they pay attention to” (p. 31) that assists in understanding how an arts therapist might go about doing research. How this translates into formal research has been summarised by Kapitan (2010):

Every session potentially harbors the hallmarks of a good qualitative researcher: the multiple, repeated controls of observing and interpreting behaviour over time; the inductive processes of discovery and meaning-making; the ‘data checks’ with clients to calibrate mutual understandings. As

keen observers and interpreters of experiences that are significant to the people they work with and instructive of the human condition, art therapists have much to offer in the interpretivist arena of research. (p. 157)

The use of arts in this study is central as they are both practice and enquiry. McNiff (2012), an art therapist who has written much on arts-based research, argued that arts-based practitioners as researchers need to “perceive and implement their unique ways of knowing and communicating as primary modes of research” (p. 7), not as secondary, as has been the case in arts collaborating with psychology in health and educational studies. I turn now to briefly examine the role the arts currently play in the context of research.

Arts in Research

The use of the arts in research has gained momentum over the past decade (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Knowles & Cole, 2008; McNiff, 1998, 1999, 2012; Savin-Baden & Major Howell, 2013; Sullivan, 2005) and continues to challenge more traditional approaches to research across disciplines. The use of the arts in research refers to that which may include one or all of the art forms: visual, dance, drama and music (McNiff, 1998). Researchers in cross-disciplines have begun to explore ways of expanding their investigation of the human condition through the arts (Gilroy, 2011; McNiff, 1998, 2008).

The strength of using arts in research is that it offers diverse and unique ways of understanding, knowing and living in the world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; McNiff, 1998; Savin-Baden & Major, 2013; Prior, 2013) in that it encourages active involvement from participants so that their voices and expressions as data are represented in alternative ways to a more familiar written or spoken data. As Susan

Finley (2005) has stated, “art is equal to, and may be at times more suitable than, science for moving people to action and advancing human understanding” (p. 686). The applied arts, particularly the art form of drama, have an established history in political, social, educational, community and selected health contexts (Boal, 1985; Bolton, 1979; Emunah, 1994; Freire, 1970; Jones, 1996; Landy, 1994; Malchiodi, 2008).

The arts are valuable as an inquiry as they have the ability to express and explore what can never be conveyed in conventional language (McNiff, 1998), and if research is ultimately about discovery, then engaging with the creative imagination provides the potential landscape for this to happen. As Sajnani (2012) concurred: “Arts-based research approaches share a similar goal with other forms of enquiry wishing to illuminate the human condition, they aim for context specific rather than essential and generalizable truths” (p. 84). Arts-based methods of inquiry then are a traversing of the psychological landscapes to illuminate the individual and collective meanings that McNiff and Sajnani write of.

McKenna and Woods (2012) have offered a valuable model of how the arts may contribute to researching communities of meaning. In this model they presented ‘artful practice’ as research that focuses on “liberation through aesthetic experiences”; by “connecting through ritual using arts practice”; with the intention being to “create the stories/narratives using art to break the silences to know individual and collective truths”. In their model, which is aligned with psychodynamic psychotherapy, knowledge emerges “from the unconscious, which is made ‘conscious’ in the art products, so that knowledge is process driven via inter and intra reflexivity. Significance is determined by “witnessing connectivity through arts works and the intimacy of making shared meaning” (p. 85).

Historically, the arts have been utilised by various disciplines in research in the following ways:

1. Theory-driven research that relates features of the arts (such as a visual artwork) to particular theories, for example in art history and art interpretation
2. Research that uses visual means to gather and interpret data that is then analysed within existing trends in the social sciences
3. Arts-based research found primarily in arts education where sensory based learning is foregrounded as the way of knowing and understanding (Sullivan, cited in Kapitan, 2010).

One might argue that all three areas of research are arts-based, however, there are many names given for arts in qualitative research and this has been confusing (Finley, 2011); for example: arts-based research, arts-based inquiry, arts-informed, arts-informing. Finley has written from her experience of seeing researchers who “clearly experience art as qualitative research but do not choose to describe their work as arts based” (2011, p. 441). She further offered a number of explanations for this argument, one of them being that “much of the work is ephemeral and can only be captured as description and in analytic discussions of that which must go unseen and unexperienced by an academic audience” (p. 441).

Prior (2013) has argued arts practitioners possess “a great deal of knowledge about their craft” (p. 58) and are faced with the challenge of “legitimizing the knowledge and benefits contained within artistic processes” (p. 58). For this reason, he explained, it has posed particular issues regarding wider acceptance in research, and for a field that values different ways of knowing. McNiff (1998, 2013) has supported this position and has written extensively on arts-based research as that which places artistic

knowing at the core, recognising that the arts offer unique ways of understanding and communicating human experience. McNiff (1998, 2013) has defined arts-based research as distinctly different to the use of the arts in qualitative research in the social sciences. He has described it as research that places the arts process as the primary mode of research, not as adjunctive, both in how data is collected, interpreted and presented.

Savin-Baden and Major (2013) have listed three types of arts-based research: 1) Arts-based inquiry, 2) arts-informED inquiry and 3) arts-informING inquiry. They have distinguished between these types of inquiry in the following way:

1. Arts-based inquiry: where the artistic process is used as research by artists, researchers and participants in order to understand the art itself or understand a phenomenon through the artistic process.
2. Arts-informED inquiry: that is of two types:
 - a. where art is used to represent the findings of a study;
 - b. where art is used to represent a response to the findings of an issue or situation studied.
3. Arts-informING inquiry: where art is used in order to evoke a response from an audience (in the broadest sense) made to a situation or issue; the response may or may not be captured.

This typology captures the growing currency of arts in social science inquiry and action (Sonn et al., 2015) and is helpful in the definitions it provides. According to this typology, the current study can be construed as arts-based inquiry (Savin-Baden & Howell Major 2013); whereby “the artistic process is used as research by artists, researchers and participants in order to understand the art itself or understand a

phenomenon through the artistic process” (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013, p. 293).

While the arts are central to this study my use of this method does not include presenting or responding to the data through an art form as many arts-based researchers encourage (Finley, 2011; Kapitan, 2010; McNiff, 2013). Significantly though, as McNiff (2012) has further encouraged arts practitioners as researchers to do, the research design was developed in “response to the nature of the question, not the other way round” (p. 7).

In the next section I explore ways in which the specific practice of dramatherapists can inform the processes of social science research. I will focus on relationships to participants, play and creativity, symbol and metaphor, meaning making, reflection and reflexivity. Specific underlying dramatherapy processes that are interwoven through these areas include embodiment, role, active witnessing, dramatic projection, empathy and distancing, and life drama/arts connection (Jones, 1996), and will be discussed separately. These are significant for my methodology as it is through these processes that I will analyse and describe potential changes that happen for participants.

Dramatherapy Practice Perspectives

Dialogic Relationships with Participants

Much has been written in social science research on the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the participant (Maxwell, 2013). This is particularly evident in the literature on research and ethical practice that highlights the importance of collaboration and critical dialogue (Sonn, 2009) with participants. Tolman and Brydon-Miller (2001) put forward methods that are “relational in that they

acknowledge and actively involve the relationships between researchers and participants, as well as their respective subjectivities” (p. 5). Like Lees (2010), Finley, (2011) and Timm-Bottos (2014), they have argued that qualitative research should involve collaboration with research participants in order to generate knowledge that is useful to the participants as well as the researcher, thereby contributing to both personal and social transformation (Maxwell, 2013). Another field that involves dialogical relationships is that of arts therapies, framed within psychotherapy.

Arts therapists are trained in general psychotherapeutic principles (the importance of the relationship formed between therapist and client, and that change happens through process over time), arts methods, and the use of these to achieve psychological change. They are also trained in reflexive praxis and encouraged to understand the impact that socio-political factors have on the therapeutic (Jones 2010; Landy 2006). Sajnani (2012) has asserted that arts therapists have the skills and the knowledge to challenge wider ideologies and social practices, thus making them socially responsible and aligned with critical theorists, who challenge various injustices and work to design social redress programs. It also means arts therapists are well positioned to provide a resource for communities regarding how programs are implemented and supported in an ethical manner.

Central to arts therapy is the relationship formed with an individual, a group of participants and/or an organisation. This relationship usually involves pre and post therapy interviews with ongoing dialogue throughout the duration of therapy. The therapeutic relationship is complex, fluid and dynamic, involving a dialogical process that requires ongoing renegotiation of goals and aims. Unlike the talking therapies, in which there is a dyadic relationship between therapist and participant, in arts therapy there is a triadic relationship involving the art form. How the therapist and participant

relate to the art form created in a session carries significance in how meaning is made (Emunah, 1994; Jones, 1996; Landy, 1994). This has significance for practice led research in that there is a relational dimension to the ‘data’ and how it is interpreted. In other words, the researcher cannot merely provide an interpretation of the data outside of this triadic relationship. What the individual says about what they created, how they created it and what it means for them is significant in how meaning is made. As Kapitan (2010) has noted, the arts therapist brings with her/him an aesthetic relational tool that involves relating compassionately to the arts creation (image, the drama, the role, and story) and to the people who see, create and relate to the arts created. Dramatherapy theory on witnessing (Jones, 1996) furthers this notion of knowing through a relationship and it will be discussed in more detail later on.

Play and Creativity

“Creative arts therapists know that therapy is, first and foremost, art, an inter-subjective playspace” (Landy et al., 2012, p. 50). The arts are seen as extensions of play, existing on a continuum, and for most arts therapists, creativity is considered as the central premise upon which health is built (Emunah, 1994; Jennings, 1998; Jones, 1996; Karkou & Sanderson, 2005). To engage with creative processes is said to engage with the healthy part of oneself (Rogers, 1961; Winnicott, 1971). This can be seen in the current global arts-in-health movement (Prior, 2010; White, 2006) in which the benefits of engaging in arts practices are seen as positive to an individual’s and community’s well-being. According to Jones (2007), dramatherapy “builds upon the healing aspects that are present in the processes of creativity, playing and acting” (p. 15).

Karkou and Sanderson (2005) have defined creativity as “the capacity to find

new and unexpected connections, new relationships and therefore new meanings” (p. 53). Creativity is interwoven with the capacity to be open, playful and spontaneous (Emunah, 1994; Jones, 1996; Kershaw & Nicholson, 2011; Malchiodi, 1998) and is best facilitated in a trusting and safe space: a playful state, “allied with feeling empowered” (Jones, 1996, p. 126). The significance of creativity in research has been written about and forms part of the growing interest in postmodern research methods (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Kershaw & Nicholson, 2011; Liamputtong & Rumbold, 2008; Landy, 2010; Sajjani, 2012). Elsewhere I have examined, in more detail, play and creativity from a methodological standpoint as transformational (see Chapter 3).

Creativity, a core concept of the arts therapies in practice and research (Jones, 2008; Kapitan, 2010; Karkou & Sanderson, 2006; McNiff, 1998) became a key feature of this study. This is evident in the value of multiple methodological perspectives in the research as well as the interdisciplinary nature of the Firemaker program in that it recognises the strength in cross-collaboration and multiple perspectives (Meyer, 2014).

Symbol and Metaphor

Non-verbal communication is central to the arts therapy process and is twofold. Firstly it refers to the body language of participants’ e.g. facial expression, gesture, body posture etc., and secondly it refers to the use of imagery, symbolism and metaphors, all of which are said to be present in people from a pre-verbal stage (Winnicott, 1971). How these images, symbols and metaphors are created is important in arts therapy as they surface new information, particularly regarding relational aspects. “Artistic expression is, therefore, seen as a manifestation of deeper hidden structures, a means of accessing personal and/or cultural history that would not be available through verbal means” (Karkou & Sanderson, p. 51). In research that is interested in

subjectivities, complexity and ambiguity, data that works beyond the constraints of formal language (Gillies et al., 2005) is valuable. I now turn to discuss how meaning making has been written about in the arts in general, then specifically in dramatherapy.

Meaning Making and the Arts: Multiple Ways of Knowing

Meaning making in and through the arts has been written about extensively (Allen, 1995; Barrett, 2010; Eisner, 2008), particularly in the field of drama education (Bolton, 1979; Kershaw & Nicholson, 2011; Mendel, 2015; Neelands, 2004; Taylor, 1996) where an embodied experience that involves doing, feeling and thinking can result in new understandings about oneself, the other or the context within which the drama happens. This embodiment can be extended to other arts forms with the understanding that art making is an accepted basic human behaviour (Dissanayake, 1995). Making art (dance, drama, visual or music) provides a “sensory aesthetic experience of embodied learning” (Timm-Bottos & Reilly, 2014, p. 105) wherein the body, through feeling and doing, can uncover/discover moments of illumination (Dirkx, 2001; Jones, 2010) that, along with critical reflection (Mezirow, 1998), can lead to subsequent new ways of seeing and knowing. “Art is a transformational act of critical consciousness. Not only is art the making of things; it awakens new ways of thinking and learning that things can change” (Kapitan et al., 2011, p. 64).

The relationship between art, meaning making and knowledge extends back to the beginnings of humankind. Storytelling and engaging in arts practices is widely accepted as a significant way the earliest human beings built community and made sense of their experiences together (Emunah, 1994; Gersie, 1996; Jones 1996; Landy, 1994; Prior 2010). The central role the arts have traditionally played in many communities around the world (Dissanayake, 1995; Irobi, 2007) has often been

overlooked by the claim to what art and culture is in Western knowledge (Dissanyake, 1995; Smith, 2005; Watkins & Shulman, 2008). As Sajnani (2012) has noted, “art is never neutral” (p. 190) and not without the power dynamics of those with privilege and in power to decide how “bodies and histories are signified in print, on canvas, on stage and on video” (p. 190).

So how then do artists know? Prior (2013) has stated that artists draw on “multiple ways of knowing” (p. 58) and that through their ongoing practice these ways of knowing become more developed. He has highlighted the significance of experience and its relationship with knowledge. This notion is underpinned by the theories of constructionists Dewey (1916), Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner (1986), who each proposed that “learners could learn actively and construct new knowledge based on their prior knowledge” (Huang, 2002, p. 28), and that thinking and feeling are interdependent (Bresler, 2008). Significantly their theories emphasise the importance of participatory methods of learning in which learning is a process of discovery. For all three, the purpose of learning is to develop reason, imagination and creativity (Takaya, 2013). Bruner (1986) has stressed the importance of making mistakes through the process of learning and in so doing, suggested people come to understand the way they think by reflecting on what they did or did not do (Takaya, 2013). So knowledge emerges from action, through which not only do people gain factual knowledge but they understand something new about their own way of thinking, learning and communicating.

Prior has stated that there are many types of knowledge and that meaning is generated in multiple ways, but that it has “long been associated with the practical act of *doing*” (p. 59). Rasmussen (2014), who writes on drama education and applied theatre, has commented that many researchers and artists consider there to be “fundamentally different” (p. 26) forms of knowing. Drawing on the work of Seely and Reason (2008),

Rasmussen (2014) suggested that there has been a shift in this thinking whereby “different knowing forms” are “seen in a united knowing process within the same cultural event” (p. 26) and that these ways of knowing are relational i.e. they happen in the context of a relationship between self and other.

He suggested there are four types of knowing in the arts:

1. **Experiential:** This involves exploration of a phenomenon through the body, mind and feelings: as Rasmussen (2014) noted it is “knowing through participative and empathic involvement in something of which we are a part and from which we are at the same time detached” (p. 26). This is what Kapitan (2010) referred to as the lived experience of participants and what in dramatherapy theory would be defined as a combination of embodiment, empathy and distancing (Jones, 1996).
2. **Propositional:** which involves the processing of experience through thought, speech and writing.
3. **Practical or tacit knowing:** this refers to knowing through practice that Prior (2013) also referred to. It involves the knowing of the bodily skills involved in one’s art form that develops over time.
4. **Presentational knowing:** which provides a bridge to propositional knowing “by way of presenting the experience in symbolic or linguistic forms” (p. 26). In dramatherapy theory we could describe this knowing as ‘dramatic projection’ whereby someone’s experience (internal or external) is projected into the dramatic material e.g. small objects (Jones, 1996). Kapitan (2010) would describe this as both the expression of the lived experience and the understanding of what has emerged. This form of knowing is embedded in experiential knowing and links to propositional knowing. In other words

“meaning is understood to be woven through the experience, and the artist or researcher (or audience) will see the meaning/know through the forms that manifest it” (Rasmussen, 2014, p. 27).

For the purposes of this study, I draw on experiential and presentational learning but I link them with the underlying processes in order to deepen the understanding of how the learning takes place.

I will now outline some concepts from dramatherapy theory that underpin drama/arts activities and that describe how drama and arts processes can offer the possibility of change through `new insights and new knowledge. These processes do not consist of specific techniques or methods but “concern fundamental processes within all dramatherapy” (Jones, 2007 p. 81). And as Jones has said, they “are not neat categories, rather they are a language to try to describe aspects of a whole” (2007, p. 83). Jones (1996, 2007, 2010) illustrated eight core underlying processes apparent in dramatherapy and they are:

1. Playing
2. Embodiment
3. Role play
4. Dramatic projection
5. Empathy and distancing
6. Active Witnessing
7. Life-drama connection
8. Transformation

Jones's (1996) Core Dramatherapy Processes of Change

For the purposes of this research I have chosen to examine embodiment, role, dramatic projection, empathy/distancing and active witnessing, as they encompass core processes that move across all arts therapies (Karkou & Sanderson, 2005). I also discuss life-drama connection as the place of reflection, where connection is made to personal, social and work contexts. As the Firemaker Program is collaboration between the arts therapies and includes drama, art and musical activities this feels appropriate. In addition the process of role play will be examined as the central focus of the research question is around how care workers might develop new awareness of their role as a youth care worker in relation to children and young people. It is these underlying processes that enable transformation to occur. My research seeks to make these links clearer.

Embodiment.

In dramatherapy theory, embodiment is described as “physicalized knowing” (Jones, 2010, p. 40) and concerns the body as the main means of communication. It involves the way in which the self is realised by and through the body. Attention is given to the way the body communicates on a conscious and unconscious level with the understanding that “the body holds the truth more than words do” (Jones, 2007, p. 54). By physically participating in a dramatic activity, the body and the mind are engaged together in discovery. Through embodiment, a client presents and encounters their issues in the ‘here and now’, thereby allowing for a deepened exploration of what they might be experiencing.

Role play.

Jones (2007) refers to role taking or role playing as “someone playing themselves, or an imaginary character or a person taken from life experience within a role play or improvisation” (p. 94). Taking on a role (either oneself or other) enables participants to experience what it is like to be someone else, connecting to the process of empathy. Role theory has been extensively developed by various dramatherapists (Jennings, 1993; Landy, 1993, 1994, 2009) in understanding how change occurs for clients. Importantly role is seen as an extension of embodiment in the play-drama continuum as discussed in Chapter 3.

Dramatic projection.

Drawing partly on aspects of psychotherapy, the dramatherapeutic process of dramatic projection is central to how the arts may be seen to facilitate change (Emunah, 1994; Jones, 1996; Karkou & Sanderson, 2006). Through projection someone’s inner conflict is projected into an external form, that is, the art form such as image making (drawing, painting, sculpture), storymaking, role play, and use of small objects. As noted by Jones (2008), this provides perspective for reflection to take place.

Dramatic projection within dramatherapy is the process by which clients project aspects of themselves or their experience into theatrical or dramatic materials or into enactment, and thereby externalise inner conflicts. A relationship between the inner state of the client and the external dramatic form is established and developed through action. The dramatic expression enables change through the creation of perspective, along with the opportunity for exploration and insight through the enactment of the projected material (Jones, 2007 p. 84).

Through reflection and exploration, insight can be gained and a new relationship

to the conflict emerges. The client then integrates this new perspective. Projective techniques include: concrete objects, narrative storytelling, symbol and metaphor, videotape, masks, puppets and image making (drawing).

Empathy and distancing.

Often empathy and distancing are seen as opposite forces; two opposing processes within theatre and dramatherapy. These processes have been linked to mediation and the ways in which an individual relates to others and events in life: “healthy functioning requires a balance of feeling and thought” (Landy, 1986, p. 98). Distancing relates to keeping the client emotionally safe in the dramatherapy session and is described as the point at which a client can experience new insights without too much affect or too much thinking; in other words with aesthetic distance, a balance of cognition and affect (Jones, 1996, 2008, 2010; Landy, 1986; Langley, 2006)

Distancing is facilitated through the various techniques that can be used. For example, a client may be experiencing a particular problem, but is unable to express it for fear of being overwhelmed by her/his emotions. The dramatherapist could then work with a story or metaphor with connections to the client’s problem, which would provide a safe enough distance for the client to explore her/his feelings. Some clients are encouraged to have more empathy (less distance) as it encourages emotional resonance, identification and high emotional involvement within any work. The development of an empathic response to a role, objects or dramatic situations or activities may be the therapeutic work in itself. For example: some clients may have problems in developing relationships or dealing with others due to lack of understanding or capability to empathise with another: the development of an empathic response during dramatic work can help encourage empathy towards others in life

outside the dramatherapy group.

Active witnessing.

A fifth dramatherapy process is that of active witnessing and refers to the presence of a willing listener or witness (Jones, 2010). It is defined as “the act of being an audience to others or oneself within dramatherapy” (Jones, 1996, p. 111). In the original description of the core processes, Jones (1996) has put emphasis on witnessing the dramatic work created in a session. This is captured in dramatherapist Emunah’s (1994) understanding of witnessing when she noted that “while acting we are both participant and observer; we are emotionally engaged in the reality that is being portrayed, and at the same time we are witness to what is taking place” (p. xvi). In later research on the core processes and how dramatherapists in practice are using them, Jones (2008) revealed new discoveries in therapists using dramatic action to enable clients to think and reflect on their actions. The relevance of this discovery is that witnessing is then not only about witnessing enactment but also about witnessing each other’s responses to the enactment. This provides possibility for new understanding and insight (Meyer, 2010).

The processes described above are all linked to how active methods in the arts may facilitate and develop the reflective capacities of the research participants. Furthermore, together with researcher and other group members in exploring shared spaces, participants are invited to look at their work, themselves and/or their relationship with their clients.

Life-drama connection.

This process relates to what happens in the workshop or therapeutic space and

how this connects to life outside the space (Jones, 1996, 2007). In dramatherapy there “is an intimate connection between life and drama. This is intentional and essential to the process of change in dramatherapy” (Jones, 2007, p. 118). What participants create and do in the workshop or therapeutic space is “opened up, examined, re-created” (Jones, 2007, p. 126), making links to their real lives outside the space. This process is linked with the process of reflection.

Table 4: Summary of core dramatherapy processes

Process	Descriptive summary
Play	Encourages spontaneity, development of imagination Encourages flexibility Keeps participants open to new possibilities Focus on process not product
Embodiment	Physicalised knowing: discover and express through body Attention to way body communicates on conscious and unconscious level Encounters material in the “here and now” New possibilities/insights through the body
Dramatic projection	Inner conflict projected into external form e.g. clay, objects (externalised) Awareness of conscious and unconscious feelings, thoughts Dramatic expression enables change through establishment of perspective
Role play	Involves taking on a role/s involving oneself and others Enables an embodied experience of being someone else, thereby potentially increasing empathy
Distancing/empathy	Often empathy (feeling) and distancing (thought) are seen as opposite forces Need balance of thought and feeling Emotional resonance and identification: empathy Distance: not being overwhelmed by emotion, provides perspective
Active witnessing	Presence of willing listener/observer Witness to others and self Lead to insights, new perspectives
Life Drama/arts connection	This process has similarities with reflection, thinking about, through and on action, so that changes can relate to life outside the workshop space Articulate and think back on connection between what happened in the drama/arts process with life through reflecting and talking. Making the links.

The next section examines reflection and how active methods from dramatherapy can facilitate it.

Reflection

Reflection plays a significant role in this study, not only for the researcher as a reflective practitioner but for the participants who take part in action-based arts methods as a means to facilitate their reflective practice. One of the key concerns of this study is the way/s in which connections to the children are made by the care worker through the creative arts processes. Reflection is therefore a key component of this research as it is concerned with how the arts might facilitate the participants' reflection on their work and clients.

Literature on reflection is covered in fields of nursing, social work, learning and education and psychotherapy.

Experiential learning and reflection.

Experiential learning through creative arts processes provide a way of knowing through feeling and doing, and reflection is an important part of this process (Mezirow, 2000; Timm-Bottos, 2014). Many who have written on arts-based approaches write about the importance of a reflective journal (Kapitan, 2010; Prior, 2013; Taylor, 1996). The reflective practitioner approach has its roots in drama education (Taylor, 2012) and is linked to experiential and transformational learning (Kolb, 1984; Mezirow, 1981; Rasmussen, 2014; Thompson & Pascal, 2012).

Using a reflective practitioner approach is important as the researcher navigates roles of facilitator/co-participant and participant observer. This involves the ongoing process of action and reflection in artistic/aesthetic meaning making (both during and

after the arts process), thereby acknowledging the power of the lived artistic/aesthetic experience. Reflective practitioner research processes includes developing ways of attending to action as it happens in the moment, and strategies (such as critically reflective journaling) to reflect on the process and artistic moment/s (Schön, 1983; Taylor, 2006). Schön (1983) defined the reflective practitioner as one who holds a special type of knowledge, which seems 'intuitive' as we go about the usual practice of our work. The difficulty is in trying to elucidate not only what we do but how and why we do it. Schön (1983) wrote about tacit or unconscious knowledge as being significant knowledge and that it comes to the surface or conscious when the practitioner reflects on action.

In the context of dramatherapy or facilitation this refers to reflection on the following:

- content of session
- therapist/facilitator strategies and interventions
- exploration of therapy process and relationship

It is through the process of reflection on their actions that the practitioner learns skills from recalling the past or preparing for the future (Dokter, 2008). This reflection on action involves conscious thinking about actions (a significant part of supervision) and problem solving (Dokter, 2008). As a reflective practitioner the researcher obtains knowledge by doing and reflecting on what they have done. While Schön's (1983) contribution to the field of reflective practice is significant, it has been extended by others to include reflection-in-action (Dokter, 2008; Heron & Reason, 1997; Thompson & Pascal, 2012). Heron (1992) posited that "this is a practice led epistemology in which practical know how, though informed by theoretical knowing is grounded in a third

subjective domain of experiential knowledge” (cited in Dokter, 2008, p. 71). I turn now to consider how the arts can be used as action within reflection, particularly in the context of supervision, thereby extending the work of Schön (1983) for the research participant. As examined elsewhere, the emphasis on play and creativity and its contribution to transformation in dramatherapy is central to this study.

Action methods in dramatherapy

Literature on action methods in dramatherapy supervision are particularly relevant to this study (Jones, 2012; Lahad, 2000; Landy, Hodermaska, & Mowers, 2012). In the Firemaker workshops (like supervision) there is a third relationship always present albeit invisible—between the care worker and the child/young person—so the workshops are focused around the relationships the care workers have with the children.

Landy et al. (2012) examined performance as research, within which they particularly focused on the relationship between the supervisor and the dramatherapist as being in a shared space in which “supervisor-as-spectator facilitates dramatic performance to explore the textured relationship between the therapist, client or researcher and research subject” (p. 50). This model provides a useful framework for this study in which researcher/facilitator/therapist-as-spectator of participant and their relationship with their clients (young people) is explored. Through the art form/aesthetic framework participants are supported to explore the shared spaces between themselves and the young people they work with, using the body/and arts as a site or ‘way of knowing’.

Jones (2012) posited “the nature of supervision in dramatherapy concerns a chain of connection which joins the client and their situation as brought to the therapy,

with therapist and supervisor” (p. 49). In the context of the Firemaker the ‘chain of connection’ concerns the care worker and the child joining the relationship between participant and facilitator and co participants. In the supervision literature this process is seen as beneficial to the client (child) if the care worker is able to make connections to the child within supervision through a range of processes (Jones, 2008). “These connecting processes are at the core of how the quality of the clinical work of the therapist is enhanced by supervision” (Jones, 2008, p.49). These processes involve the development of knowledge, skills and competence in order to provide quality care (Rice et al., cited in Jones, 2008). Jones (2008) summarised the processes as:

- ongoing connection between practitioner and supervisor
- supportive environment
- facilitating of reflective practice
- enhancing self-esteem of practitioner
- supporting professional and personal development

How that connection (between practitioner and client in terms of understanding/new insight into way of relating) is made and how the arts can play a role in this is the focus of this study. Jones (2008) offered insight as to what active methods are most commonly used by dramatherapists in supervision, and can be effective ways to enhance connection between practitioner and client. These include the use of objects, sculpting and role play.

Dramatherapists commonly use active methods in their supervision of other therapists or those in the helping professions as ways of facilitating reflection on supervisee work roles and relationships (Dokter & Jones, 2008; Lahad, 2000; Landy,

2012). In Firemaker, care workers participate in arts activities in a playful way that involves both individual and group engagement. The activities allow for the embodiment and/or projection of thoughts and feelings around how they see themselves in their work, as well as the exploration of how the young people they work with might see them. These methods facilitate active ways to reflect on their work roles in creative ways, offering moments of insight or illumination, as McNiff (2012) noted. It is the work of self-reflection and connectivity made with those they work with, as well their understanding of how the arts process works to create a shift or a transformation that is the basis for this methodology. The next section introduces the Firemaker program as an example of a model of practice that uses action methods to facilitate reflective capacities of participants.

The Firemaker Program

As previously discussed in Chapter 2, the Firemaker method is about facilitating reflective practice in a supportive environment. Previously I have documented the Firemaker program as a model of practice that

provides care workers with experiences in multiple arts forms: art, drama, movement and music. It borrows from models developed in education (Dahlman 2007; Kolb et al. 2001), health (Ungar 2011) and the arts (Emunah 1994; Jones 1996; Landy 1994) and represents an arts programme that integrates arts as learning and arts as therapy but is innovative in its reassembly of these models' useful aspects. (Meyer, 2014, p. xx)

The facilitator/supervisor/therapist of the Firemaker program is completely immersed in practice (facilitating a skills program and reflecting on it at various stages). In researching how participating in the Firemaker project might enhance youth workers'

capacity to respond to vulnerable young people, I have to run the program (as I have done before), and research it as I go along. However, while this research is practice based and practice-led, the Firemaker program was modified and set up to ask specific research questions and involved participants who took part in creative arts experiential processes.

Embedded in practice led research is participant-observation (Jupp, 2006). As a therapist, supervisor and facilitator, personal participation is consistent with my conditions of professional practice. A relationship is set up involving both therapist and client (Jones, 2007). In the same way a workshop program involves both facilitator and participant. This approach for research supports my arts-based practice and the project as the care workers' experiences and art-making processes were witnessed by them and by me over time. This methodology will allow the richness of the care workers' perceptions of their experiences working with children to be expressed through the arts and their reflections to be recorded on an ongoing basis for the duration of the Firemaker Program.

I specifically used particular arts activities as ways of exploring participants' perceptions of themselves in relation to their work and the children/youth they work with. The research design was developed "in response to the nature of the question, not the other way round" (2012, p. 7), which McNiff urged applied arts practitioners to do. The strategies of my research model honour the integrity of the aesthetic form, space, and relationships as a method of inquiry making "concrete the idea of a context-specific and embodied methodology in the human sciences" (Gallagher, 2008, p. 70).

Meaning making in this research involves three levels that include the following:

1. Participants engaging in arts activities through experiential learning, reflecting through the activity (while doing) and afterwards on what it felt like, what happened, what they noticed and what this might mean for the individual.
2. Researcher observing how participants interact, engage with arts activities, watch for body language cues and non-verbal communications. Noticing own personal feelings and responses and later in reflective journal, writing process notes, observations and feelings down. Using the supervision space to further make meaning and to understand process.
3. Group meaning making: reflection on processes together in a circle, after each activity and throughout the workshops.

I specifically designed three arts-based data collection activities, which serve to triangulate the data to explore the participants' understanding and feelings of themselves in their work with young people. In other words the arts activities were designed to purposefully facilitate an inquiry into how participants see themselves in their work. It also provided the opportunity for both researcher and participants to collaboratively reflect on and explore the process of engaging in the activities.

In this chapter I have outlined the theoretical approach to this research study, drawing on various practice perspectives from dramatherapy. In researching the lived experience of the Firemaker program the value of multiple methodological perspectives is argued, demonstrating that a flexible and creative research design was necessary. In the next chapter I outline the process of methods in conducting the research.

Chapter 5: Research Methods

This study employed a qualitative research design, which consisted of practice led research (Barrett & Bolt, 2007; Freshwater & Lees, 2008), with an arts-based approach (Finley, 2011; Jones, 2008; Kapitan, 2011; Knowles & Cole, 2008; McNiff, 1998, 2012; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013) that involved a number of different interwoven forms of knowing as outlined in Chapter 4.

The Firemaker program is focused on experiential knowing that comes through the body. All workshops were experiential and participants actively engaged in arts action processes followed by reflection time. During reflection, researcher and participants attempted to deepen both meaning and understanding of what had emerged in the workshops.

Having three focused arts methods using different modalities (art and drama) for participants to represent their experience, created the opportunity for presentational knowing. Propositional knowing emerged from journaling and reflection within the workshops, as well as from the follow up individual interviews. The primary focus of the research was on the presentational knowing, that space of 'not knowing' that is often complex, messy and difficult to describe. In order to understand how people make meaning of their experience of participating in the Firemaker, data was collected from two groups of participants working for two different organisations with separate goals in the delivery of services to children and young people.

The research design therefore consisted of a number of stages of data collection (similar to the process described by Radermacher, 2006). These stages consisted of pre-program semi structured interviews, three focused arts methods, a group evaluation in the final workshop and follow-up semi structured interviews. The stages of data

collection are incorporated into the description of the six phases of research. Table 5 presents the phases of the research process and at what points the stages of data collection occurred.

Table 5: Mapping phases of research against stages of data collection and data source

Phases of Research Process			Stages of Data Collection	Data source
The Australian context and modification of Firemaker Program	1			Journal
Recruitment of participants	2			Journal
Pre workshop interviews	3	1	Pre workshop individual semi-structured interviews	Audio tape Journal
Running the Firemaker Program	4			
Workshop 1		2	Clay and box arts-focused reflective activity one	Audio taped, videotaped and artwork photographed Journal
Workshop 2		3	Objects arts-focused reflective activity two	Audio taped, videotaped and artwork photographed Journal
Workshop 3		4	Body sculptures arts-focused reflective activity three	Audio taped, videotaped and artwork photographed Journal
Workshop 4		5	Group reflection on the program	Audio taped, videotaped and artwork photographed Journal
Follow-up interviews	5	6	Individual semi-structured follow-up interviews	Audio tape Journal
Data Management and Analysis	6			

Data Sources

To enable an in depth process that focuses on the relationship of the participants' experiences to the context within which they work, as well as the relationship of their

participation in arts methods as moments of insight or illumination (Cassidy et al., 2014; McNiff, 2012), the main data sources were interviews, video and observation, and three arts-focused reflective activities. Analysis occurred concurrently with the data collection but also as a separate phase following the data collection (see Data Analysis).

With participants' permission all workshops were audio and video recorded to assist in triangulating the data. Along with observations of what participants did these recordings documented and informed what they did or did not say. Audio and video assisted in an accessible chronological record and was a major data form for the 'meaning making' and analysis. All art works created by participants were photographed. Pre- and post-workshop audio recorded individual interviews were conducted with all participants. Participants were informed that the video recordings would only be used for analysis of data.

In addition I kept a reflective journal to record my experiences throughout the research process. These included workshop process descriptions, workshop plan change decisions, observational notes on individual and group dynamics, and personal reflections, feelings and thoughts about what worked and did not work in each workshop. The use of a journal in the research process has been documented as valuable in encouraging reflexivity (Pillow, 2003) as well as being a tool to ensure rigour in qualitative inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Taylor, 1996, 2011). Having the recorded video material of the workshops also helped with this in that I was able to review observations made in terms of what participants did and said.

Photographed images of artwork/activities happened in the context of the workshop program.

Phase 1: The Australian Context and Modification of Firemaker Program

The research proposal was developed in collaboration with my research supervisors. After acceptance by the University candidature panel, I began the process of identifying and getting 'buy in' from organisations who wished to collaborate, before I was able to submit my proposal to the ethics board. At this stage I was intent on running the Firemaker Program in its full version as it is run in South Africa, that is: over 12 days.

Recruitment for organisations to participate in this study, was initially via word of mouth. Through colleagues I sent out a separate information sheet on the Firemaker Program (Appendix E) as well as a Participants Research Information Sheet (Appendix F). I had initially set out to run one group. In the first six months of my candidature I made contact with a number of organisations to discuss the research. Some were interested in the research but felt that the time commitment of 12 days was unrealistic, for example email correspondence 18/04/2013 "This project sounds wonderful but the time commitment and numbers needed are a little hard for me to buy into".

I had contact with a prominent arts education organisation in Melbourne and had three meetings with them, but they could not commit a venue, wanted me to pay the arts workers for their time as they would be working on Saturdays during potential income earning time and felt they could not commit more than four mornings in total. After a number of these responses I soon realised I would have to rethink the duration of the Firemaker and evaluate if it might be possible to adapt and streamline the program from twelve to just four days.

There were and are implications in the adaptation of any program intended to be more than a training program. As covered in Chapter 3, literature on change and transformation in the arts points to the significance of a trusting relationship and enough

time for process to evolve. I was faced with an ethical dilemma of needing to get my fieldwork done, offer a meaningful experience for participants and still be true to the values of the Firemaker.

After numerous and lengthy discussions with my supervisors and organisation representatives, I decided to adapt the Firemaker from its original form into a four day program. In the original program there are four workshops of three days each:

Workshop 1: wellbeing

Workshop 2: introduction

Workshop 3: consolidation

Workshop 4: application

As explained earlier in Chapter 2, each workshop within the Firemaker Program follows a developmental play model focusing on play, art and drama. So usually day one focuses on play, day two art and day three drama. In adapting the program I chose to focus on one main art form in each workshop and chose activities that both the formal evaluation (Higgson-Smith et al., 2006) and my experience of the FM suggest participants have found most useful. As I was pitching these workshops as professional development, theory, application and reflection had to be integrated. To follow is the adapted structure:

Workshop 1: intro and play

Workshop 2: art

Workshop 3: drama

Workshop 4: consolidation and overall program reflection (see Appendix G for detailed workshop plans)

I reworked the information sheet and developed an information brochure (see Appendix H) to send out to potential organisations. It was through a colleague working with various arts initiatives that I was introduced to organisations that might be interested in participating. I set up a number of meetings with interested organisations to discuss the research and in October 2013 I had a 'yes' from two organisations who were interested. I could then apply to the University High Risk Ethics Committee for approval to complete the research, which was granted early December 2013. In January 2014 I could then begin the process of recruiting participants.

After having sudden interest from different organisations I was faced with offering the program to one or the other. After discussion in supervision I chose to run it in both organisations, recognising the potential extra time commitment and data gathering this entailed. At this stage I was now eligible to apply for ethics from the University Ethics Board.

Phase 2: Recruitment of Participants

In both organisations, invitations to participate were extended to individuals that team leaders thought would a) want to participate and b) would benefit by taking part in the Firemaker workshops. All participants were sent an information sheet on the Firemaker program and the research process (Appendices E and F). The information sheet outlined the purpose of the research, how long it would take, and what participants would be asked to do. Participants then let their team leaders know if they were interested in participating. I was given the names of interested individuals whom I then

contacted, and made arrangements to send them a consent form (Appendix I) as well as to set up a time to meet. Not everyone who had initially expressed interest in the program eventually participated.

Group Size

In order to facilitate an optimal group process and opportunity for discussion, it was decided to confine the group size to between five and ten members. Group One consisted of six participants to begin with and had one drop out. Group Two started with eight participants and dropped down to six.

Group (setting) One.

Participants were all adult youth support workers from a Melbourne council youth services provider. This provider is a generalist service for young people aged between 10 and 25 years who live, work, study or visit the specific council area on a regular basis. Services provided include: youth events, information/support/referral on a range of issues, programs for young people, parenting forums, Adventure Playground services, School Focused Youth Services, and programs/information for parents, schools and professionals.

Participants were all trained youth workers with group work skills and all held certificate, diploma and/or degree qualifications in related fields (refer to Table 6). One was a social worker, one a research project manager, three were youth workers and one a teacher. All participants except the teacher worked for council youth services. The teacher came to hear about the research because the team leader who was also a participant invited her. All participants worked with groups of youth in various placements supervised by their primary organisation. As a work requirement they all

held current 'working with children' checks. Their work was regulated and salaried and follows business hours unless contracted to work weekends and after hours. The Firemaker workshops were blocked off as professional development days for these workers, which made it easier for them to be there.

Group One attrition.

One female participant withdrew after the initial interview as she was pregnant and decided she could not commit to the time requested. The female teacher attended the interview and the first workshop. In the first workshop she reported she was ill and then did not attend another workshop, taking sick leave from her job as well. I decided not to include them in the analysis as they did not complete the Program.

Group/setting two.

Participants were all adult arts workers from a community, participatory arts centre in the west of Melbourne. This organisation works in partnership with individuals and communities through participatory arts practices to increase wellbeing and creative potential. They facilitate a number of their own dynamic programs that support the development of emerging artists from culturally diverse communities.

Participants were all arts practitioners in their own right (being musicians and actors) and they all work with children and youth facilitating various arts programs. Some have formal qualifications e.g. paramedic, community public health, but most are community arts workers who through their life experience, artistic talent and interest in the arts, have worked their way to where they currently are. The majority of participants work on a program which targets primary school children to raise awareness of and address racism.

Participants all have a number of independent work commitments on the go at any one time. Work means a day job in a non-arts field to earn regular income, engaging in one's own artistic practice, working on educational and participatory arts projects, and after hours rehearsing for performances or gigs. For some it also includes part time study. Life as an arts worker is demanding: there is no set stable income and demands on time are often difficult to manage. Participants gave up their Saturdays for the workshops as this was the day most could attend without clashing with work commitments. Even a Saturday sometimes proved difficult with arts happenings and community events planned, which was to be expected.

Group Two attrition.

One participant, the community cultural leader, attended the interview and the first workshop but did not return. He had a very busy and demanding schedule and he was not an arts worker, and found it difficult to commit to the time. A second female participant attended two of the four workshops and gave illness as the reason for not completing the workshops. As they were not able to complete the program I did not include them in the analysis. The table below summarises the final participants' details and attendance at Firemaker workshops:

Table 6: Participants' details and workshop attendance

Group 1: Council Youth Services	Sex	Job title	Years in Org	Client group	Firemaker attendance
Anthony	Male	Social worker: paid by another organisation but works in partnership with youth services.	Two years	Children, youth and families we have disengaged or are at risk of disengaging from education	Attended both interviews and all workshops
Mark	Male	Youth worker: Youth connections worker, one on one individual case manager.	Two years	Individual young people (11-20) who have disengaged from education. Meets individually with clients in their homes to try and set up educational/ training links.	Attended both interviews and all workshops
Liz	Female	Research project manager	Two years	Not working with young people directly but working with youth workers researching ways to engage young people in education.	Attended both interviews and all workshops
Amy	Female	Youth worker	Just begun working for youth services	Runs an adventure playground program on the housing estate. Responsible for planning and running recreational activities for before and after school as well as during school holidays	Attended both interviews and all workshops
Emma	Female	Youth support worker	One year	Runs and organises events/programs for young people as well as some individual case work offering support to young people	Attended both interviews and all workshops
Group 2: Community Arts organisation	Sex	Job title	Years in Org	Client group	FM attendance
Simon	Male	Musician, Arts facilitator for school arts program	One year	Primary school children and youth	Attended one interviews and all workshops
Jasper	Male	Musician, Arts facilitator for school arts program	Two years	Primary school children and youth	Attended both interviews and three of the workshops

Dave	Male	Actor, theatre/ drama group facilitator in schools, works part time in a factory.	Two years	Primary school children and youth	Attended both interviews and all workshops
Michelle	Female	Actor and musician, Arts facilitator for school arts program, trained paramedic,	Three years	Primary school children and youth	Attended both interviews and all workshops
Toni	Female	Actor, Arts facilitator for school arts program, final year of studying for a public health degree	Three years	Primary school children and youth	Attended both interviews and all workshops
Angela	Female	Singer, runs children groups at local church	Three years	Primary school children and youth	Attended both interviews and all workshops

Phase 3: Pre-Program Interviews (data collection stage 1)

The purpose of the pre-program interviews was to engage participants individually, build relationship and develop understanding of their objectives for wanting to take part in the program. In practice this is done as a means to understand individual needs within the group before it commences. A further aim of interviewing was to gain information necessary to meet the aims of the study; for example, to develop understanding of participants' roles in their organisation and how they approach work with young people and children, including any challenges experienced.

The interview was also an opportunity for me to further explain the Firemaker program, the aims of the research and answer any questions participants might have. The structure of the initial interview (Appendix J) was informed by discussions with my supervisors and critical friend. Interviews were semi-structured, using open-ended questioning, allowing participants to explore themes that were important to them.

Examples of questions included:

1. What impact do you think the work you are doing is having on the needs of the children?
2. How would you describe your working relationship with the children?
3. How do you feel taking part on this project might be of value of you?

Through this approach I was able to get some sense of the participants' feelings around their work, and what was important to them, as well as identify where they felt they needed support. I also got important information around the children and young people they work with; that is, age groups, social, cultural and family contexts, and challenges experienced as perceived by participants. The interviews assisted me to think about the approach to the workshops and plan accordingly. During the interviews I was also able to discuss with participants potential dates for the four days of the program that they were required to attend. I contacted all participants individually to arrange initial interview times. Interviews were held at a mutually convenient time and place. These interviews, with the participants' permission, were audio taped and later transcribed.

For participants in Group One, the organisation arranged a meeting room for a full day in working hours, in which to conduct the interviews. This was coordinated on a day that all potential participants were at work, making it fairly easy to schedule 30-45 minute individual interviews. Six face to face interviews and one telephonic interview were conducted in this setting.

For participants in Group Two, interviews were scheduled at a range of different locations. Four were held at participants' homes and three in Victoria University's library meeting rooms. I conducted seven face to face interviews and one via email, as the participant had requested it due to other work commitments.

Prior to the interviews I provided participants' with an information sheet and a consent form, but in some instances participants requested another one, or had not read them. The interview provided an opportunity for participants to ask further questions about the research and participants were given the option of more time to think about whether or not they would want to participate in the program.

Those who agreed to participate were asked to sign a voluntary participation consent form (Appendix I). They were also asked to sign a consent form to have the interview audio taped and the workshops audio taped and videotaped (Appendix I). Consent was also sought to have all art work photographed. Throughout the workshops I constantly reminded participants of the purposes of the photographs and video and that confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained throughout. Interviews took between 30 and 60 minutes. I transcribed all the interviews. The length of the transcripts ranged between four and seven pages. Where possible this was done immediately after the interview.

Participants were given the name and contact details of the principal researcher (principal supervisor) and they were also given the name and contact details of a psychologist at Victoria University, in the event they felt the need to speak to a professional. One participant after the initial interview chose to not continue for personal reasons.

Phase 4: Running the Firemaker Program

Research Sites

Only participants who consented to the study took part in a version of the Firemaker workshop program (Appendix G) consisting of four days spread over six

months. The central inquiry space of this research was the Firemaker workshop space. After the interviews, dates were mutually agreed upon. As there were two groups, there were two different workshop spaces.

The program was run in two closed groups and no-one was able to join the groups once they were established. A group contract was negotiated in the first workshop and confidentiality emphasised. Both organisations provided workshop venues and participants provided their own lunch. Tea, coffee and refreshments were provided by the researcher. Group One met for three out of the four workshops in an inner city library meeting room and for one workshop in the community meeting space at an inner city housing estate where most of the participants work. Group Two met at a community arts centre in the Western suburbs of Melbourne for all the workshops; however we worked in three different workshop spaces. Group One ran on Tuesdays and Group Two on Saturdays. We met once a month with 4-5 weeks in between workshops. Please refer to Appendix R for attendance record.

Three Focused Arts-Based Reflective Activities (data collection stages 2, 3, 4)

Three arts-focused, active-based reflective activities happened in the context of the workshop program. At three specific points in the workshop program (day 1, day 2 and day 3) specific reflective activities (Appendix K), using drama active methods (Jones, 2008) were facilitated and participants were asked to think about their work with young people and the challenges they face. Participants were asked to create an individual artwork/performance around the perception of self in their work with youth, their challenges, and any changes noticed. These activities were framed within a dramatherapy supervision model, which previous research has shown is favoured by many dramatherapists (Jones, 2008).

Workshop 1: Image making- clay and box (focused activity 1, data collection stage 2).

For the purposes of this research I used image making to explore the youth workers' feelings about their work and the relationship between themselves and their clients. In general this activity forms part of the first day of the full Firemaker Program. It is used as a tool to gain understanding of the participants' work place environment and their feelings around their work. Image making usually involves the use of arts materials. For this activity I used clay for its three dimensional properties.

Clay and Box Activity

(Note: A sheet of paper or piece of cardboard can be used as a container for this activity if it seems the box representing the workplace is not containing enough – depending on organisational structure and needs of participants.)

Participants are invited to warm up with the clay before starting with the activity, simply exploring the texture, temperature, weight of the clay in your hands. Close eyes if comfortable. To start, you are not to make anything, just explore the different ways your hands can work with the clay – pinching, slapping, squeezing, rolling, stroking.

Gradually start reflecting on your feelings about your work. How do these feelings translate into how your hands work with the clay? Open your eyes and see what shape has arisen from these feelings (without any judgment – we are just here to explore).

We are going to make an image of you in your work.

- Choose a box to represent the work you do with youth (imagine: what the work looks like, smells, feelings, others). Is the box big, small, open, closed?
- Clay: make an image of yourself in your work. Think about your feelings about the work that you do. Allow yourself to explore what is difficult in your work. You will put the image of yourself into the box. How do you fit into the box/how do you fit into the work you do? Do you fit? Perhaps there are others in the box too? How big, small, in relation to others etc., what surrounds you, what do you look like in it? You can also use other recycled materials to add to your image.
- When finished bring your clay images into the middle of the circle.
- Look at the image you have created....please could you share what you have made with the group.

Possible question prompts: One sentence about how you see yourself. What work do you do with youth? Please describe in as much detail as you can. Do you use the creative arts? If so, what and how? What is it you feel about yourself and your work? How would you describe the way you respond to the youth you work with? What do you enjoy, what do you find challenging? Do your groups enjoy what you do with them? Why? Why not?

What do your groups not like? Why? Why not? How do you imagine they see you? If you could change something what would it be?

- Feedback and reflection on working in clay: what did you like, what did you not like, and what did you notice about yourself, any other general themes you noticed? What did it feel like listening to others?

Workshop 2: Object worlds (focused activity 2, data collection stage 3).

Objects are commonly used as a projective technique in dramatherapy (Emunah, 1996; Jones, 1996, 2008; Landy, 1994). Dramatic projections into objects “enhance and deepen client participation in engaging with material from life” (Jones, 2008, p. 59).

Likewise in the supervision of practitioners, objects can be used in the following ways:

- To play without any set agenda to see what themes and issues emerge in relation to the issues brought to the supervision
- To use objects to depict a situation from clinical practice, for example, a moment from a session or the dynamics at work in a group
- To use objects to create a representation of a client’s feelings or life situation
- To use objects to depict supervisees’ own feelings or issues
- To recreate or explore an activity in a session or to try out the development of a technique in order to test the experience
- To depict aspects of the supervision process

For this research participants were asked to use objects to depict their worlds. They were invited to think about their personal and professional worlds and create an image with objects. Afterwards participants were invited to walk around and view others’ object worlds, without commentary, as if in a gallery. They were then invited to share in more detail with a partner, and in some cases partners, depending on numbers.

Workshop 3: Body sculptures (focused activity 3, data collection stage 4).

Body sculptures enable participants to use their bodies to express ideas, situations or relationships, working individually or in groups. It involves the use of the body to create a frozen picture/statue/sculpture. The body/bodies form a still image, like a 3-dimensional photograph.

In dramatherapy literature the practice of role work is important for helping a client create a connection to either a part of themselves or another person they are in relationship with, in order to explore possible dynamics (Jones, 2005; Johnson, 1999; Landy, 2001; Langley, 2006). Role reversal is a common method used to develop empathy or help someone experience the perspective of another. Similarly, in supervision literature the use of role work can help the therapist facilitate connectivity to the client (Jones, 2008). For youth workers the use of role by playing the young person can enhance the exploration of connectivity to the young person. Role can be used in many ways but I chose to work with it using body sculptures. Participants were asked to first depict what the relationship looked like now, then (three months ago), and what they would like it to look like in the future

For the purpose of this research participants created three body sculptures in groups of three, whereby they were asked to show what the relationship between themselves as youth worker and the child/young person looks/looked like. Each participant chose two other group members to represent a) themselves and b) the young person. They then 'sculpted' them into a sculpture/picture of the relationship between the two. They then stepped back, looked and adjusted accordingly. I then asked each sculpted person to respond in role (as either worker or young person) by saying "I feel..."

We did this three times after each sculpture (now, then and future) and then de roled. Afterwards participants then reflected on what it was like to be sculpted and how

they felt in their positions. The person responsible for the sculptures, namely the sculptor, was asked to reflect on what they had noticed, thought and felt watching themselves being represented, and having themselves reflected back to them.

Body Sculptures

The space is divided into performance space and audience.

Choose two people to represent a) yourself and b) a child/young person.

Sculpture one: What the relationship looks like now....

Sculpt these two people into a form that best represents how you see the relationship between them now in your work. Please freeze these positions.

Researcher touches a) and b) on the shoulder and asks them to complete the sentence "I feel...."

Sculpture two: What the relationship looked like 3 months ago....

Sculpt these two people into a form that best represents how the relationship looked like 3 months ago (if any different). Please freeze these positions.

Researcher touches a) and b) on the shoulder and asks them to complete the sentence "I feel...."

Sculpture three: What would you like the relationship to look like?

Sculpt these two people into a form that best represents how you would like the relationship to look like (if any different). Please freeze these positions.

De role: what was it like being sculpted, what did you feel?

What was it liked sculpting, did you notice anything? What did you like, what did you not like, and what did you notice about yourself, any other general themes you noticed? What did it feel like being sculpted and sculpting others?

Comments from the rest of the participants as spectators?

Workshop 4: Group reflection on the program (data collection stage 5).

In the final workshop participants were asked to use objects to create a journey map of their experiences of the Firemaker program. Journey maps are commonly used

as reflective tools in group work. They allow participants space and time to map out their experiences in an embodied way, and then step back and look/reflect on what they have created.

Group Reflection on Program: Journey Maps

Participants will be invited to look at the photographs of the clay in a box image they created and the body sculptures they created from the previous two reflective arts activities. They will then be asked to reflect on where they are at the present moment in their work.

- Create a road/pathway of your experience of the Firemaker program.
(Your road will start when we started the first workshop and will end in the future.)
- Introduce – objects are ‘representations of....’ It may include stop signs, rough patches, dead ends, highlights etc.
- Think of symbols to represent each phase: tree, clouds etc.
- When you think about the Firemaker workshops so far and looking at it represented here, what stands out as the most shining moment for you? Mark it in the right place and time: find a symbol to represent this.
- What has been the most difficult experience in Firemaker? Mark this in the right place and time.
- What have I learnt about myself so far?
- Mentors: add mentors you have had along the way.
- Think about how you feel at the moment. Look at the journey you have made to get to where you are today. Put an object at a place on your journey or create a symbol to represent how you feel about your work today.
- Stand at end of journey and look back.....over the past 6 months, have you found anything useful and has anything changed in the way you work as a result? The way you see yourself? The way you see the children/youth you work with?
- Thinking about where you have come from and where you are now, create an image representing your future.
- Share individually with the group and researcher - asks further questions if necessary.
- Share one aspect with group - “I notice about myself....” Or “A theme I noticed....”
- Group reflection.

As group process is central to the Firemaker program, the processes above were analysed, explored and discussed in the context of the group, allowing participants the opportunity to evidence their responses in a group context. Having three focus points enabled me to use three different action methods as way of being able to explore the underlying processes and how they might lead to change. It also allowed for the researcher and participants to see if/how their perceptions changed over the course of the program. The artwork or performance work created at these junctures was photographed, and these photographs, or actual artwork, made available for participants to review their work in ‘visual’ form as they reflected on both the experiential learning (inter-reflexive) as well as their internal processes (intra-reflexive).

All focused arts activities were transcribed for each group and replayed on video if necessary, to see where participants sat and how they engaged, especially if I was uncertain in my memory.

Table 7: Length of focused arts activity transcriptions

	Clay and box	Object worlds	Body sculptures	Group evaluation
Group 1	18 pages 4716 words	6 pages 1636 words	24 pages 4447 words	13 pages 3977 words
Group 2	24 pages 6078 words	7 pages 1728 words	20 pages 3591 words	19 pages 4067 words

Note on Art Data

Literature on the ethics of using participants’ art work is extensive in arts therapy practice and research (Kapitan, 2010; Leenstra, Goldstraw, & Rumbold, 2014). How art work is collected, interpreted and exhibited requires careful ethical

consideration (Kapitan, 2010). Arts therapists are trained to be ethically sensitive to how art is created in therapy.

Scientists value the various aspects of the art images created in art therapy because art supplies essential data for their investigations. Social scientists study people in all their complexity and are not without compassion or regard for their wellbeing. Throughout the research process and whatever the methodological framework chosen, how art therapist researchers view, describe, and interpret artworks, and how they apply the knowledge gained, must be ethically sensitive to the people and phenomena that contributed to the study. (Kapitan, 2010, p. 33)

Meaning making and reflection on art making was done in the context of the group. Each participant was invited to speak for themselves and think together with the researcher and co participants about the process of creation. I collected and safely stored all artworks created in each workshop (as is common practice within arts therapy), as symbolic of the ongoing relationship, until the last/closing session. After the fourth day of workshops, participants were invited to take home any of the art work they had created. I also photographed all art work after each workshop and made them available at the beginning of each workshop for participants to reflect back on what we had created and done in the previous workshops. In the final workshop I gave each person a complete photographic record of their work. They were able to take them home or leave them behind if they wished. No identifying features were attached to photographs or art work.

Phase 5: Follow Up Interviews

I conducted individual face-to-face 30-45 minute interviews as a follow up to the program (Appendix J) with participants, one month after the last workshop, as a follow up to elicit further information relevant to the participants' perceived experiences of the Firemaker Program. The interviews were semi structured with open ended questioning.

Like those held at the start of the research process, interviews were held at a mutually convenient time and place. These interviews, with the participants' permission, were audio taped and later transcribed. One participant did not participate after numerous attempts to contact him. I subsequently heard that he had gone overseas and it was not known if/when he would return. The follow up interviews were an opportunity to check in with participants one month after the workshop, and to explore their retrospective reflections on the Firemaker process. Participants were asked what they liked and did not like about the program and if through FM they had noticed anything different in the way they interacted with children/young people. Examples of questions included:

1. Looking back over the Firemaker Program, what have you learnt about yourself and your work?
2. Has anything changed in your experience of yourself, or how you see yourself in your work with youth?
3. Can you comment on a particular process or activity in Firemaker that made an impact on you (positive or negative) and can you say a bit more about that?

Conducting individual interviews one month later allowed me the opportunity to explore in line with the aims of the research if and what learnings had stayed with the participants and if there had been any shifts in how they thought about or worked with children and young people. The interviews were further an opportunity for participants to express, explore and process any difficult feelings about what they had not liked, or possibly found difficult to voice in the group context.

I transcribed all the interviews. The length of the transcripts ranged between four and seven pages. Where possible this was done immediately after the interview.

Phase 6: Data Management and Analysis

Analysis occurred throughout the research process and was not confined totally to the last stages (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The purpose of the analysis was to examine participants' experiences of Firemaker to see if they had experienced shifts in awareness in thoughts/feelings about child/young person interaction and how these shifts might have occurred through Jones's (1996) underlying dramatherapy core processes. As is the case with qualitative research, analysis is an ongoing cyclical process (Flyvbjerg, 2013; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The method of analysis involved three interrelated processes:

1. Analysis and meaning making that happened largely in the context of the workshops between graduate researcher and participants. As the workshops were experiential, participants were actively engaged in arts processes followed by reflection time, during which both researcher and participants were able to deepen meaning and understanding. Each person participated differently in the workshops, created different things and had different experiences of the arts

processes. They also each reflected on different aspects of the Firemaker at different times and the meaning this had for them individually. Despite the idiographic nature of individual experience, each group as a whole responded differently to the activities, dependent on the nature of their work and context. The analysis then occurred at both group and individual levels.

2. Through myself as an instrument of analysis. The video recordings and graduate researcher's journal allowed for ongoing observations of experiences and changes to be recorded. It involved a narrative description of the participants' arts making processes, their individual and group responses and the researcher's responses in the context of Arts Therapy Theory, notably Jones' core therapeutic processes (1996) and dramatherapy supervision literature.
3. After the program had ended, through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Transcripts from the data sets outlined earlier (Table 5) were thematically analysed allowing themes and patterns to be identified as well as acknowledging individual participant's responses (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the participants' experiences of the FM and how it might have enhanced their capacity to respond to children.

I now turn to describe the processes of data analysis in more detail. I begin with data management.

Data Management

In order to examine participants' experiences and to understand how shifts might have occurred, I used a case study framework to pull the data together and write up the final product or narrative for analysis and meaning making (Stake, 2013; Wolcott, 1992,

cited in Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). Flyvbjerg (2011) asserts that the strength of the case study is “depth-detail, richness, completeness, and within-case variance” (p.

314). I took the following steps to manage the large amount of data:

1. NVIVO was used to store and manage the different data sets.
2. For each group I wrote a summary of the group process over the four days, based on my observations, reflections and feelings (see Chapter 6).
3. I then transcribed (using video and audio) each group’s engagement with the three focused arts active methods (workshop 1, 2 and 3) as well as the group evaluation of Firemaker in workshop 4. This way I could capture accurately what participants in each group said about their experiences of each activity, as well as observe what they did, and how they did it.
4. After collating each group’s experiences, for each participant I then collated their full transcriptions into individual cases, from the following:
 - a) pre workshop interview
 - b) each focused active-arts method (workshop 1, 2 and 3)
 - c) group evaluation (workshop 4)
 - d) post workshop interview

Each individual transcript case ranged from eight to 19 pages, with an average of 12 in total.

5. After this I read through all the transcripts a number of times and then began to construct a story about what happened for each person: experientially, propositionally and representationally, using their words as well as observations

from my researcher journal, thereby reducing the data. These summaries were informed by the research questions and structured under the following headings:

- Background to participant
- Reason for participation in Firemaker and perceived role as youth worker
- Overall general experiences of Firemaker
- Experiences of three focused arts active methods
- Reported shifts in thoughts, feelings or practice of worker
- Researcher reflection on evident core dramatherapy processes

These summary stories ranged between five and 10 pages, with an average of six pages per participant (see Appendix L). As part of a process of checking with participants, I sent these summary stories to all participants via email (15 June 2015), almost one year after completing the workshop requesting feedback (see Appendix M for email content).

In Group One, three out of five responded, two participants had moved overseas in the interim and were no longer working at the organisation. In Group Two, five out of six responded, one participant was travelling overseas indefinitely. The responses received were all positive (see Appendix N). These summaries formed the basis of my initial analysis of participants' experiences of Firemaker.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

At all times participants were de-identified and anonymity and confidentiality maintained. I created pseudonyms for each participant and all photographs were de-identified.

Data Analysis

I turn now to discuss how I analysed the data in order to answer these questions. The study sought to 1) examine the care workers' experiences of participation in the methods of the Firemaker Program, 2) explore how participation in this program influenced the care workers' understanding of their role as care worker, and (3) explore what role the arts therapies can play in developing the care workers' capacity to respond to children and youth in their care. I begin with the analysis of participants' experiences.

Analysis of Participants' Experiences of Firemaker

The analysis of participants' experiences of the Firemaker Program involved cross case analysis of their individual summaries. Data was coded, recoded and analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Liamputtong, 2009). As I was writing the summaries, I made memo notes in the margins and also started noting emerging individual and group themes. I created a thematic matrix about what participants said about their experiences and developed initial codes. I then looked for links between codes and finally developed general themes.

As the process unfolded, I started to look more closely at what participants were saying about their experiences of the program and the themes I had originally developed. It became clear that participants were talking about the processes and practices involved in delivering the program. This included a safe space, time to do and reflect, working in a group, doing and reflecting, all of which is consistent with how Firemaker is set up. As previously discussed, Firemaker was set up to provide care workers with:

- Experiential learning of play and the arts, with relevant supporting theory

- Skills to implement arts activities in their psychosocial work with children/young people
- Space for personal and professional reflection

In its structure and methodology, Firemaker is informed by arts therapy practice and theory that are central to the experience of it. These elements involve:

- Setting up a safe space: contract, circle, arts materials, opening closing rituals, basic set workshop session structure
- Working in relationship with the facilitator and other group members
- Working over a number of months with time in between each workshop to practice new skills learnt
- The use of arts activities with an understanding of purpose and outcome

After this initial process the themes that I identified were then examined to determine their relevance to the meta-processes of change as posited by Cassidy et al. (2014) in their theoretical model of change:

- Working in the here and now as coming first
- Creating safety
- Working alongside
- Choice and control, leading to empowerment
- Being actively involved

Cassidy et al.'s model was reflected in the data and this led to the final themes within which the analysis was organised.

Analysis of the Role of Dramatherapy Core Underlying Processes in Relationship to New Awareness

In order to attempt to answer whether participating in the Firemaker program impacted care workers' engagement with the children and their roles as care workers, participants were asked during the group evaluation and post-workshop interview if their understanding of their role had changed, and if there had been any shifts in how they think about the children and or themselves in relation to them.

In the group reflection (workshop 4) all participants mentioned the focused arts activities as their stand out moment. While I had intentionally designed these three focused data collection points as reflective activities, I did not anticipate that participants would name them as their stand out moments. Given that they had, I revisited the transcripts for each focused arts activity for each group, as well as the video recordings. In order to manage the data I created a table (see Appendix P) including:

- general group experiences (from journal) of each arts method
- individual experiences (as reported by participants)
- dramatherapy core process of change
- Heron's (1999) 'way of knowing', that is, experiential, presentational and propositional
- Any reported new awareness by participants

I then broke the table up into each focused arts method (see Chapter 7) and looked more closely at what participants said of their experiences of the methods as well as what they said directly relating to any underlying processes. I also looked for any self-reported changes they had mentioned as a direct result of the focused art method.

Through observation and journaling I was conscious of noting any contradictions between what participants said had changed and what they did in the workshop. For example, one participant, Mark, while stating he felt he had become more accepting of where the young person is at (resisting the urge to want to change them), in the final workshop demonstrated through his actions that he was not accepting at all, by putting a tie onto the image he had created of a young male person, cutting his hair and removing the joint from his mouth. He had indeed wanted to change the young person to be like himself.

Using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) I firstly noted the ways people named their experience of the focused arts method. I then generated broad themes across cases. I grouped themes across cases and then wrote about participants' general experiences of each method. I then looked for what participants said specifically about the core processes of embodiment and role, dramatic projection, active witnessing, empathy and distancing, and life arts connection.

Researcher Reflexivity

Given my role in designing and implementing Firemaker in South Africa, and my investment in the program's applicability in the Australian context, it was imperative that I consider the potential influence of these factors on my data collection, analysis, and interpretation. I acknowledge my bias and while this insider knowledge (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013) gave me certain advantages, it also had potential disadvantages. Having three supervisors and an external critical friend to consult with and analyse data with me has been one way of attempting to manage my bias. I have been distanced from the program (through time and in terms of geography) for five years and feel this has facilitated an ability to be somewhat more objective. The

program itself has developed and changed since I was involved in South Africa and this too has allowed me space and distance to look back into the program in detail with less emotional investment. And lastly, in collecting and analysing my data I was very conscious of purposefully looking for what has not worked or looking for moments that show up clear ambiguity.

Researcher reflexivity was critical in this study. I practice my dramatherapy knowing that I have feelings and needs and want it to be a good experience for the participants. Pillow (2003) posits reflexivity that is uncomfortable, and so I looked for moments when I felt uncomfortable, feeling the need to want to make it a good experience for the group. Similarly in a supervisor, facilitator and therapist role, reflexivity (Thompson & Pascal, 2012) is central. I was at all times attentive to my feelings in the workshop space and afterwards. Through a reflective journal and consultations with supervisors I hoped to assume a critical stance for most of the time (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). The multiple data sets and triangulation of the data was a further way to make reflexivity possible.

In this Chapter I have detailed the process and methods employed in conducting this research study. While complex, it mirrors the complexities of practice. Managing and organising the large quantity of data and multiple data sets was particularly challenging. Analysing and articulating the tacit knowing of my practice through an accepted research method also proved challenging. However, having a clear sense of pre-, during and post-workshop process, assisted in these challenges. Furthermore, making choices about what to include in the analysis or not was challenging. In the end having the three focused arts methods as research interventions helped focus the analysis.

Chapter 6: Participants' Experiences of Firemaker

Chapter 3 (Literature Review) outlined the challenges in building reflective capacity in care workers, and the need for professional development programs. The review examined literature that focuses on the significance of a reflective space for care workers that encourages a playful 'internal' attitude so that they may remain open to meanings and possibilities (Casement, cited in Jones, 2008) that may emerge in relation to their work with children and young people. The review focused on the use of active methods drawn from dramatherapy literature to facilitate care workers experientially to feel and think through their actions in the reflective space. The literature review also pointed to the need for research into the potential role the arts therapies can play in professional development programs in facilitating care workers' development of new insights.

This research project responds to these concerns. It was focused on understanding youth care workers' reflections on their capacity to respond to children and youth in their care. It sought to 1) examine the care workers' experiences of participation in methods of the Firemaker Program, 2) explore how participation in this program influenced the care workers' understanding of their role as care worker, and their interactions with children.

The aim of this chapter is to report on participants' experiences of the Firemaker Program and to ask how participating in the Firemaker program impacted care workers' understanding of their engagement with the children/young people and their roles as care workers. As has been highlighted in the literature (for example, Daher & Haz, 2010; Ho et al., 2012), it is important to recognise that experiences of any program must be understood as a combination of people's lived experiences, training and work

contexts, and how these come to impact the program experience. In order to understand people's experiences of the Firemaker and the shifts that they experienced because of their engagement, it was important to focus my initial analysis on who the participants were and what they expected. This was then followed by what participants reported about their general experiences of the Program. In the analysis of their experiences, participants spoke about aspects of the program methodology and delivery, which suggests that there are important conditions necessary for enabling shifts to happen. Shifts are defined as new awareness 1) of self, 2) in interaction with the child/young person, and/or 3) in their knowledge of practice (Cassidy et al., 2014; Jones, 2008).

The first part of this chapter reports on the groups' perceived roles as youth care workers, their reported challenges in working with children and young people, their reasons for participating in the program, and the researcher's reflections of the overall program delivery. The second part of this chapter reports on findings regarding what participants described as important in their experience of the program methodology and delivery. These two parts are significant for understanding the shifts (Chapter 6) that participants reported as individuals and across the two groups.

Part One: Description of Groups' and Researcher's Reflections

In order to contextualise the perceived changes (Chapter 6) as a result of participating in the Firemaker, it is important to understand how participants' saw their role as a youth worker at the start of the program. During the pre-workshop interviews, participants were asked to describe how they relate to the children/young people they work with and what they found challenging in their interactions. They were also asked what they hoped to gain from participating in Firemaker. This next section firstly provides a description of each group, their work context, their roles, challenges and

reasons for participating in Firemaker. Secondly, it summarises each group's overall engagement with the Firemaker Program from a reflexive practitioner approach. A reflexive practitioner approach means developing ways of attending to action as it happens in the moment, and using strategies (such as critically reflective journaling) to reflect on the process and artistic moment/s (Schön, 1983; Taylor, 2006).

The following Table summarises this data.

Table 8: Perceived work roles, individual work challenges and reasons for participating in Firemaker

Perceived role as youth worker			Individual work challenges			Reason/s for participation		
Themes	Group 1	Group 2	Themes	Group 1	Group 2	Themes	Group 1	Group 2
Supportive other/mentor	Anthony, Mark, Emma, Liz	Toni, Dave	Managing Behaviour	Anthony, Emma, Amy	Angela, Jasper	Personal	Anthony	
Family member		Michelle, Simon, Angela, Toni	Lack of participation	Mark, Emma	Mich, Simon, Dave	Arts skills and arts knowledge	Anthony, Mark, Liz, Emma, Amy	
Hanging out with FUN/ alongside	Amy	Jasper	Managing boundaries		Mich, Toni, Jasper	Reflection on self as facilitator, knowledge on group work		Michelle, Toni, Dave, Jasper
			Diverse backgrounds	Emma, Amy		Building relationships	Amy	Mich, Dave
			Frustration with work expectations	Mark, Liz, Emma		Uncertain		Angela, Simon
						Other: Help expression Manage organisational expectations	Mark Liz	

Group One

As reported in the previous chapter, four formally trained youth workers and one social worker from Anglo Australian backgrounds made up Group One. All participants worked in a state regulated work environment with disengaged young people. The youth workers regularly gave case presentations on their clients and attended formal supervision. There was the expectation that they attend professional development training and practice programs. Firemaker was timetabled as professional development that they could attend during working hours. Their employment and programs in general were funding dependent and governed by current politics so their work happened in a context of long term uncertainty in that their contracts may change or be terminated at any time. This impacted the young people they worked with and they reported that long term contact with a key youth worker was not usual, making it difficult to establish ongoing, trustworthy, and sustained relationships.

Group One: Perceived roles.

This group of participants were experienced in working with young people in the government social services system. They did not self-report difficulties in developing relationships with young people, saying they had to be flexible and adaptable, but found it difficult at times managing organisational expectations against what they thought a young person might really need. As formally trained youth workers, they saw themselves as professional helpers with a clearly defined work role and case load, tasked with getting youth who had disengaged from education back into the system. They work to fixed objectives with key performance indicators, and set ways of engaging with young people supported by theory emanating from a Western perspective, "I think that sometimes our training is so formulaic and so Western and is a

business model...” (Liz). Firemaker was identified by Liz, the research co coordinator, as an alternative potential way of thinking about engaging with young people using the arts. This group of participants generally saw themselves as “mentors” (Mark, pre-workshop interview) but there was variation in how they defined their individual roles.

Group One: Reported challenges.

Participants in Group One reported challenges labelled as the following themes:

1) Challenging behaviour

“...when one unsettles the other and then I lose control.” (Anthony)

“Young people can be challenging like when they don’t want to do something they don’t do it.” (Emma)

2) Working with children/young people who come from diverse backgrounds

Youth workers reported that they were tasked with meeting government and state objectives:

Most of our organisations have clear expectations about what they want us to achieve: getting kids into education or whatever. I think that sometimes that our training is so formulaic and so Western and is a business model...it makes so much sense to us because we have studied it...but reflecting on other data coming in and the great sense of frustration about their disengagement or their lack of motivation and thinking about what that is...frustrating because goes against what we do and what we ask you guys (the youth workers) to do. (Liz)

“They have not been taught values or haven’t been taught how to do things that I would have taken for granted when I was growing up.” (Emma)

3) Frustration in government expectations and no time to develop relationships

There are clear work objectives for youth workers with specific “cultural assumptions that lie behind that” (Liz) reported as being limiting in that they do not allow youth workers time for:

slowing down with the young person and really finding out what is meaningful for them...because for the majority of them it's not getting into education or training, that comes later. But what motivates them has to be something that is meaningful for them and not us. (Liz)

“...all the government is interested in is: have I worked with 50 kids and how many of them have I linked in successfully?” (Mark)

Group One: Reasons for participating in the Firemaker Program.

By participating in Firemaker, all participants (5/5) in Group One wanted to experience the arts and learn new skills to apply to their work. Anthony's reflections encapsulate this:

This specifically is a good chance to reenergise, that's the main goal, to learn some skills, to get ideas, to have time out of the office to really think how I can apply it. Tips and tricks, chance to reflect and to experience it myself as well. I have questions around arts stuff...what do you do with a finished piece of art, what goes where and.....as a tool it seems like it is being used a lot but I have never really jumped into it at all or had the confidence to use it.

(Anthony)

One participant specifically also wanted “knowledge of how to help young people express themselves more so they can understand what's going on” (Mark). This

participant felt that if young people were able to do this, he might be able to direct them in the right direction. Another participant commented that she was also interested in how to implement arts programs across a community: “It’s not just about the art but the group and community you do it in and I think that is a really meaningful thing” (Amy).

This next section summarises Group One’s overall engagement with the program, taken from the researcher’s observations of what participants did and what they said about participating in the program.

Group One: Researcher reflections on the workshops.

I always manage to somehow set up in time for each workshop and be ready when the first person arrives. But arriving feels difficult, because of parking and getting into the library space that has been booked. There are a number of locked doors and official library people to negotiate with as well as many trips to my car to carry in the workshop materials. At the start of each workshop I am anxious. For me there are lots of feelings around ‘doing it right’ and feeling under observation and needing to deliver. The group all have tertiary qualifications, they are well trained in working with youth and have outcomes to achieve and set ways of doing it. I fear that I will not be good enough or know enough. They are highly articulate, critical and reflective. It takes a lot of self-talk to put myself at ease and remind myself I do know my area and it is valuable.

Each week we take a while to warm up, individually and as a group. Play does not feel spontaneous and easy. But they are serious and engaged and interactive. They know each other from work but have never shared a space like this together that invites them to be creative, spontaneous and express themselves. They seem hungry for play and creativity and they appear to enjoy reflecting afterwards. However, at times they

are very quiet. I become so aware of silence and restraint. Is it cultural? The Western whiteness thing? Political correctness? I feel like it is serious work this and when they laugh it breaks the silence in an almost violent way. They seem particularly in need of time and space to explore their own feelings and personal life contexts; and for some it feels like it is a space to break with work and they say it feels good. I notice too that they do not speak of difference, they talk about children and young people who are diverse, but they never speak about racial or cultural differences or how they position themselves. It is only Liz who articulates in the final workshop how Western and business-like the model within which they work is. She also reveals that this model is not working.

Boundaries feel tight and the group feels contained. But I feel foreign coming from South Africa, I feel other and I struggle with my own feelings of insecurity regarding the work and program and question if it will be good enough for these Western trained, so-called first world, practitioners: will it make sense? I find myself wanting to give them a 'good' experience, with answers to their questions and feeling like I am the one who should know. I doubt if what I have to offer is good enough and ask if it will fit the tick box of good practice in Australia. I recognise these feelings might well be my countertransference, a psychodynamic principle in which the therapist or facilitator feels the often unwanted, unconscious projected feelings of the group. I wonder if this is what they feel like when they meet a young person: the need to know and give immediate solutions. My feelings are strong, and through them I understand this group may need a space for tolerating ambiguity and the unknown. In the workshops some people want step by step instructions, asking me if what they are doing is right or wrong. While I feel tempted and co-opted into wanting to make them feel ok, I have to resist the urge. Actually what I believe they need is support to loosen up,

become more playful, and trust the creative process. I sense in participants they feel they ought to know how to change the young person.

As a group they generally do not take big risks and when something happens or they feel something, they question but are also very cautious. What works well in this group is the fact that Firemaker is timetabled in as professional development and forms part of their work week. This means that they do not have to give up their weekends. It also says something about the organisation valuing the importance of professional development. The shadow however, is that it might feel like work, and they feel obliged to attend. They talk of needing to implement case presentation and supervision in this kind of way, but how? They see the benefit of the arts, but they are cautious and perhaps frightened to use the activities because they have not had enough experience of them. They are afraid of not having the language to justify for the arts in their work.

Have we, in striving to protect children, rendered them even more vulnerable and invisible and voiceless? Why can't they speak for themselves? This group feels like they need to be brought into their bodies, they need to feel and do and play. They feel distanced from the children in so many ways, they feel distanced from themselves. I feel distanced from them in my foreignness, and my anxiety in my need to create a good enough experience for them.

Group Two

Six artist facilitators, none of whom were formally trained in working with children or young people, made up Group Two. All participants came from African-Australian backgrounds and were all working with children and young people in various

arts programs engaged with social justice issues, diversity and racism. All participants were working on multiple projects at the time of participating in Firemaker.

Participating in Firemaker had to happen outside of working hours and could not clash with paid work commitments, so participants chose to attend Firemaker on Saturdays.

All participants self-identified primarily as arts practitioners, their identity as someone working with children and young people was secondary and as yet not clearly defined.

All participants identified quite strongly with the children they worked with, which was valuable in that they could relate to the children's experiences but at times felt

overwhelmed: "I am that kid" (Simon). They had all experienced racism and exclusion at school and so were passionate about raising awareness and building the children's

self-esteem to feel proud of who they are. There was a very strong sense of connection and belonging with this group that they have had to make in order to 'survive' in

Australia regarding racism and being black. Most commented on the frustrations of working within the schooling system with teachers:

we are teaching the kids but who's teaching the teachers...they got an excuse for everything. Pisses me off. I am not sure we're teaching the right people here, maybe we should start off with the teachers first and then teach the kids.

(Jasper)

All were working for an arts organisation that drew on the metaphor of family to structure itself and the programs it runs. All participants commented on feeling like this

was a family for them and represented a work place where they were consulted, brainstormed together, and worked in teams. This group did not attend formal

supervision but "debriefed" after workshops with children:

and we also have feedback discussions about how we feel and things and that is really good. Because we know so much about each other, we can like say because this person has got his going on we won't ask them to do it, even though I might want to do it. Because I always put my hand up for things.

(Toni)

Group Two: Perceived roles.

All participants in Group Two self-identified primarily as arts practitioners, their identity as someone working with children and young people was secondary and not clearly defined. Many spoke about themselves as an “emerging artist” (Dave), a term commonly used in the government arts sector. Much of this group's learning about working with children and young people happened through practice, with some ad hoc workshops being run for them on pedagogy of practice that they had found helpful. Many of them spoke about coming from large families with younger brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews where they had experience of relating to children and young people, as well as being involved with children in their local community, for example at church.

All participants saw themselves as young and taking the role of a family member. As a group they identified quite strongly with the children/youth they worked with in schools, in age and experience, which they saw as valuable in that they could relate to the children's/young people's experiences. All participants noted in their pre-workshop interviews the reciprocal nature of the relationship with the child and that they felt they had much to learn from the child too. They also spoke about the organisation they worked for as being reciprocal in that their views were considered relevant and important:

I enjoy the freedom and in regards to... I am led by people through sharing of different perspectives, like there is no hierarchy there.... I can have input into the project, I can input a lot of myself in there and receive it back as well from others. We are part of a planning process in regards to each workshop.
(Michelle)

Group Two: Reported challenges.

Participants in Group Two experienced two similar challenges in working with children and young people to those in Group Two. These two themes were:

1) Challenging behaviour

“Unpredictable behaviours and mood swings” because “you don’t know what’s behind that... so you need to not judge or react on what they have shown.” (Angela)

“when a participant just does not want to participate at all. Getting them up just to be refused and rejected.” (Dave)

2) Managing boundaries and how to build relationships with young people were also mentioned as challenging:

How far can you take conversation into the difficulty of a particular issue?

Like with racial discrimination, we open a conversation and they took it to a level, we didn’t expect them to take it to, regards talking about people harming selves and suicide, that is something we don’t get trained how to talk about, but kids know about it and how do you talk about it when you don’t have expert knowledge or anything like that. I know you can give them like guidance or tips as just a person to person but at same time you in there mentoring them. (Toni)

going into workshop and something unexpected happens....like we are kinda trained not to be teachers so things like the kids fighting of course you break it up but in what way do you discipline them? That's the challenging thing and how do you let them know you are not there to punish in the same way the teacher would but you also want to tell them that it is not ok. We try to be friends to them but at same time still hold fact that you are there to mentor them so there still needs to be that respect.... how to hold that balance. (Jasper)

Group Two: Reasons for participating in the Firemaker Program.

In comparison to those in Group One, no participants in Group Two stated in the pre workshop interview that they were looking for experience in or arts skills, which is not surprising given they were all arts practitioners. Four of the six participants in Group Two stated that they wanted a space to reflect on their work and hoped Firemaker would give them that.

It's gonna be interesting to reflect on what we do as facilitators and how it affects us. So only recently where we started thinking a bit more about us and how we are relating to our work so will be interesting to learn more about that. (Michelle)

Two participants in Group Two stated they were uncertain of what they wished to gain from participating.

Group Two: Researcher reflections on the workshops.

I feel alive with this group. They are energised, playful and laugh a lot! But I also feel at times like a teacher and a mother: themes that surface right at the start of the Program. Our first workshop is in a very cold art space with sewer pipes running along the ceiling so every time a toilet is flushed in the centre it reverberates through the room and is noisy and very disconcerting and obviously causes laughter from the group. The energy is big, their voices are animated, and they laugh. They are young.

At the same time there is an awkwardness about them, they are new to this and I wonder if the laughter is as much about nervousness as it is about enjoyment and fun. They are not quite sure and it is as if they are a group of big kids needing containment. So they know each other well, this could be both good and bad. They say they know most things about each other. I ask them to introduce themselves and tell the group something they may not know, they take a bit of time to chat and think through and the secrets are big: soiling pants, nearly killing brother.

We move into the clay activity and they are very chatty. I ask them to try work without words and eventually they do. At the end they reflect that it was good to work in silence as they are not used to it. I feel I need to work for silence, for quietness, so that thinking can take place. In the other group it is about working for noise and play so that the thinking can take on a new perspective.

This group gives up their Saturday for Firemaker, they are artists and all involved in at least two other projects and/or work things. And they are talented and it seems many people want something from them, me being one of them. And they are eager to please. A theme that runs strongly through this group is self-care, and my own identification with them being arts workers and involved in many different projects all wanting to make a difference. They seem to relate well to children and children to

them. They are very close to the children in age and lived experience, they might need more distance in order to think about the child. They have not been formally trained in child care work and it is refreshing as they bring their personal experience of children in their families into the workshops. They do not see themselves as needing to ‘help’ children or young people, they see themselves as on the same level as them. Less about power and control than it is about support and having fun, while at the same time raising awareness around social issues such as racism. They go off after the first session and try out activities, they are not afraid.

I feel comfortable with them. I am relaxed and I enjoy being with them (do I let things just go too much?). They like to play. Two group members drop out. The group finds it difficult to speak about it, to acknowledge their anger/disappointment. In the last workshop two participants comment on it but they do not want to go deeper into those feelings it seems. I comment on this in the group too. After workshop two the energy seems to drag. They seem tired. The energy at the beginning is not sustained until the end. The bubble pops. We also work in three different spaces and I am full of conflicting feelings regards being flexible and not too rigid but also feeling a need to hold onto the boundary of a space. Also the final two sessions happen in their workplace meeting room. It has associations and cannot be neutral. In addition it is also used by other artists who come and go on the weekend so it becomes a very open space and I feel is not private anymore.

On reflection with this group it feels we have only gone to a certain level. It has remained on a very surface level, or has it? Some I think want to go deeper (three) but the group does not. Is it too painful? Is it too boring and nor relevant? Is it too wordy? Or is it that the three want to take their facilitation deeper, the others are not really in that space in reality. They bring facilitation challenges they are facing in groups to the

workshops to think about and discuss. I feel they could benefit more from facilitation skills input and ongoing formal supervision that engages them in their work and gives them thinking space to reflect on their work. They are so in their bodies they need space to help get into their heads.

In summary the two groups of participants came from diverse backgrounds, different work contexts and life experiences. Both groups worked with children and young people in various contexts. Group One were trained youth workers with no experience in the arts, and Group Two were arts practitioners with no formal training in working with groups, children or young people. Given their contexts, participants perceived their work roles differently, with Group One seeing themselves mostly as mentors and Group Two as family members. Both groups experienced similar challenges in working with children and young people, namely: how to manage groups, disruption and challenging behaviour.

Expectations for the outcome of participation was also different across the groups. All participants in Group One reported wanting experience in arts tools and skills. In comparison, most participants in Group Two reported wanting a space to reflect on their work. The ways in which the groups engaged also differed. Participants in Group One were generally more cautious around arts processes and needed a lot of warming up, whereas for participants in Group Two more thinking space was needed.

Part Two: Experiences of the Firemaker Methodology and Delivery

Thematic analysis of participants' overall experience of the Program as reported during the workshops, which included a group evaluation in the final workshop, and in the follow up interviews, indicated that two aspects of the program were particularly

valued by participants in both groups. Most said they valued the experiential focus of the program and being able “to do” things, as well as the opportunity to reflect on both the experience, their work and themselves. However, it was not only the act of doing that was important for participants. The analysis showed that while experiential learning and the act of doing and reflecting are important, there are several other components, processes and practices that work together to promote active involvement and reflection. As noted by Liz, Group One, "there are a lot of things that go into making this fire and that it doesn't just happen on its own".

As previously discussed, Firemaker was set up to provide care workers with: experiential learning of play and the arts, with relevant supporting theory; skills to implement arts activities in their psychosocial work with children/young people; and a space for personal and professional reflection. In its structure and method, Firemaker is informed by arts therapy practice and theory (see Chapter 2). Several elements are taken from this area that inform Firemaker method, including:

- Setting up a safe space: contract, circle, arts materials, opening and closing rituals, basic set workshop session structure
- Working in relationship with facilitator and other group members
- Working over a number of months with time in between each workshop to practice new skills learnt
- The use of arts activities with an understanding of purpose and outcome

The data analysis identified that participants' comments related to most of the features of the Firemaker method listed above. According to what participants said, the

findings have been grouped according to the following themes which encapsulate elements of the Firemaker methodology:

- A safe space: creating safety
- Reciprocal engagement: group and facilitator relationships
- Freedom
- Time
- Doing: the creative process, experiential learning both in and out of the workshops
- Reflecting

A Safe Space

“Looking back I see contemplation, reflection, inspiration, togetherness, containment.”

(Michelle, Group Two)

In all group work, safety is considered important: physical, emotional and psychological safety. Most group programs will build safety into the program in a number of ways. Building safety is also part of a therapeutic relationship so that trust may be developed over time. When working with the arts, there is an added dimension to creating a safe space and allowing participants to feel comfortable working with art materials and the imagination and entering the play space. How the space is set up is critical to maximise active involvement. In dramatherapy this involves creating and maintaining the play space (Jennings, 1999; Jones, 2010). It also involves facilitating participants' entry in the play space, maintaining involvement, de-roling, and exiting the play space where and when necessary. Sub themes related to creating safety include: the physical space, the circle, opening and closing activities, the fire metaphor.

The physical space.

How a safe space is created to enable experiential learning and play to happen involves the physical space. The space for Firemaker is always set up with a circle of chairs in the centre of the room, with tables of art materials around the perimeters. For each workshop the same set up is created and it is important for consistency and familiarity and building trust. For Group One, a neutral workshop space away from work was booked for all of the sessions. However, due to a double booking only three out of the four were facilitated there. The third workshop happened at another venue. This was mentioned by some as impacting on the process:

I started to like that we didn't have any windows in the space we worked in, we were closed off from the rest of the world. We had been in a little cocoon and it felt personal and closed off and I like that. I found it different at x (2nd venue) where there are lots of windows and we were quite exposed. I can imagine young people liking that too, they don't want to be seen, and given a chance to express selves or be creative it needs to happen in closed off space where they feel comfortable. (Emma, Group One)

The workshops were delivered at three different settings in the same building for participants in Group Two despite efforts to secure one space for all of them. All workshop spaces were in the same building as their workplace. The final two workshops happened in their work space. Participants spoke about being used to moving and working in different spaces, as well as having interruptions in their group work, thus having to be flexible and adaptable.

The circle, opening and closing activity and the symbolic fire.

Creating a circle, having a ritual opening and closing activity and the symbolic fire are all ways of helping to creating safety and consistency in the Firemaker process.

The circle.

In the analysis many participants from both groups commented on the significance of the circle: “I think being in a circle is powerful as well, so I learnt that from Firemaker as well. Being in a space, in a circle, yeah...” (Michelle, Group Two). For Toni the circle made it easier to acknowledge everyone’s feelings: “just being in the space and acknowledging people’s days and feelings” (Toni, Group Two).

The opening and closing activity using the fire metaphor.

Having a daily opening and closing activity, as well as a ritual of sitting around a symbolic fire, was experienced by some participants to help them focus and be present in the moment:

I remember this session you told us at the start, like right at the start when we were standing in the circle and facing outside... and you said leave everything outside, like just to kinda be there for that time, and I have really experienced it at that time, because we are always so busy, and that was the only time, that for so long that I had actually been somewhere not thinking about being somewhere else or doing other things. (Michelle, Group Two)

Emma commented that it meant the experience was meaningful:

I really like the entire fire thing, I found it powerful. I liked the opening and closing of each session. It gives it more meaning and felt more special. I think when we have groups we don’t necessarily leave it by summing up or having official closure until we next meet... don’t know how I would do that but I found it powerful it meant that what we’d created and what we had

learned and time spent together was meaningful because of that. And the safe space thing. (Emma, Group One)

Reciprocal Engagement: Facilitator and Participant Relationships

“Looking back I see how important it is to go back to the basics, to move forward.”

(Jasper, Group Two)

Establishing a safe space in a group, as evidenced above, enables participants to develop trust in their relationships with each other and with the facilitator. In dramatherapy and experiential learning, in particular Firemaker, there is a focus on individual experience and group experience. How relationships are formed in group work is important so that participants can feel free to express themselves, be vulnerable and take risks. Facilitation is an obvious important aspect of this and requires training and skill (Kalmanowitz & Potash, 2010). Most participants commented on the reciprocal engagement between the facilitator and participants as well as between participants. Most spoke of the important role of group processes and some spoke of the role of the facilitator as being important to their experience of Firemaker.

Group collaboration.

All participants in Group One commented that the fact that they worked together and knew each other impacted positively on their overall experience

I think it's dependent on the group, I was thinking about it driving here this morning. Over time process has created a lovely bond between us... who have taken part in this journey together.... I feel completely comfy saying everything in front of you guys... because we have shared lots of personal and professional stuff along the way.... (Liz, Group One)

They spoke of trust and being able to take risks because of it:

also a good sign of a group I think is like when you can have people... the way I thought about it straightaway is that we had to build a fire, our own fire... and then I was thinking, normally I am pretty polite and usually ask people who wants a fire and shall we do it... and I thought naah sometimes if you feel safe in a group and trust it you just go with it. (Anthony, Group One)

It also meant being able to be more vulnerable and share more openly with the group:

I felt very vulnerable cos you put yourself out there and you are amongst peers and stuff and you think crap people are going to think I am weak and stuff... and it was a moment following the next week as well... its ok to be vulnerable its ok to feel shit. (Amy, Group One)

Amy spoke of a stronger relationship with colleagues outside of Firemaker as a result of participating: "I also think it was good, because we got a stronger relationship with the group" (Amy, Group One).

Similarly in Group Two, participants knew each other from work but their relationships extended to the personal and social context as well. Despite knowing each other fairly well, this group still discovered new things about each other during the workshops and enjoyed that "learning about the other people in the group, even though we, you know, know them but learning different sides to them" (Michelle, Group One). They spoke of feeling comfortable with each other and the significance of having peers to work with. Despite this group knowing each other so well, they found it difficult, almost impossible, to express their disappointment with other group members in the group when they were late or did not arrive. These feelings some shared in the individual follow up interviews.

I don't like that not everyone could come, that lack of participation.... because that is so bad... it is like everyone holding up a brick wall and then someone leaves and has a rest you know? He says he will be back but he never is (laughs). I guess I think it is the norm. (Dave, Group One)

Relationship between facilitator and participants.

Participants were not asked directly about how they experienced the facilitation of the program. At the end of both pre and follow up interviews they were asked if there were any questions I had not asked during the interview. One participant in the follow up interview commented:

I suppose you haven't asked about your facilitation with the group (laughs) and I would like to say I can't imagine it with anyone else obviously now we did it with you. You made it so it was a calm environment, gave each person a chance to talk, you didn't cut anyone off or object to anything, but I think say another facilitator had been part of it and had got more involved or made it a bit more about them it could have taken away from it. You made us feel comfortable in the space we are in, knowing you were a part of it but you didn't make it about you. You made sessions roll really well. (Emma, Group One)

However one participant in Group One felt the facilitator was not directive enough. Anthony felt I could have "pushed" them a bit more by being "directive in the short space of time" because I was "reliant" on them "to come up with it a lot of the time" and that I could have taken it to the "next level" if I had perhaps visited them in their workplaces and observed them doing their work so that I could get a "sense of the group" and context in which they work. This Anthony said might have given them

more constructive tools to use in their work. This will be discussed further under implications for this research study.

Freedom

“Looking back I can see the expression, the group expression in different formations.”

(Anthony, Group One)

“Looking back I can see that we have explored creativity and self-discovery”

(Emma, Group One)

Dramatherapy literature shows that only once an individual or group feels safe, will they feel free to express and create (Emunah, 1996; Jones, 1996; Landy, 1994; Read Johnson, 2000). The concept of freedom implies a state of playfulness (Jones, 2010) both in body and mind. Thus it was important to allow participants to be open to imagining new possibilities in their lives and work without fear of consequence.

Freedom to play and be creative, to express oneself and in having choice as to what materials are used and how to use them, is understood in Dramatherapy to give participants a feeling of control in how they make decisions for themselves both during the workshops and outside (Cassidy et al., 2014; Jones, 2010). Freedom to express oneself, to play and be creative and to make choices was important based on the participants’ reflections as seen in the next section.

Freedom to express oneself.

Participants in both groups reported experiencing a “non-judgemental environment” giving them “the opportunity to debrief and discuss our thoughts, feelings and experiences which was extremely therapeutic” (Emma, Group One).

One participant in Group Two reported on her experience of Firemaker as being one that felt free of restriction in the way that their everyday work did not:

It was a kind of down time... just opening up and yeah letting things out and just not having to worry about having to work. Yeah compared to other days like when I do have to go to work. So it's kinda like work but a release of all that work you know that I have been doing. (Toni, Group Two)

Freedom to play and be creative.

Many commented on the freedom they felt to play and engage in creative processes.

I got excited because there were no restrictions... I knew we would make something and then talk about it afterwards, reminds me of art at school.... when we started I turned to x and said this is lovely... creativity rather than be thinking about what we should be doing, to think deeply about what I want to do. (Emma, Group One)

For some the freedom to play and be creative brought up anxiety:

Yeah I think definitely like the first week I thought what have I got to do to get this right... get the... ok like do the diagram, here's the diagram, awesome, good diagram it's like a pass... the first activity was like go and make a badge... and everyone got up real quick and I was like I have no idea what we are doing... I really prefer activities when you get told you have to use these 3 things to describe how you feel... when you have such a wide scope I did not know what to do... and I kinda freaked out... so for me that was a freak out moment cos I wasn't even given any like step, step, step.

When someone says make something, I need more steps, for what is it functional for? A wall, do you hang it? I need more parameters. So that was really difficult for me so I kind of cheated by watching everyone else make it.

(Mark, Group One)

Freedom to choose.

Freedom to choose art materials.

In each workshop there was always a table set up of art materials, small objects and fabrics. Participants were invited to choose what material they would like to work with in each activity. Anthony, Group One, spoke of feeling excited when seeing “lots of stuff”, he said “when I saw that the first time... wow I think, I am very creative so I could use all of it and then suddenly my brain’s going...”

Similarly in Group Two, participants enjoyed having choice over materials:

uh I don’t know I found it very... I enjoyed it a lot. You know, choosing the fabric, choosing the ... you had a choice of three big buckets to choose from and I had all these stuff there, and like you know I wanted to grab all of it, I felt like a kid again, just playing. I just wanted to play again and get all of the stuff and play dinosaurs and stuff (laughs). (Dave, Group One)

Choice in how art materials are used or moved.

In both groups participants spoke about the experience of having the freedom to choose how they moved materials around. Dave, Group Two, spoke of feeling empowered as he was able to play with reality in his life of working under a powerful boss:

and yeah I think something really significant about toys is that you know they are toys, they are not real I know but um it's like... I had a shark and then there was a small whale. I like big animals, small and... it made the whole thing global. I guess that sense of equality as well, like about toys. You choose whose boss and that yeah... I was the starfish and the starfish was bigger than the human soldiers so yeah I think I just had a lot of fun. (Dave, Group Two)

Anthony spoke of enjoying having choice in the:

moving of the things and to form it in so many different ways, and then being given the opportunity to explain it, I really enjoyed that, it was meaningful.

What stems from that for me is a bit more relaxed, a bit less prescriptive.

(Anthony, Group One)

Time

“Looking back, I feel like it has been like a really long program. It feels like six months' work.”

(Amy, Group One)

In dramatherapy literature time is an important factor in therapeutic change (Emunah, 1996; Jones, 1996, 2010; Landy, 1994). Time is linked to the themes of building safety and relationships. It is also closely related to the theme of freedom in that participants felt they had permission to take time to explore experiences, thoughts and feelings.

Further related to the theme of time in dramatherapy is the notion of working in the 'here and now' (Emunah, 1996; Jennings, 1992; Jones, 1996; Landy, 1994).

Experiential learning also emphasises the felt experience in the ‘here and now’ as the way in which people learn, thereby implying potential for change (Bruner, 1976; Moreno, 1953).

Working in the ‘here and now’ requires participants to make use of what they feel in the present moment, helping to make conscious feelings and thoughts that can then be reflected on. It requires focusing at any given moment on themselves and what they might be feeling.

For example, in the Firemaker workshops, feelings about themselves and/or the lives of those they work with may emerge in the moment, making conscious unacknowledged or unconscious feelings or thoughts, leading to new self-awareness. Through the arts process the unconscious material is brought to light or externalised. These are important as they give clues and capacity for self-awareness, insight, and reflection afterwards:

the time we took to do especially what we were thinking inside to reflect into the model, for me that was really good and then being given the opportunity to explain it I really enjoyed that, it was meaningful. (Anthony, Group One)

Participants mentioned time in relation to the actual structuring of the sessions; time to focus and be present; time to make links back to work in the workshops; as well as time as important for building relationships.

Timing and structure of the four workshops.

Many participants commented on the time in-between workshops. Some felt that the monthly spacing gave the experience “a lot of value. If you do it concentrated you take a lot out of it and off you go whereas here there is so much time between the

sessions to think about what happens” (Anthony, Group One, follow up interview).

Another participant reported “there are things we physically did in the workshops but the majority of the work was done outside of workshops where we go away talking, thinking and coming back”. (Liz, Group One)

Others felt it would have been better in a short space:

I am just thinking maybe the timing of the sessions, they were quite intense and quite short, I don’t know if things would be different if we were able to do it on a weekly basis for a longer period of time.... but that may have helped me remember a lot more. (Angela, Group Two)

Michelle, Group Two, wondered how it may have been: “doing it four days one after the other? But then no time for reflection....”

Time to focus and be present.

Participants in both groups spoke about participating in Firemaker as taking time to focus on themselves, as illustrated in the excerpt below:

I remember this session you told us at the start, like right at the start when we were standing in the circle and facing outside... and you said leave everything outside, like just to kinda be there for that time, and I have really experienced it at that time, because we are always so busy, and that was the only time, that for so long that I had actually been somewhere not thinking about being somewhere else or doing other things. (Michelle, Group Two)

Time was also experienced as important: to not rush the creative process.

Participants from both groups noted the significance and value of having time and

taking time to create and engage in the arts processes: “it was very unique and the real taking your time to unpack was good” (Anthony, Group One).

Time to make links with work.

The program also gave some participants “time out to look at the work and share it with like-minded people”, and to link their feelings, thoughts and actions in the ‘here and now’ with what was happening at work. One participant described this as an “opportunity to look at work from a different angle in a way that you really don’t get from professional development, where you are left to make your own connections back to work. This is really in depth.” (Anthony, Group One).

Time to build relationships.

Time was also seen as important to building relationships within the group as well as with children and young people, but that often the reality of the work context did not allow for this. Liz, Group Two, commented on time, noting that Firemaker had:

really allowed me the space to think about some of the cultural assumptions that lie behind that and re-evaluate time and allowing us time to do this and slowing down with the young person and really finding out what is meaningful for them. (Liz, Group One)

Doing

“Looking back I feel like we did a lot, there are a lot of things and I think I forgot some of them.”

(Mark, Group One)

Central and specific to dramatherapy and experiential learning is active involvement. All the themes explored so far evidence the factors that are essential to effective experiential group work: safety, reciprocal relationships, freedom to express and create within the group as well as time to process experiences. It is important to note that while each of these factors are important, they are interconnected. Once these factors are in place, the possibility and opportunity for active involvement emerges.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the two major aspects of Firemaker that all participants reported on were doing and reflecting. Doing implies being actively involved; engaging in creative processes that involve the body, thought and feeling. Arts activities make up the creative processes i.e. art making using art materials or drama using the body as the art material. Participants reported experiences of doing, which I have labelled as a sub theme: the creative process. They also reported experiences of doing applied in their work contexts, labelled as a sub theme: experiential learning.

The creative process.

Being actively involved was described as “fun”, “weird” and “scary”. They commented on the importance of engaging different senses—on touching and manipulating materials with their hands: “I really enjoyed that, the clay and moving of the things and to form it in so many different ways” (Anthony, Group One).

Both groups specifically commented on enjoying making “crafty things with their hands” (Toni, Group Two) and having the opportunity to work with the “tactile stuff” (Anthony, Group One) like the objects and art materials.

Toni, Group Two, spoke of how she enjoyed getting her hands “dirty”: “I really enjoyed you know, using my hands and doing all of those stuff that you usually wouldn’t do... as a child” (Toni, Group Two).

Mark commented on the process of creating as him having to “do that natural process without realising what I was thinking” (Mark, Group One). At first he felt unsure:

when Kirsten said you can come up with an idea while you are doing it... and I always feel whenever someone says that... I’ve already got the idea down, I always want to have an answer or prep before you walk in. So this was one of my first experiences when I really didn’t have an idea and it did come out, so that was quite cool and really definitely one of my highlights.

Being asked to work quietly, and focus in on themselves, felt “different” for Angela, Group Two, and she was surprised by what she could achieve/complete with that focus.

I felt the activity was really focused because it was silent. And whenever we facilitate or whenever we are in our activity there is no silence, it’s quite loud so that itself was good, it was different and then I was very focused on my own and then I finished and looked at X and then Y and it was WOW we’ve done something... especially in the time frame because normally our timing things we tend to go over, so it was quite good we managed to complete something. (Angela, Group Two)

Feelings during the creative process.

In the doing and making different feelings were evoked. Some spoke of positive feelings such as “enjoyment” (Toni, Group One) and “felt like meditating” (Simon, Group One). Some participants commented on how relaxing some of the activities were: “I felt relaxed a lot of the time, even the breathing exercises. I am one of those people who doesn’t switch off. But I felt myself become calm when we did those exercises” (Emma, Group One). Others experienced anxiety around the arts processes. Group One initially experienced more anxiety around the right and wrong way of doing arts activities “and I kinda freaked out... so for me that was a freak out moment because I wasn’t even given any like step, step, step” (Mark, Group One).

As most participants in Group Two were from a music and drama background, there appeared to be less anxiety around engaging in arts processes. As a group they were generally more spontaneous and very playful in how they engaged with the arts activities.

Accomplishment.

After engaging in a creative process, participants also commented on feeling accomplished and having produced something they could see and feel good about:

like with young people as well, like because yeah a lot of times especially when you’re getting to know someone you can kinda feel like there can be a sense of “oh my god I’ve talked to so many people and I don’t feel like I’ve accomplished anything” so to have something where you can say “ok we are going to do this today”, we’ve started it, we’ve talked about it. Even myself as an adult I am thinking “ah yes I feel like I have done, made something today.... (Liz, Group One)

Experiential learning.

In dramatherapy like experiential programs, the focus and objective is about being actively involved. Being active involves doing (physically and mentally engaged), feeling (through senses and emotions) and thinking/reflection (through, on and after action). Again these processes are central to experiential group work (Bolton, 1979; Dirkz, 2001; Mezirow, 1998; Taylor, 2000). Liz, Group One, commented on this process in the following way:

far more valuable because it accesses things that you are not prepared for... you get there indirectly as some of the stuff that is about you and more genuine and more powerful to bring to your own attention... and the attention of your supervisor, and supervision fits in a Western model... but maybe we need a different model to think about.

Taking part in the arts activities gave participants an opportunity to use and experience arts activities as method. For participants in Group One, who had not experienced arts processes before, the learning was novel. Mark commented that:

It was really fun to do it and to do all activities instead of like how you get those emails telling you how to do an activity. If you have never tried it you don't know how fun, awkward or scary it can be.

The value of learning experientially was encapsulated by the following quote: "Going through it yourself is the only way. I have never done it before, I have read about it but doing it yourself that's where the message stays with you" (Anthony, Group One).

Participants in Group Two, who had direct experience of arts activities, spoke about experiential learning as a process that was about “learning all the activities”, in a more instrumental manner, which could then be used in their group work and facilitation: “I’ve used so many of them. Which is perfect timing because I was running out of activities to do in workshops” (Michelle, Group Two).

Toni said:

...like the activities that we did in the workshops and then were able to like implement them. Like the group agreement and just being in the space and acknowledging people’s days and feelings and um especially if people aren’t/don’t know each other um... getting them to know each other on the day. (Toni, Group Two)

Participants in both groups reported they felt confident to implement specific activities such as the warm up games and ice breakers immediately in their work. Through experiential learning participants were able to imagine how they might structure their groups in their practice in similar ways: “I am thinking more deeply about how the workshop structure affects the students, their behaviour in the, the dynamic of the group and the behaviour of the group in the sessions” (Michelle, Group Two).

The more complex arts activities were met with more uncertainty about how to implement. Some felt cautious about working with arts methods in this way, particularly in Group One:

it’s like quite amazing what can be stuck in there and you bring that out and it has a life outside of your brain transformed certain parts and feeling that’s

why it's such a responsibility to work with this stuff... I definitely think it is very powerful. (Anthony, Group One)

One participant in Group One specifically reported after the focused clay activity that while she had found it personally valuable: "I don't know how I could do that [activity] or how I could justify its benefits..." (Emma, Group One). There was some blurring in understanding between activities used to purposefully facilitate participants in reflecting on their work versus using activities safely with children and young people.

I definitely remember most of the activities, like the one with the clay, I can't remember why we did that. I feel like we did that sort of as a reflection of ourselves. I remember the one where we used the toys, I don't know why we did that I am just trying to think why we did that... uhhh... ok let's pass that. The drama activities, that was good, that's something I definitely remember, that's something we could kinda actually take on board. I have not done it yet but I know the other guys have used it in their facilitation. So the activities are what stood out. (Angela, Group Two)

This raises further questions around training to use arts methods, which will be discussed in Chapter 8. Despite the opportunity for experiential learning, it is important to note that two participants felt the learning process could have been taken further. Jasper would have liked more time and space to explore actual personal and workplace difficulties in the group, and to "problem solve" together, indicating the need for peer support. He was specifically interested in how others deal with hearing emotional stories from children: "How do people cope with hearing stories or how that may affect you and be able to not take that back home, as a like over-emotional kind of thing, it's

good to talk about it...” This was an important theme for participants in Group Two, who often closely identified with the children’s stories: “I am that kid” (Dave, Group Two). While most participants in Group Two did not have formal training in group work, nor regular supervision, the Firemaker workshops for some was a space to debrief. This will be discussed further in Chapter 8.

Anthony, despite receiving regular supervision, noted that he felt validated through Firemaker, “in a way that you really (laughs) don’t get much in this kind of work”. However, Anthony also spoke about wanting to be “pushed” more with direct input from me about work specific solutions. He said he would have preferred me to be like:

this is how I am running the homework club: I have done two Firemaker sessions and this is what I am thinking, what do you think I should do?... a bit more of like a guided specific... you know and then measure before and after you observed this.

Doing outside of workshops.

Most participants reported on doing in between the monthly workshops. This involved trying out activities they had learnt in the workshops. In Firemaker the practice of participants in between workshops is important and forms part of the methodology. The doing outside of the monthly workshops was evident in both groups, but more so in Group Two, which is not surprising given that they were running weekly arts groups. Group One reported using specific warm ups in meetings at times and fed back on this. However, participants in Group Two would report back each month on activities they had tried out: “We did the group contract with both of our groups...and we had one of

the best sessions, with up to 70 kids and we didn't have to say quiet once or shhhh...it was awesome" (Michelle, Group Two).

A simple game or something like that is what brings you really closer together. And I was talking to another one of my directors and just how there's something missing here, there's something, like it's cool but somethings missing, guess it's the love man. You know the love. (Dave Group Two)

Reflection

"Looking back I see how important it is to have evaluation in everything that you do."

(Simon, Group Two)

Reflection plays a significant role in this study, not only for the researcher as a reflective practitioner but for the participants who take part in action-based arts methods as a means to facilitate their reflective practice. One of the key concerns of this study is the way/s in which connections to the children are made by the youth care worker through the creative arts processes. Reflection is therefore a key component of this research as it is concerned with how the arts might facilitate the participants' reflection on their work and clients.

Linked to the previous theme of doing and active involvement, reflection is significant, not only as an outcome of doing (i.e. as self-reflection) but as pedagogy within dramatherapy practice, experiential learning and the Firemaker. In the Firemaker workshops the practice of reflection is integral to the structure of each and every workshop. After every activity, and at the start and end of each workshop, reflection

happens around the symbolic fire, where participants are invited to reflect on their experiences of an activity and any thoughts or feeling associated with it.

Not all arts therapists place importance on verbal cognitive reflection, preferring to remain within the art or dramatic metaphor without making a direct link between the art/drama and real life (Jones, 2010). The practice of the researcher of this study places the primacy of verbal cognitive reflection as important to the development of self-awareness and insight. Five sub themes of reflection are discussed below with supporting quotations from participants.

Reflective practice.

Reflective practice is defined as the activity of reflecting on one's work experience. Reflection was reported by 10 out of 11 participants as being significant to their experience of Firemaker: "I saw it as a good um reflective workshop" (Toni, Group Two). People reported on reflection in different ways, but both groups reported they valued above anything else the opportunity for reflection, both on their personal and professional lives. Having the space to actively reflect was reported by one participant as "unique", that he "wouldn't get in any other training... the real 'taking your time to unpack' was good" (Anthony, Group One). Particularly for participants in Group Two, who were not accustomed to the practice of doing and then reflecting afterwards, it "highlighted how important it is for us to reflect on our work" (Jasper, Group Two).

Reflective self-awareness.

This is the capacity to make ourselves the objects of our reflective activity so as to become aware of our feelings, motives and attitudes, particularly in how they might

impact our interactions with others (Kondrat, 1999). Emma (Group One) in her follow up interview said: “The biggest impact that the Firemaker training has had on me is the importance of self-reflection”. The Firemaker introduced people to tools that they could use to explore personal feelings and connections to events in their own lives that felt valuable to them:

I think prior to this point when I was thinking about the workshops in terms of tools to use with young people in particular... it was at this workshop that I realised the tools are equally powerful for me and I guess for ourselves in terms of self-reflection and things like that... that was a standout moment for me and I started to look at things differently after that. (Liz, Group One)

Critical reflexivity.

This is the process of critically examining our ideological and cultural contexts in relation to perceptions of race, gender, class etc. (Pillow, 2003). One participant reported that Firemaker had allowed her:

the space to think about some of the cultural assumptions that lie behind that and re-evaluate time and allowing us time to do this and slowing down with the young person and really finding out what is meaningful for them and not us... that first step is to go back and give that gift to the young person... meaning engaging and creating and give the gift of voice to the young person. When we label the person-- disengaged they are robbed of a voice and a story to tell about their experience... so I think sitting down with a young person and changing the conversation from “why are you not doing stuff?” to “what is your story?” is a really nice way to allow them to own their story. (Liz, Group One)

Reflection on and in action.

In arts methods, this is reflection that happens after an activity or during an activity, in which participants explore their thoughts, feelings and experience of the activity. Some participants made direct mention of the active arts methods as facilitating reflection on their work: “the part of Firemaker about own reflection and where you are at with work, the role plays... that was very powerful” (Anthony, Group One, follow up interview). Arguably arts methods enable a deeper kind of reflection to take place. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

Significantly in the follow up interviews participants reported feeling they “missed” (Toni, Group Two) Firemaker, and losing the time to reflect on themselves and their work. Liz (Group One, follow up interview) commented on what she had observed of her colleagues in Group One after Firemaker had ended:

why I thought the work was so powerful in the four sessions that we did, and because it was based on the personal stuff... and what I have picked up from all the participants is the loss, oh god we are losing the time for ourselves that they came to look forward to having that day and that space to reflect and other possibilities presented to them in the way that they could reflect as well that was so confronting or confined... which I think helped them access far more meaningful reflections than possibly what supervision does, so I think there’s loss about that but also about... almost like having this knowledge awoken in them and then seeing now possibly more than ever, which they wouldn’t have had, had they not done this four weeks with personal reflections, about the implications that this could have on their further work and wanting more guidance on that.

While the practice of reflection was valued by most participants, for one participant it felt “too much”:

The only criticism I would have to say is the last day was probably too much reflection... we were all expecting more of newness to be fitted in and by that point I felt we had reflected as much as we could. (Anthony, Group One, follow up interview)

The final Firemaker workshop consisted of a group evaluation of the Program, as an opportunity for the group to reflect on the entire process. This involved creating a visual journey of the Firemaker using any of the materials available: scarves, small objects, drawings etc. After the journey was created, each group was invited to walk it and comment on moments that stood out for them. The final part involved standing at the end of the journey and looking back over it. Participants were then invited to say one sentence about the process beginning with “looking back...” The following table presents each of their sentences. This is an illustration of “reflection in and on action” in process. Significantly all of the themes explored in this chapter are evident in these sentences.

Table 9: Participants’ one sentence reflections looking back on the Firemaker journey

Group 1	Looking back I...
Mark	Looking back I feel like we did a lot, there are a lot of things and I think I forgot some of them.
Anthony	Looking back I can see the expression, the group expression in different formations.
Emma	Looking back I can see that we have explored creativity and self-discovery.
Amy	Looking back I feel like it has been like a really long program. It feels like 6 months work.
Liz	I feel as though we have come a long way and I think it is in terms of the visual of this journey we have become 3 dimensional people.... it’s flat there and the procession.... it feels like a journey of becoming and ending up at the spot where we are now.

	Looking back on this journey it illustrates there are things we physically did in the workshops but the majority of the work was done outside of workshops where we go away talking, thinking and coming back . These physical things remind us of processes that have happened over time so feels like we have done heaps of stuff.....
Group 2	Looking back I...
Michelle	Looking back I see contemplation, reflection, inspiration, togetherness, um containment.
Toni	Looking back I see growth.
Dave	Looking back I see the seed sprouting out into a huge tree.
Simon	Looking back I see how important it is to have evaluation in everything that you do.
Angela	Looking back I see feelings through creative art and I also see something that will continue on.
Jasper	Looking back I see how important it is to go back to the basics, to move forward

In summary, I set out to examine participants' experiences of participation in the Firemaker Program. Analysis of the data revealed that participants valued the opportunity to do and to reflect. Further analysis revealed that participants not only reported on doing and reflecting but also on key elements about the methodology and delivery of Firemaker. The themes of 1) safety, 2) reciprocal relationships, 3) freedom to express and create within the group, 4) time to process experiences, thereby enabling 5) doing and 6) reflecting, were all reported on across both groups. These themes are interrelated and combine to create a foundational framework for potential shifts to occur. The next chapter seeks to examine participants' reported shifts and the underlying dramatherapy processes at play.

Chapter 7: Focused Arts Methods

In the previous findings chapter, key program features such as safety, the significance of the relationship formed between participants and facilitator, and being actively involved, were outlined and analysed as important factors for change to occur. This chapter is a closer examination of the active involvement of participants in the three focused arts methods (clay and box, object worlds, body sculptures) or as one participant said, the “stuff we are doing here” (Anthony, Group One). These focused arts methods were purposefully designed to enable reflection on the relationship between youth care worker and child. In the analysis of this data, dramatherapy core processes were used to understand the links between the “stuff” (focused arts methods) and reported shifts in how care workers think, feel and respond to their clients.

As explored in Chapter 3, active methods are valuable learning tools as they engage thinking, feeling and creativity (Jones, 2007). Being actively involved in the arts methods immerses participants in playful action that is not purely reliant on cognitive frameworks of learning. Being immersed and then coming out of the play and reflecting on the action, giving it meaning through words, triggers participants’ reflective capacity, resulting in new awareness. In bringing these elements together, participants can become more “creative, active in their own lives” (Jones, 2007, p. 121).

As part of the research process, at three specific points in the workshop program (day 1, day 3 and day 4) specific reflective activities, using arts active methods (Jones, 2008), commonly used for reflection on and in action (Dokter & Jones, 2008), were facilitated and participants were asked to think about their work with children/youth, and the challenges they face.

Participants were facilitated to create an individual artwork/body sculpture around the perception of self and relationship in their work with young people (Appendix T). Having three focus points enabled the researcher to use three different arts active methods to explore the underlying dramatherapy processes and how they might lead to shifts/new awareness in the relationship of the participant with the young person.

Table 10: Three focused arts methods

Activity	Purpose
Clay and box (image making)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use clay to create a 3 dimensional image of what the relationship looks like between youth worker and client • To explore themes, issues, feelings around the relationship
Objects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use objects to depict a situation from practice, for example, a moment from a session or the dynamics at work in a group • To play without any set agenda to see what themes and issues emerge in relation to the issues brought to the workshop
Body sculpts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It involves the use of the body to create a frozen picture/statue/sculpture of the relationship between youth worker and client • The body/bodies form a still image, like a 3-dimensional photograph • The use of bodies to express ideas, situations or relationships, working individually or in groups

Participants were asked in the final workshop, during the group evaluation of Firemaker, to create a physical representation of their journey on the program using objects and scarves. As part of this process, they were asked to place an object on the journey at the point that marked their stand out and most challenging moment of participating in the Program. They each then spoke to the objects they chose, describing their standout and challenging moments.

This data is presented in Table 11, showing individual participants' stand out and challenging moments, and whether or not these were one of the focused arts active methods.

Table 11: Stand out and most challenging moment

Group 1	Stand out	Focus Active Method?	Challenging	Focus Active Method?
Anthony	body sculpts	yes	having to leave early	no
Mark	clay and box	yes	first activity having no clear parameters	no
Liz	objects	yes	speaking for a young person	no
Emma	objects	yes	not having positive solutions for image of young person created	no
Amy	objects	yes	feeling overwhelmed at the beginning of first workshop	no
Group 2				
Michelle	opening activity	no	some people dropping out	no
Simon	staying focused when feeling tired	no	evaluation and talking	no
Toni	clay and objects	yes	finding one object to represent herself	no
Dave	clay and box	yes	when people dropped out and missed sessions	no
Angela	clay and box	yes	when people did not arrive on time for workshops	no
Jasper	sharing in the group	no	missing a session	no

The table above highlights that the three focused arts methods were mentioned as standout moments. The majority (nine out of eleven) of participants chose one of the focused arts active methods as a standout moment: this then became the focus. None of the participants mentioned the focused arts methods as a challenging moment in the Program. Moments that were experienced as challenging were varied and individual, seemingly more to do with the group process than the actual activities. For this

research, in order to understand the role of the underlying processes in change, I chose to focus on the arts active methods and what participants said about them.

As the literature shows, there are a number of core change processes operational in dramatherapy methods (Cassidy et al., 2015; Jones, 1996, 2010; Karkou & Sanderson, 2005). These processes include play, embodiment, role, dramatic projection, distancing and empathy, and active witnessing (Jones, 1996).

These processes are interconnected and often operate simultaneously within a specific arts active method, as illustrated in Table 12. It is through the underlying processes that new awarenesses may arise, which may enhance the care workers' capacity to respond to those they work with and so improve the quality of interaction.

Table 12: Focused arts methods and underlying processes

Arts-Focused Method	Dramatherapy Processes
Clay and box	Play and embodiment Dramatic projection Distancing/empathy Life drama/arts connection
Objects	Play Dramatic projection Distancing/empathy Life drama/arts connection
Body sculpts	Play Embodiment/role Active Witnessing Distancing/Empathy Life drama/arts connection

Participants chose different methods (clay and box—(4); object worlds—(4); body sculpts—(1), and in different groups people chose different methods (Group One—three chose object worlds; Group Two—three chose clay and box). The majority chose an arts-focused method, suggesting participation in these methods in particular was meaningful. Also, the majority of participants in each group chose the same arts method, signifying how they engaged was dependent on the context in which they worked and/or had been trained.

Participants in Group One chose object worlds (3/5), valuing the opportunity for personal expression and self-reflection, as noted by a participant:

we focus on other people's journeys and how to support them in their journey... I don't think in my life I have ever really looked at my life and journey like that before, it was very powerful to use symbols and items to describe your journey, I thought it was something I would never have done myself, it would take something like this for me to do it. (Emma, Group One)

Group Two chose clay and box (3/6) and valued the opportunity to consciously think about their role at work: "I got to really understand the kinds of journey I want to go on and where I am in that journey" (Toni, Group Two).

A table (Appendix S) was developed that included both group and individual data, summarising the experiences of the focused arts active methods, the underlying core dramatherapy processes, the way of knowing and the shifts in understanding/awareness of the youth worker's relationship with the young person, that occurred for participants. Some parts of the full table will be represented in this section.

I turn now to report on what participants said about their experiences of the focused arts methods linked to the underlying core dramatherapy processes of change,

and how some of their experiences might have led to a shift in their understanding/awareness of their relationship with the child.

Clay and Box Focused Arts Method

Cross Case Experiences

All participants in Group One created clay images with clear work role definitions and distinctions between themselves as a youth worker and the young person.

Only two participants of Group Two created a clay image with themselves in a clear work role position. All the others made clay images representing the theme of journey or development, with themselves somewhere on that journey. Sometimes children were represented, however there was generally no clear distinction between who the youth worker was and who was the child/young person. This is perhaps not surprising given the training and workplace contexts of the groups, however it did have impact on how participants experienced activities.

One participant in Group One chose this activity as his stand out moment, whereas three participants in Group Two noted this activity as their standout moment.

Experiences of participating in the clay activity for both groups were similar, in that most participants spoke about not knowing, using their hands to explore the clay and then coming out of the activity, being surprised by what they and others had created, reflecting on the experience and giving it meaning through words. However, the resulting shifts were slightly different for each group, as were the primacy of the underlying processes. Table 13 summarises each groups' experiences of the *clay and*

box activity, the reported shifts that occurred and the underlying dramatherapy processes.

Table 13: Clay activity: Summary of experiences, changes and underlying processes

Participants	Active Arts Method: Clay	Stand out	Experiences	Core dramatherapy processes	Shift in awareness of relationship with young person
Group 1	All images showed YW and organisation and young people: suggest work role defined	1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not knowing 2. Anxiety and enjoyment 3. Surprise when idea emerges 4. Noticing what hands were doing 5. Actions consistent with feelings 6. Time to explain 	<p>Primary:</p> <p>play embodiment</p> <p>Secondary:</p> <p>dramatic projection empathy/distancing</p>	<p>Take time to understand what the child needs</p> <p>Honouring/respecting what child makes</p> <p>Awareness of negative feelings towards child</p> <p>Heightened awareness around child's feelings</p>
Group 2	One image shows clear depiction of work. Others depict journey/moving to a place of growth e.g. tree: suggest work roles emerging.	3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not knowing 2. Focused and quiet, fun and relaxing 3. Surprise at outcome 4. Enjoyed getting hands dirty 5. Feelings of inadequacy 6. Seeing and looking 7. Questions and meaning making 	<p>Primary:</p> <p>dramatic projection distancing/empathy</p> <p>Secondary:</p> <p>play embodiment</p>	<p>No clear definition of role, child and worker role merged. Role is emerging as if on journey</p> <p>“you don't have to be perfect”</p> <p>Recognises role as one of learning</p>

The clay and box activity is specifically facilitated to engage participants in an embodied experience (see Table 12). In introducing the activity, participants were invited to close their eyes and with their hands explore the clay, focusing on the sensory experience, that is, texture, smell, taste, sound and density. They were invited to form it in many different ways, then to notice what they were feeling or what they saw when they opened their eyes. Their experiences have been organised thematically.

This experience was reported on by the majority of participants (8/11), as one of not knowing and uncertainty, through comments such as: “I walked into this activity without any ideas straight away” (Mark, Group One), “I didn’t know what the heck I was actually doing” (Simon, Group Two), “I wasn’t sure what I wanted to make, I just made it” (Dave, Group Two).

Anxiety and enjoyment.

My observations and participants’ feedback shows that the experience for some produced anxiety initially around not having immediate ideas:

when Kirsten said you can come up with an idea while you are doing it... and I always feel whenever someone says that... I’ve already got the idea down, I always want to have an answer or prep before you walk in. (Mark, Group One)

However, for other participants, the activity also produced excitement and relief when they were invited to create something without relying on thought: “this is lovely... creativity rather than be thinking about what we should be doing” (Emma, Group One). Not relying on thought was further described as “fun and relaxing” (Michelle, Group Two) and “meditating because of the silence” (Simon, Group Two). In Group Two, working in silence was experienced as different:

I felt the activity was really focused because it was silent. And whenever we facilitate or whenever we are in our activity there is no silence, it’s quite loud so that itself was good, it was different and then I was very focused on my own. (Angela, Group Two)

Focus on hands.

In the experience of not knowing and not being able to rely on thought, “I just let my hands do what they needed to do. I wasn’t thinking about it” (Toni, Group Two). It was the felt experience or knowing at a bodily level that was significant in initially engaging the body and then the mind in the process of discovery together

It’s very, very cool to do this... it’s interesting all that valuable... like the feeling when you started that whole process of like hold the clay feel it what are you thinking... funny I looked at it and didn’t know what it was but the brain was doing something, and the hands were doing something. (Anthony, Group One)

Through play and having to rely on their hands for the experience, they had to let go of usual expectations of how things are done, “I had to do that natural process without realising what I was thinking” (Mark, Group One). This implies that the usual process of relying on thought was felt to be unnatural. This idea of being natural was also mentioned in Group Two with reference to clay coming from the ground and being in touch with something natural:

good to touch something and play with it, you.... and everybody not knowing what they will create, but it is just good to feel something like clay, you know what I mean... this is from the ground it is not.... (Simon, Group Two)

Idea/image emerges.

Despite mixed feelings to begin with, most participants commented positively on the experience of using their hands and not knowing, that is, allowing the process and end product to emerge without too much thought: “So this was one of my first experiences when I really didn’t have an idea and it did come out, so that was quite cool and really definitely one of my highlights” (Mark, Group One). Participants reported

feelings of achievement once they had completed the activity and saw what they had created:

and then I finished and looked at X and then Y and it was WOW we've done something.... especially in the time frame because normally our timing things we tend to go over, so it was quite good we managed to complete something.
(Angela, Group Two)

For some participants in Group Two (3/6), some anxiety arose after the activity, about not being happy with their finished images and wanting to have the chance to fix them: "I still want to do something else... I still want to touch it" (Dave, Group Two), and "I want to go fix it. I realise like that as always we are more judgmental to ourselves than everybody else is" (Toni, Group Two).

Reflection on activity (making meaning with words).

Participants in both groups reported on the importance of reflecting on the activity, giving it meaning through words, and making links to their working lives "and then being given the opportunity to explain it, I really enjoyed that, it was meaningful" (Anthony, Group One), "the more you talk about it the more you get to know what people have done" (Dave, Group Two).

The overall experience can be summed up by the words from one participant. I have included the underlying processes in italics that will be explored in the next section.

the time we took to do especially what we were thinking inside to reflect into the model (*dramatic projection, distancing*), for me that was really good, the tactile stuff (*embodiment*), I really enjoyed that, the clay and moving of the

things and to form it in so many different ways (*play and embodiment*), and then being given the opportunity to explain it (*life arts connection, witnessing*) I really enjoyed that, it was meaningful. What stems from that for me is a bit more relaxed, a bit less prescriptive. (Anthony, Group One)

In summary participants reported overall similar experiences of this activity, involving not knowing, a focus on what the hands were doing and the opportunity to look at what they had created, make meaning and speak about it. This is perhaps not surprising given the nature of the activity and the Firemaker methodology of doing and reflecting.

However, how the participants in the groups engaged and spoke about the experience points to different underlying core processes. Although all the processes were evident in both groups' experiences, some were foregrounded in each group.

In the analysis of the clay activity, it emerged that Group One seemed to focus more on the embodied experience, using more feeling words, suggesting play and embodiment were important, and Group Two focused more on the experience of reflecting on that activity, using more seeing words, suggesting dramatic projection and distancing were important for this group. Witnessing was important for both. I looked for evidence of the core processes, by mapping what they said about their experiences and looking for words that related to the core processes. I turn now to examine the core processes that led to shifts/new awareness of the participants' relationship with their clients.

Dramatherapy Core Processes and Consequent Shifts in Awareness

Embodiment and play.

Embodiment involves feeling and responding to the primacy of feelings (Jones, 1996, 2010; Landy, 1994), beginning from a place within the body rather than the mind. Play was seen to be working alongside embodiment in this activity in a way that encouraged participants to be spontaneous and playful with the clay. Play and embodiment as core processes were evident across groups in what participants said about the experience, but foregrounded in Group One.

Words used to describe this experience were rooted in the body: “tossing” (Liz, Group One), “touching” (Emma, Group One), “form it in many different ways” (Anthony, Group One), “hold” (Liz, Group One), “feel” (Mark, Group One, Toni, Group Two). In exploring the clay some spoke about it as “play” (Liz, Group One) and having the opportunity to “form it in many different ways” (Anthony, Group One). They described it as “cool and valuable” (Anthony, Group One), “lovely” (Emma, Group One) and “interesting” (Liz, Group One).

These words also suggest play was important in developing a relationship with the clay, i.e. spontaneously responding to the clay without direct intention: “the clay and moving of the things and to form it in so many different ways” (Anthony). Embodiment allowed the participants to be playful in relationship with the clay without expectation and without knowing what would emerge: “It was good to play with clay” (Simon, Group Two).

New awareness: “it gives me the idea not to have the kid worked out”

(Mark, Group One)

The experience of not relying on thought and being open to multiple possibilities, allowing the final image to emerge without expectation, led Mark (Group One) to a new realisation about his interaction with young people: “it gives me the idea

not to have the kid worked out before I start meeting with them, like to let their ideas change and form and the way I react to let that happen naturally as well”.

The way people touched was important too, connecting them to feelings (conscious and unconscious) about the relationship with their clients, “I instantly became aware that I was touching in a very sensitive way which is a large part of my job being sensitive to what is going on for each kid... that was interesting when you said that” (Emma, Group One). “When I started I closed my eyes and started breaking the clay into bits... ties in with what I am trying to do in my work... all the bits and roles” (Amy, Group One).

Liz (Group One) spoke of how her movements reflected her current feelings at work, enjoying the space to express them, “when you said think about what your hands are doing and I was really like tossing, didn’t really have a hold on things which is very consistent with how I am feeling”.

Dave (Group Two) noted “I think at first I was thinking too hard you know, and I was having a play and then.... my first image was making pillars... and then they kept falling”—that felt like “failure”. Here embodiment put him in touch with vulnerable feelings of inadequacy and not being good enough.

New awareness: “You don’t have to be perfect.” (Michelle, Group Two)

Most participants in Group Two (4/6) commented on their feelings of wanting to “fix” (Toni) their images, feeling they were “unfinished” (Angela). Linking these feelings to their work with children and young people Michelle reported that “I think it’s more important being imperfect, like being imperfect is more perfect, like showing them that you don’t have to be perfect”.

Dramatic projection.

Dramatic projection works alongside embodiment. Connection to feelings happens in the ‘here and now’ and is considered important as it gives material to work on. For example, in the clay activity, feelings about themselves and/or the lives of those they work with may emerge in the moment, making conscious unacknowledged or unconscious feelings or thoughts, leading to new self-awareness. Through the arts process the unconscious material is brought to light or externalised.

This was evident in how participants’ relationship with the clay became a symbolic representation of their relationship with their client, whereby participants projected unconscious feelings into the clay:

Yeah, so this is how I feel and how I see myself in what I do... sometimes I feel like it’s a bit all over the place (*he shakes the box he is holding with his right hand*), other times I feel like I reflect on look there are a couple of kids playing with kids... or let’s create a hub (*box drops and he catches it*), because no one’s using that hub for what I thought it was meant for so let’s just start again (*shakes box again bit more aggressively*)... because that’s

what they want me to do (*he picks up some of balls that have fallen out and keeps them in his left hand*) just to see what was happening on the ground, create connections... and (*he looks into box*) sometimes it does feel like work I have done has fallen apart (*others laugh*)... (*throws balls into box*).

(Anthony, Group Two)

See figure below:



Figure 1: Anthony, Group One, Clay and Box

New awareness: “I wouldn’t want to work with kids like that in a harsh way...”

(Anthony, Group One)

Anthony became aware of his frustrating feelings of working in the system and how these feelings might be with children, acknowledging “the intention”, feelings he was not consciously aware of previously when he threw the balls representing the children back into his box:

when I was saying those little balls were the kids and then *(he gestures with his hands them falling out)* then when I threw the balls in I disconnected... I didn’t realise I was still in the zone, and I chucked it in and suddenly had a feeling of like *(he puts left hand to chest and pulls back)* I just threw a kid, I kicked a kid or something... it was so bizarre, really, really weird and the next balls I picked up I placed very carefully... I wouldn’t want to work with kids like that in harsh way... I put the meaning into what I was doing so the intention is there.

Distancing/empathy.

Dramatic projection helps in creating distance, so that participants can step back and look at what they have created, offering up potential new perspectives. For example in Group Two, the majority of the clay images had to do with the theme of journey. Through dramatic projection and distancing Toni commented on how valuable the activity was for her to “see where I am on the journey”—where she was going—“but I don’t think I am there yet. I am getting there, so yeah...” (Toni, Group Two).



Figure 2: Toni, Group Two, Clay and Box

Another participant commented that it helped him see the “bigger picture” (Jasper, Group Two) and that he liked creating it physically and seeing it as it depicted him in a “way that is true”, recognising his strengths and abilities. For most, however, distancing enabled them to see their role as one of learning: “yeah, I will never know how I get to that tree, whether it’s now or later on. Even though later on I might have a clearer picture but I reckon it’s still.... growing” (Toni, Group Two).



Figure 3: Dave, Group Two, Clay and Box

New awareness: “I am still in their position.” (Dave, Group Two)

In creating his clay image, Dave made pillars that kept falling. He also made clay figures of himself and the child as the same size, and commented “I think I just got reminded... that like the people I teach I am still in their position... it was really good to see we all had that theme you know... we all showed it in different ways”.

Life drama/arts connection and active witnessing

Having the reflective space after the activity was important for participants to make links between their experience of the arts activity and their work roles. The process of life drama/arts connection is closely connected to active witnessing in the clay activity, in that participants develop insights through what others see in their images too:

Um yeah then all those questions... you actually don't know what you did until people ask you. And then you have to make meaning out of it... just like X's dog... the more you talk about it the more you get to know what people have done. (Dave, Group Two)

Angela's comment pointed to the importance of moving out from an embodied and immersed experience of the art form into one of reflection. She said:

When the person creates, whatever they have made, the other person's input into that as well, I found that interesting. You don't know what you've done besides the physical things and other people come with something else, like the dog, like the height of my obstacles. (Angela, Group Two)

This process of witnessing each other was affirming, recognising they were all on a similar journey. "It was really good to see we all had that theme you know... we all showed it in different ways" (Dave, Group Two), "it was good to see everything was linked in one way or another" (Angela, Group Two).

Having his clay image witnessed by others and having the chance to speak about its meaning for him, left Anthony, Group One feeling "honoured and respected". This experience created an awareness around how he works with young people.

New awareness: “To honour and respect whatever they are coming up with.”

(Anthony, Group One)

Anthony felt honoured and respected in creating what he had made in clay and explained that it felt “meaningful” for him. A new awareness for him was in honouring and respecting whatever the child/young person makes in his afternoon homework club.

To really honour and respect whatever they are coming up with and to just acknowledge that it’s there and it’s come from them and not dismiss it.

That’s what I was doing before. “Oh yeah yeah, you done that, chuck it out” ... you know, like being really flippant about a kid.

In summary, for Group One participation in this activity had a direct influence on how some participants understood their role as youth workers. Through embodiment and play, participants engaged in a playful way with the clay, allowing them to explore and be open to new possibilities. In the context of work this was understood to influence how they might view their relationship with a young person as a process of discovery, allowing more flexibility and being less prescriptive. Dramatic projection and distancing through reflection heightened awareness around difficult feelings when working with young people. Being witness to oneself explaining what they had created, and having this witnessed by others, produced a new understanding of the importance of patience when working with young people, as well as the importance of honouring whatever a child/young person makes.

In Group Two embodiment and play put participants in touch with vulnerable feelings of not being good enough, feeling they still had a way to go, very much like being in the position of a child. However they all felt they still had much to learn, including from the child, giving the child agency and wisdom. They were not able at this stage to recognise this as a positive attribute; they saw it as a deficiency. With distancing they could look back on and recognise the similarities of their journeys that felt validating and reassuring.

Object Worlds Focused Arts Method

Cross Case Experiences

In Group One, three out of the five participants chose this activity as a standout moment for them. They noted that it gave them the opportunity to focus on themselves: “it was prior to this point when I was thinking about the workshops in terms of tools to use with young people in particular... it was at this workshop that I realised the tools are equally powerful for me” (Liz). Amy said it was at this point that she could acknowledge it was “ok” to use it for her “own wellbeing”.

Participants in Group Two reported that they enjoyed creating their object worlds and playing with the objects, however none of them chose this activity as their stand out moment.

Table 14: Objects: Summary of experiences, changes and underlying processes

Participants	Active Arts Method: Objects	Stand out	Experience	Core dramatherapy processes	Understanding of role
Group 1	Images showed participants 'worlds' both	3	1. Shifted focus to self-reflection	Primary: play dramatic projection	Shifted focus to self-reflection; personal expression of own story felt significant, time to honour child's

	personal and professional		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Choosing objects 3. Moving and playing with objects 4. making a pictorial representation, use of symbols to express rather than words 5. having time to explain, make meaning link to work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> active witnessing Secondary: distancing/empathy life /drama connection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> story and let them make meaning/ less prescriptive and more flexible More patient with child Awareness of importance of time to process, and youth workers needing space to express and reflect Personal expression of own story felt significant, empathy for child who can't express and whose story not understood
Group 2	Images include lots of objects with reference to family and cultural context	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choosing objects 2. Enjoyed playing with objects and playing with their meaning 3. Looking at their journey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary: play dramatic projection/ distancing active witnessing Secondary: life drama connection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearer about what journey looks like and where they are going Awareness of life journey multiple influences in her life and where she was on that Recognises power dynamics at work and feelings of helplessness and anger, awareness of need to try out different roles at work

The images across groups were very individual but all depicted aspects of both their personal and professional lives. The experience was reported on by the majority of participants as one of fun and playing—“I felt like a kid again, just playing. I just wanted to play again and get all of the stuff and play dinosaurs and stuff” (Dave, Group Two)—in which they had the opportunity to choose objects, move and place them as they wished and then talk about them.

In many respects the experience was similar to clay and box in this way, that is, actively doing and reflecting. However the experience of not knowing was not

commented on. Participants' experiences have been organised thematically, choosing objects, playing with objects and sharing object worlds.

Choosing objects.

Choosing objects was described by most as “fun” (Toni, Group Two; Dave, Group Two; Liz, Group One; Amy, Group One; Anthony, Group One; Simon, Group Two). Anthony, Group One, spoke of feeling excited when seeing “lots of stuff”, he said “when I saw that the first time... wow I think I am very creative so I could use all of it and then suddenly my brain’s going...”

Similarly, in Group Two, participants enjoyed having choice over materials:

uh I don't know I found it very... I enjoyed it a lot. You know choosing the fabric, choosing the... you had a choice of three big buckets to choose from and I had all these stuff there, and like you know I wanted to grab all of it.

(Dave, Group One, workshop two)

Some participants spent much time moving between the buckets and could not get enough of the objects, filling their ‘worlds’ full of “stuff” (Dave). Others chose only a few objects. “I wanted it to represent just one thing and not have lots of different objects and stuff” (Angela, Group Two). Simon (Group Two), spoke about choosing to create something simple:

when it came to find things that represent who I am actually there's just simple things and often I think about how simple I want it to be, so I made it very simple on how I want my life to be, you know very simple. (Simon, Group Two)

Toni (Group Two) found it very difficult to choose an object that represented her. She noted this as her most challenging moment in Firemaker because she comes from a diverse background; consequently she chose to put “everything” into her image:

I kind of put everything on there, from cars to the plastic flowers and animals and plastic army men, because everything in this world should be acknowledged and not just be like: ok because you’re not nature, I am not going to involve you in my path to seeking the truth.

Simon, Group Two, was amused about choosing objects to represent himself, stating,

I thought about how funny... you could choose anything and you could represent your characteristics of who you are, you could choose animals and objects, um very interesting because I never thought I would use animals to represent who I am.

Angela (Group Two), commented on not being consciously aware of why she chose a shell to represent herself: “I don’t know why I chose it but I feel it does represent me well”.

Mark (Group One), spoke about how the objects “inspired” him and felt easier than having to draw something:

I think like if you just have a blank sheet of paper and all the same coloured pens, I think it would be harder, cos then you have to create a thing... but when you have got objects that can inspire certain aspects, “ah that reminds me of this or this reminds me of that”. So I thought that was really good. I

think without the element thing I don't know what I would have done. You respond differently to objects.

Playing with objects.

In both groups participants spoke about the experience of playing with the objects they had chosen and having the freedom to choose where they placed them. Anthony described enjoying being able to “move things around”, which felt “meaningful”. It was in the choosing and moving of objects, as in childhood play, that participants engaged with the activity: “like you know those toy soldiers, they bring back childhood memory for me, there's lots of things that you are working with when you're using that, so all that's happening” reported Anthony, Group One, hinting at the complexities of play and a number of processes working at the same time.

Others described the process as “deep” (Emma, Anthony) and “subjective” (Mark). Amy (Group One), described the experience as “therapeutic”, “to sit there caught up in my own world and looking at it, as I was building it I would take something away and I would kind of reassess and ‘ah no that's probably not...’”. For Amy playing with the objects felt like an opportunity to “process everything” that had happened at work in the past 2 months and in her personal life; that felt “good” to do and was “interesting”.

In playing, participants could decide where the objects were placed and what they represented, what meaning they had. How participants played with the objects was also evident in what the researcher observed, for example Simon, Group Two, chose six objects, lay down on the carpet and played with a blue toy car he had chosen. He was very quiet throughout the activity, completely immersed in what he was doing (see Figure 4 below).



Figure 4: Simon, Group Two, playing in Object World

After they had completed their object worlds, some participants commented on the final product, “when you done it kind looks good as well. It’s not about who’s a talented artist” (Anthony, Group One). Liz (Group One), spoke about the experience as being:

Nice to have something you can start and finish with... there’s a sense of accomplishment, a sense of I did something today I created something... I’ve got something I can go home and say “I’ve done something”. When you tied to that it’s like a personal achievement.

Sharing with a partner.

Participants were invited to share what they had created with a partner, before they reflected on the activity experience with the whole group. Liz (Group One) reflected on how through talking she was able to “see” more: “you just kind of do it and when you explain it to someone you almost see more of it, you realise things are there as you are explaining”. For some participants, packing up the objects at the end felt difficult: “I think I enjoyed the process so much it was painful, I didn’t want to pack up” (Liz, Group One).

Dramatherapy Core Processes and Consequent Shifts in Awareness

Play was central to this activity, as evidenced above, as it is to the Firemaker methodology. However, dramatic projection, working alongside play, was the core underlying process that led to shifts in awareness. As noted by Anthony (Group One) “when you put the meaning into the objects and then you start putting words, there’s the meaning, the object and then there’s the words, there’s so much happening”. Distancing, empathy and witnessing are also present but to a lesser extent.

Dramatic projection.

Of all the underlying processes, dramatic projection in this activity was predominant for both groups. Like embodiment in clay, it is not surprising, given the nature of the activity, but it highlights how participants accessed new knowledge and awareness of both themselves and the other through dramatic projection. Dramatic projection led to distancing/perspective for some and empathy for others, which will be illustrated in excerpts below.

Through play and dramatic projection using the objects, participants were able to externalise inner conflicts, themes, situations or feelings. These “pictorial” (Mark,

Group One) representations gave most participants an opportunity to show what they were feeling, what was going on both personally and/or professionally and to name it for themselves. Mark said he liked that he got to:

Make something pictorial of your world rather than try and explain where you are at in your career. I think that's a really weird question. But the idea of what's your world like, was really nice because you could really be subjective about it.

The process was unexpected for some particularly participants in Group One "It was very deeper than I expected it to get... you put yourself a lot deeper in to that object than you assume you are going to at the beginning and I found myself as that object and even zoned in like kinda that world" (Emma, Group One). Anthony (Group One), commenting on how much was "brought out" by dramatic projection, said:

we have so much wisdom in us you know, people do, humans, so if it can be brought out in a way like we have just brought it out, it's quite... I was blown away by first of all how it's an instinct thing, an instinct wisdom in a way... it's deep but it just came.

Despite what participants described as a deep process, dramatic projection did not necessarily create a new awareness or understanding in their role as youth worker. For example, Mark, Group One, chose a soldier to represent himself and could acknowledge that his work felt "rough" being "on the ground" trying to do the right thing with "kids who don't want to do anything".



Figure 5: Mark, Group One, object world

Through dramatic projection, Mark was able to gain some distance on his work life and recognise his role as that of “an army man”. However he was not able to at this stage reflect on what being a soldier meant in terms of potentially holding aggressive feelings of hostility towards the young person, represented as the enemy. This was a perspective he held onto throughout Firemaker. It seemed to reinforce his role as army versus enemy and illustrated how difficult it was for Mark to imagine another way of being with the young person. He seemed to be on guard all the time.



Figure 6: Dave, Group Two, object world

Playing with the objects allowed Dave to project his feelings and conflicts into the objects, and play with reality and different roles he was conflicted about in his own life. It allowed him to imagine feeling more powerful and assertive in his relationship to his dominating director boss during the activity:

and yeah I think something really significant about toys is that you know they are toys, they are not real I know but um it's like... I had a shark and then there was a small whale. I like big animals, small and... it made the whole thing global. I guess that sense of equality as well, like about toys. You choose whose boss and that yeah... I was the starfish and the starfish was bigger than the human soldiers so yeah I think I just had a lot of fun. (Dave, Group Two)

Dramatic projection allowed Dave to express his hostile feelings towards his boss and subsequent feelings of powerlessness in relationship to this older white male, without being overwhelmed by them. Dramatic projection created distancing, allowing him to recognise those feelings but also to begin to think about how to address them and his boss. He recognised the power he had as a starfish and that he did not have to be a soldier in order to assert his needs, commenting at the end “no matter how much you don’t know you still have all the strength in the world”.

While Anthony, Group One, did not note the object world as being his stand out moment, he commented on the power of dramatic projection he experienced in the clay activity that was heightened through the use of objects.

I will never forget the attachment to things. Putting your mind into something and then having it packed up removed and put away... all these different things you can do, it’s like quite amazing what can be stuck in there and you bring that out and it has a life outside of your brain, transformed certain parts and feeling that’s why it’s such a responsibility to work with this stuff... I definitely think it is very powerful.

New awareness: When children play, objects and images seen as extension of self

Anthony's experience of the objects brought about a difference in his attitude to his own young children's play with objects, particularly around packing up and keeping objects safe. He said he was "more patient with them". Having experienced something powerful with objects himself he recognised that for children it might be the same and that he needed to give more acknowledgement to the significance of the objects they played with in their lives:

so even if they are exploring a tea set and also in my own life, personal life, I'm having a really strong value and appreciation of creativity and expression and so... putting boundaries... e.g. dinner time kids, I would usually chuck it out (*whatever they had been making or playing with before dinner*)... now everything is packed away carefully and held.... very powerful as well and hopefully for kids as well.

While it was a powerful experience for Anthony he recognised that facilitating these activities need to be done safely, with thought and skill.

Empathy.

Dramatic projection for Emma (Group One) enabled her to "feel" what she was "talking about" because she "did it in another way than I normally do". This activity led her to the realisation that much of her own personal journey of moving to Australia had been silenced because the feelings were very difficult to talk about:

I felt torn between two places which is very much my life. But putting that down and making an image out of it was really powerful and that has stuck with me personally. Maybe because it is something I torment with all the time but don't really address that often. Like when people ask you why you here etc... It's like you are really off and don't put too much thought or feeling into it... It can be sad when you talk about home and the things you sacrifice to live in another country but I think you don't sometimes feel what you talking about...



Figure 7: Emma, Group One, object world

Emma spoke of how “the images were way more powerful than my words” and that when she “explained to people they could relate to it”. While the activity was powerful for her own personal expression, it also made her think that it would “be a

powerful tool to use with young people”. By participating in this activity dramatic projection brought about both distancing and empathy for Emma. She became more aware of how difficult it must be for many young people she works with to speak about their difficult feelings:

New awareness: “trying to find your place is a huge thing”

Through the activity Emma was brought closer to her clients and had a felt experience of the importance of being able to express what she was feeling, and to be heard, in order to make a connection.

Being able to recognise that and homesickness can be as consuming as anything, and any other kind of mental illness or depression and related things. Young people who are experiencing this and don’t even speak the same language. I can’t imagine how that must feel. Trying to find your place is a huge thing, so even if I explain that activity to a client I think it might be something they could do.

Active witnessing.

Participants described “seeing” their own images as enabling self-awareness. Dave, Group Two, commented that “no matter how much” he felt he still didn’t “know” he recognised in his object world the “strength” he still had.

Witnessing each other’s images and sharing them with a partner enabled a new awareness of each other:

It was very much deeper than I expected it to get and you were brought into other people's worlds as well and you sat down and talked with them.... it gave you a really good understanding of where each other is at really. (Emma, Group One)

Emma noted that the activity left her feeling "frustrated" about her life and that "it was good to have others take it in", not leaving her to experience her difficult feelings on her own.

In Group Two, it was reassuring for some participants to see that others were experiencing similar difficulties in their lives, for example Dave said it was good to see that "other people don't know where they are".

In summary, Group One dramatic projection allowed for the expression of personal difficulties and conflicts that were highlighted by distancing. Participants welcomed the opportunity to self-reflect and work with objects without having or rely on words. Dramatic projection also created empathy for the young person who carries stories with them often unheard and unexpressed. Lastly, like the clay activity, working with objects heightened an awareness of what young people make and how they may play with objects, projecting parts of themselves into them. It opened up awareness around respecting and honouring what children make, as well as the power of the arts.

For participants in Group Two, through dramatic projection and distancing, participants were able to create a picture of their lives, becoming more aware of what their journey looked like, where they were in their lives. Participants also had the opportunity to play with roles through the objects and to imagine a different reality

Body Sculpture Focused Arts Method

Cross Case Experiences

The body sculpt activity was specifically facilitated to engage participants in an embodied experience to explore, through role, the relationship between worker and child. Participants were asked to create three body sculptures of what their relationship looked like 1) now, 2) three months ago, and 3) what they would like it to look like. Participants chose two others in the group (one to be themselves and the other the young person) and directed them to take up a bodily position and hold it.

Once in position the researcher asked each person in role to complete the sentence “I feel...”; essentially an opportunity to reflect while in action. The person directing/sculpting became a witness, along with the other group members, and could offer comment afterwards. It was purposefully designed to create distance so the youth worker could see themselves in relation to the young person. It was also an opportunity for the researcher to evaluate if there was any new thinking in the participants’ understanding of their roles as youth worker since the start of the Firemaker Program, three months prior.

All participants in Group One created body sculptures with very clear role distinctions between worker and child, as they had done in the clay activity. Four out of five participants placed worker and child at the same level, with one participant using a chair for the youth worker to stand on for all three sculptures, placing the youth worker in a “precarious” (Liz) position.

This activity was a standout moment for only one participant, who commented that the process of reflecting “where you are at with work, the role plays, that was very

powerful” (Anthony, Group One). He went on to say that he felt they could have been “pushed” further by me being more “directive in the short space of time” because I was “reliant” on them “to come up with it a lot of the time”.

Even though only one participant noted it as his stand out, all participants in Group One mentioned it in their follow up interviews as having an impact on them. There was some laughter during the activity but generally a seriousness about the way they engaged, taking their time to think through role positions, depicting them carefully, finding ways to make a felt “connection” (Amy) between the youth worker and child, and then discussing their roles: “I want the young person to be looking at me and engaging with me” (Liz, in role as Anthony). This activity took longer than expected with Group One but it felt to the researcher like a significant group process in that it facilitated rich discussion and thinking around their roles as youth workers. Anthony commented:

When we had opportunity to direct and do all that stuff... I felt it was very powerful for me. That feeling of having it validated and reflected back and other people really taking time to think and share their views on the work, style, the situation itself and the transition... so for me that was very powerful, a significant moment. It helped me see things a little bit differently.
(Anthony, Group One)

Participants in Group Two seemed tired during this workshop and no one mentioned the body sculpture activity as a stand out moment for them. Despite their tiredness, there was much laughter and playful energy once they were actively involved and changing positions and roles. One participant noted, “I was falling asleep earlier, so good to get back into my body” (Dave, Group Two). The body sculpture activity did

not take as long as it had in Group One and it wasn't always clear on first observation who the worker and who the child was. This group had no difficulty in taking up the role/position of the child, and for most participants in the worker role, they looked and felt just like the child. This group experimented with different levels, playing with positioning the youth worker at a different level to the child, in trying to "find the balance" (Toni). Their sculptures seemed to reinforce for them the importance of being able to have fun with children in order to connect with them, as well as their underlying anxiety around the child potentially not liking them:

I felt that I wasn't sure if the child was going to like me. So at the start I felt yeah we're connecting we're bonding really well and the child sees me for who I really am, I am playful and I am energetic... (Angela in role as Dave)

Toni (Group Two) commented that the activity had made her aware of "how I want to go forward", and that she realised she had previously been in a "web" without knowing it. It was through the body sculpture activity that she came to know it, suggesting that this new knowing came through her body and in sharing it with others:

and I think that moment only came to realisation after doing all these workshops and knowing what that web is and actually kind of I guess portraying it and embodying it and I guess sharing it with other people, I'm a lot more aware of what it is now. And knowing what it is now is like being able to share it in the right way and knowing it, has enabled me to choose my actions a lot more appropriately and my words.

Across the groups, participants commented on four aspects of the experience, as evidenced in the excerpts above: 1) "opportunity to direct" (Anthony) or "portray" (Toni) the "the work, style, the situation itself and the transition" (Anthony); 2)

“embodying” (Toni) roles; 3) “sharing” (Toni) with the others in the group “that feeling of having it validated and reflected back and other people really taking time to think and share their views” (Anthony); resulting in 4) “seeing things differently” (Anthony) and “knowing it” (Toni).

Seeing things differently for some also meant feeling things differently as noted by Emma; “I got to see how the young person feels”. What follows are these aspects of the experience organised thematically and then a discussion of the core underlying processes (Table 15).

Table 15: Body sculpture activity: Summary of experiences, changes and underlying processes

Participants	Active Arts Method	Stand out	Experiences	Core dramatherapy processes	Shift in awareness of relationship with young person
Group 1	Clear distinctions in role and positioning and levels	1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Directing, use body language to tell the story 2. Put into shoes of young person, feeling vulnerable 3. Felt transparent 4. Felt validated and affirming to see self in work 5. Valuable learning to see others' style of work and give feedback 6. Powerful process watching others, feeling for both vulnerable young person and YW 	embodiment and role active witnessing empathy	Reminded of what young person feels like/not about what I want Validation of role Awareness of how precarious youth worker role can be Awareness of how in rush to help, YW anxiety gets in way of thinking about the young person Awareness of vulnerability of young person, role as YW felt affirmed
Group 2	Worker and child positions often interchangeable		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Uncertainty in role, feeling awkward 2. Focus on body, levels and balance 	embodiment/Role active Witnessing distancing	Defining identity emerging and changing, Learn from each other Awareness has much to learn from the child,

	Roles not clearly defined		<p>3. Exploring what role is, not rigidly defined</p> <p>4. Trying to find right balance in positions, uncertainty around role and power</p> <p>5. Liked seeing others represent him</p>		<p>importance of enjoyment for her and child</p> <p>Role feels uncertain and uncomfortable</p> <p>Who am I in relationship to child? Not teacher, not friend, awareness of need for balance</p> <p>More aware of power dynamics in relationship</p> <p>Awareness of still trying out ways of being with the child</p>
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Sculpting: Directing others and portraying the relationship.

Participants in both groups spoke about enjoying the opportunity to “direct” (Anthony, Group One) and “portray” (Dave, Group Two) the worker/child relationship and having choice in how bodies were sculpted like a director of a play.

Having the opportunity to portray the relationship in three different ways, using “body language to tell the story of the first meeting with our clients and how we hoped our future with that client would look” (Emma, Group One), gave participants space to play with how they imagined the relationship looked like in the present, three months ago and how they would like it to be. Participants also chose who they wanted to represent themselves and the child. In analysing how the relationships were portrayed and what participants said in role and afterwards four themes emerged. They are: relationship as dynamic, importance of connection, power and balance.

Relationship as dynamic.

In presenting their body sculptures, all participants showed there had been some change in terms of how they saw their relationships with young people from three months prior. This was evidenced in how bodies were sculpted and placed in relation to

each other (see Figures 8 and 9), and in what some participants said in role and afterwards, for example, “I think it is really good that none of us sat there and thought we were the same as three months ago. Everyone indicated some kind of progress” (Liz, Group One).

In facilitating this activity I did not suggest there needed to be any change. My invitation after creating the relationship in the NOW was to think back to three months ago and see if it looked any different. Michelle (Group Two) at first said there was no difference, but then she changed her mind:

like at first when you said what would I change, I was like ahh nothing, but then I actually looked at you guys and I was like, actually something did need to shift so there is more of a connection... and even like understanding both ways... like myself I see myself as learning from the kids, like I have learnt so much from them, and three months ago I was more unsure but still like trying to learn

This excerpt highlights the dynamic nature of relationship and importance of play and imagination to see other possibilities.

Connection.

Across groups all participants were concerned about what the quality of “connection” (Michelle, Group Two) between the worker and child looked and felt like. In terms of portraying it, connection was shown differently through how bodies were placed in relation to each other, through touch, eye contact between worker and child, and the use of levels (standing, sitting, lying down).

In role as the worker 9/11 participants referred to “connection” (engagement, together, partnership) and the uncertainty “frustration” (Liz as Anthony), anxiety and effort involved in trying to make that connection with the child (see sub theme of uncertainty below). For example: “I would like this young person to be looking at me and engaging with me and they’re off in the distance” (Liz as Anthony-worker-now). However, when a connection was felt it was described as “nice” (Liz as Anthony-worker-future), “heroic” (Anthony as Mark-worker-future), “excited” (Toni as Michelle-worker-future), “proud” (Simon as Jasper-worker-future). Anthony, Group One, commented on the felt connection as being a “moment”, again implying the dynamic nature of relationship:

That moment is about, like being at peace with the relationship in a way so there is no move to block anything... it doesn’t mean it’s all rosy, it doesn’t have to be rosy, if you can share a chair that’s a really good sign.

In directing and playing with what the relationship looked like, participants were able to acknowledge some of the difficulties of finding a connection and reaching the child at their level:

They portrayed it perfectly, the first one was me acknowledging and noticing the child as playing around... and trying to get to their level but not there yet. The second one is I am also busy with something else while they just do whatever they do... third one I wanted it to be at their level... just both be connected somehow.... (Angela, Group Two)

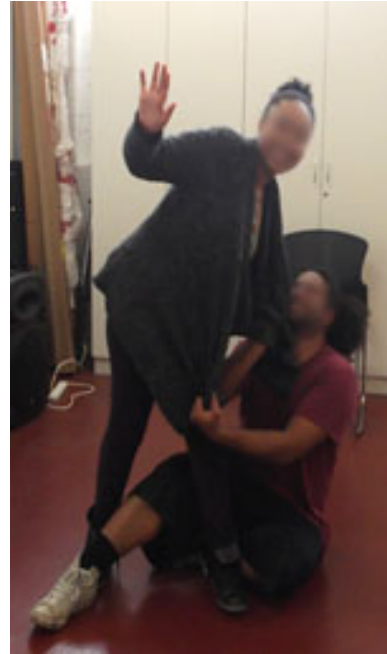
Figure 8: Angela's sculptures: Now, then and hope for future A=worker B=child



Now:

Worker: I feel entangled

Child: I feel desperate



Then:

Worker: I feel together

Child: I feel very, very happy



Future:

Worker: I feel strange

Child: I feel playful

In role as the child 5/11 participants referred to feeling connected in the last sculpture of Future: "I feel like I am about to do a dance" (Jasper as Toni-child-future).

However, while the task of the youth workers was to try and make a connection with the child, this was not always felt by the child, and sometimes experienced as an expectation: “It’s expected of you to go up, but I really didn’t want to, but I did have a connection, so I felt supported to do so but still I felt hesitant to take that step” (Amy as Mark-child). Amy later commented that what she took from this activity was “the importance of the connection and each relationship is different”.

Power and balance.

This emerged as a theme particularly in Group Two. This group’s sculptures depicted similar themes around wanting to depict the relationship as equal, at the same level. Michelle said: “I wanted to show that kind of meeting them at their level”. Being on different levels implied a power imbalance:

I have to ensure that equal balance between them and me. And I am a bit reluctant when it’s like why am I standing up when I want to be sitting down with them. But I have to stand up because I am presenting to them and I am teaching them these things but yeah.... (Toni, Group Two)

In creating their body sculptures, most participants were able to explore the conflict inherent in this essentially unequal power relationship: “between them and me... that literal imbalance that we have, we can’t escape, it’s always there but we need to accept then how can we still be open with that imbalance” (Toni, Group Two).

Mark, Group One, was the only participant to use a chair to place the youth worker on for all three of his sculptures. In his first sculpture he placed the youth worker precariously on the edge of a chair trying “to pull the young person up”. The group perceived this to be dangerous to both him and the young person. Mark felt he had been misunderstood as he said he was trying to show the difference in their life

situations, that is, he has a home, education and is not on drugs, while the young person is opposite, an ‘other’. Amy, who took on the role of the child, commented afterwards that she wanted the worker to:

Stand next to me, to have that level. I want you to be here with me right now. And the whole cranking neck thing does my head in, physically and also when working with colleagues. It’s sometimes disheartening to have to crank your neck to someone if you want them to be able to be on your level.

Mark’s sculptures were powerful in that they highlighted the importance of self-care in this work, but also the anxiety and internal pressure of the youth worker to do the ‘right thing’ and find a solution for the child.

Figure 9: Mark’s sculptures: Now, then and hope for future A=worker B=child



Now:

Worker: I feel in this particular position that I have latched on, but haven’t done any of the heavy lifting yet. Its neutral but safe, there’s a connection.

Child: I feel like my bum’s really cold... also I feel like I am about to be saved but don’t know what’s going to happen.



Then:

Worker: I am the target but I need a miracle here... anticipation and hope for engagement.

Child: I feel apprehensive, intrigued and still hesitant, cold bum, still stuck to here... I feel I could be doing so much more than sitting on the ground.



Future:

Worker: I feel heroic...this is starting to work. Something is coming back from the hand to connect.... feeling more confident, form the two hand hold like something is happening, still anticipatory rather than working alongside by side but more hopeful.

Child: I feel like I am going up, secure, a bit intimidating if it was really this high that would intimidate me.

The body sculptures not only gave participants the chance to portray the relationship and provide comment on what they saw but also to feel what it was like to

take up the embodied position of worker and child and feel what it was like to assume the given role, giving opportunity to deepen insights and “knowing” (Dave, Group Two).

Being sculpted: Embodying the relationship through role.

Simon (Group Two) reflected on the activity saying: “I liked being sculpted and interpreting, physicalising what she’s saying. Like look surprised or confused. I liked playing that and trying to feel it and become it”. Taking up the role and position and embodying the worker or child, and speaking spontaneously what they were feeling in the moment, participants’ responses were mostly rooted in the body, for example: “I feel comfortable”, anxious, struggling, “not at ease”, frustrated, connected, happy.

Participants in Group Two were quick to take up roles, using short one-to-three word responses to “I feel....” when in position. For example: “I feel excited and helpful” (Michelle as Toni-worker-now) and “I feel watched” (Angela as Simon-child-then). (See Appendix Q for all responses in role). Transitions between sculptures were quick too with some slight variation in body positions (see Figure 8).

Participants in Group One took longer to take up roles and their answers to “I feel....” were made up of longer sentences, seemingly capturing more nuanced and complex relationship dynamics. For example: “I feel like I am trying... it’s kind of hard to sit here, not sure what I am looking at but really want the young person to see it... you MUST see it” (Liz as Emma-worker-now) and “I feel like I am trying to avoid the situation. I don’t feel like I definitely don’t want to hang out with you, but I kind of feel like I am bored yeah...” (Mark as Anthony-child-then). Transitions in this group were slightly longer and there was more variation in how bodies were positioned than in Group Two.

The embodied experience involved movement and change, sometimes comfortable: “this is nice, we are sharing something new” (Liz as Anthony-worker-future) and sometimes uncomfortable: “I feel slightly disturbed” (Dave as Simon-worker-future). This dynamic, moving from now, feeling comfortable, to then, feeling unsure, to the future, feeling hopeful, reinforced the theme of relationship as dynamic.

I felt that I wasn't sure if the child was going to like me. So at the start I felt yeah we're connecting we're bonding really well, and the child sees me for who I really am, I am playful and I am energetic... then the second one that's where I felt unsure back four months ago, not sure if this kid will like me, are we doing the right thing? maybe... and then at the end it was I just need to keep doing what I am doing and then I will get that resolved. (Angela as Dave, Group Two, reflecting on playing the role of worker)

Not all sculptures necessarily followed a predictable progression from challenging to hopeful. One remained the same, one ended up in a more challenging position of “strange” (Dave as Angela-child-future). There were also examples of sculptures that held ambiguous positioning for all three, for example: *Now*: “I feel like I am trying, it's kind of hard to sit here, not sure what I am looking at but I really want the young person to see it... you MUST see it”, *Then*: “I feel frustrated... I am just here... I want your attention”, *Future*: “She can see it... YAY.... I feel happy but there is a little bit of 'nooo she's going'” (Liz as Emma-worker).

In the analysis of what participants said while in role and afterwards, reflecting on the body sculptures, three themes emerged: uncertainty, vulnerability and hope.

Uncertainty and discomfort.

In all sculptures, across both groups, for both worker (10/11) and child (10/11) at some point there was uncertainty. For many it was in the second sculpture of then: “I don’t know what to do but I know I should be here” (Michelle as Toni-worker-then) and “This is a new person, I feel like I don’t know this person” (Jasper as Toni-child-then).

I was supposed to be in a role for the kids to look up to, but still I was a bit unsure, like I know I’m meant to be here. You know I am supposed to be this role standing and... but still a bit unsure. Am I telling you the right thing?

Am I doing the right thing for you to be looking up to me and seeing me.

(Michelle, reflecting on playing the worker)

For one participant in Group One there was uncertainty in all three sculptures for both worker and child. And for one participant in Group Two there was no uncertainty in either worker or child. Michelle (Group Two), reflecting on the activity, said: “I think it’s good the children see us uncomfortable sometimes, because it’s only normal and it allows them to know that it’s ok to be uncomfortable sometimes and feel out of place and make a mistake”.

Vulnerability.

Some participants, particularly in Group One, were put in touch with feeling vulnerable, particularly as the child: “It was good to reaffirm what we do as workers and also to feel vulnerable as a young person” (Amy, Group One).

In role as the child, sitting on the floor “waiting to be saved”, Amy spoke of her “cold bum” expressing her vulnerability. She later reported that “the cold bum was like a metaphor... you are stuck there and its heavy and you are just sitting there stuck...”.

Amy went on to report that once the worker in role got physically closer to her she began to feel less vulnerable; “once you get that connection you get that feeling”.

Vulnerability was also experienced in the role as the worker. Anthony as Mark standing on the chair (Figure 9), felt like he was a “target but I need a miracle here” to do the “heavy lifting”. Mark put the worker on a chair in a “precarious” (Liz) position representing the potential that “there’s danger in it for him as well as for this young person on the floor”.

Seeing and sharing sculptures.

All participants got to see the sculptures they made as well as each other’s, offering feedback and comment. Having the opportunity to see themselves (in role by a colleague) in their work, share it with others, and see others in their work, was noted as important for most participants, giving them the opportunity to “think and share their views on the work, style, the situation itself and the transition” (Anthony, Group One). This left many feeling “validated” and “reaffirmed” (Amy, Group One), which felt good as it reminded them of how important the work they do is, enabling them to “see things a little bit differently” (Anthony, Group One), especially from the young person’s perspective:

I found it really interesting to find out how the person representing the client felt during the freeze frame and it helped me to see things from their perspective, which I think is really important for us as youth workers to be able to do. (Emma, Group One)

In seeing and sharing, some participants felt it was “a really kind of cool bonding exercise” (Mark, Group One) in which they had “to work together” but also “talk about something that is personal” with work colleagues.

However, seeing and sharing also brought about mixed feelings about being “transparent” during the activity, and opening oneself up to criticism:

you see how I work you know... and that's not to say we are all doing it right. We can learn a lot from each other, and that's what also this exercise helps me work through as well, seeing other people's work styles and just that thing about self-awareness and what it would be like.... (Anthony, Group One)

In summary, participants spoke about the experience of the body sculpture activity as mostly "reaffirming what we do is pretty good" (Amy, Group One). Particularly in youth work that, as Anthony (Group One) commented, "was a moment of validation in a way that you really (laughs) don't get much in this kind of work". Emma spoke about relating to all of the body sculptures:

I could relate to all the role plays. I feel like everyone had the same mission really no matter how far away from achieving their goal, there was the same thing that was driving them with that young person. That everyone had hope because of the future. (Emma, Group One)

In this activity participants' experiences and what they said about them correlate very closely with core dramatherapy underlying processes involved in the activity: 1) dramatic projection (portraying), 2) embodiment and role (embodying), 3) active witnessing (sharing and seeing), and 4) distancing and empathy. While these processes were evident for all participants, at a group level, how participants spoke about the experience revealed certain core processes as significant for that group. For example the majority of participants in Group One spoke about taking on a role focussing on what it felt like in role, and the ensuing empathy. The majority of participants in Group Two spoke about the experience of looking at the sculptures in terms of power balance (witnessing and distancing).

Dramatherapy Core Processes and Consequent Shifts in Awareness

As in the other focused arts activities of this study, these processes happened simultaneously and it is difficult to separate these out completely as they did not happen in a linear way. They worked together to facilitate new awareness in participants. While data has been presented, to follow I highlight some of the core processes and resulting new awareness in relating to a child, as reported by the participants.

Embodiment and role.

The spontaneous nature of the activity and responding in the here and now to what one feels in the body, points to the underlying process of embodiment and role. As evidenced in the sections above, “portraying” and “embodying” (Dave, Group Two) was noted as important to the participants. While participants gave a spontaneous verbal response to their bodily experience in role, the process uncovered new awareness/ insights about themselves in relationship with the young person. Like clay, the primacy of embodiment originating in bodily experience, in that participants are actively involved in it, is core and the other processes come afterwards. In this regard embodiment was important to all participants, however there were other core processes at play at a group level.

As discussed previously, participants in Group One took longer to decide on positions and take up roles. Once in role, their sentences were fairly long and nuanced, often capturing mixed or conflicted feelings. Being in role for this group seemed to put them in touch with the young person’s feelings, facilitating empathy, and participants commented on this (see below). In contrast, participants in Group Two were quick to take up roles, often feeling identified with the young person. Active witnessing brought about perspective through distancing.

Role and empathy.

Being in role facilitated empathy for some participants, being brought closer to both child and worker emotionally. This perspective was deepened through embodiment when the youth worker took up the position of the young person and put them in touch with their potential vulnerable feelings: “I like putting myself in the shoes of the young person because it’s always great to remind ourselves of what they might be thinking and feeling” (Liz, Group One).

Amy, Group One, who played the young person in Mark’s sculptures (see Figure 9), in role commented that “I feel like my bum’s really cold... also I feel like I am about to be saved and I don’t know what is going to happen” (now).

In reflection she said, “I thought the cold bum was like a metaphor... you’re stuck there and it’s heavy and you are just sitting there and stuck...” then went on to speak about how when his arm touched her it “wasn’t as unsettling as when I was further away”: “it was a bit intimidating but also once you get that connection you get that feeling”. Asked by the researcher if she wanted to get up onto the chair Amy replied “Not really. It was like it was expected of you to go up but I really didn’t want to...” Researcher: “what would you want to do in that position?”

Amy:

Oh I wanted him (youth worker) to stand next to me, to have that level... I admire this guy ooo aaah, but I want you to be here with me right now. And the whole cranking neck thing does my head in, physically and also when working with colleagues its sometimes disheartening to have to crank your neck to someone if you want them to be able to be on your level.

For Amy later reflecting on this activity she said she had become “more mindful of other people” in that she had gained a “different kind of awareness around how every engagement with a young person has the potential to be meaningful”. She said she always knew they mattered but something was different in that she was “more aware of how I respond or how I react and engage with a young person”. She felt she was more “in touch with the young person’s vulnerability”.

New awareness: Being more present, responding on their level

Amy found that as a worker she was:

Being more present and having more meaningful engagements, because I am responding on their level... I am getting better at relationships with the kids and am having fun at playground which is the most important thing, getting more comfortable with being able to have more fun with the job.

She commented that through the body sculpture activity she realised just to have someone alongside the young person was the beginning of a connection.

like I have found that even just sitting next to a young person... and at a table... and I just sit down and they’re sitting there being quiet and I sat down and started drawing and she started drawing, and another person came and started drawing and we all sat there quietly just drawing and then through pictures you talk... “aaah, what have you got here”... before I might have been a bit scared to do it before.

Active witnessing of self and others.

Active witnessing in this activity was of particular importance, as it involved a number of complex processes: active witnessing of self in action (played by someone else); witnessing self in role (“I feel...”); and witnessing other participants’ sculptures and others style of work. As mentioned earlier, seeing and sharing their sculptures left participants feeling “reaffirmed and validated”. In witnessing, some participants were brought closer to experiences of the youth worker and the child, and for others it provided distance to reflect on their roles.

Group One witnessing brought about empathy in some, and in Group Two it brought distancing, as the following sections show.

Active witnessing and empathy.

As the body sculpture vignette illustrates, in Group One, Mark’s sculpture affected other group members through witnessing and role/embodiment. “So when we did the freeze frame activity, I found the way they felt from how we positioned them very interesting” (Emma). In taking up his role, participants offered Mark valuable insights, but he was not able to see or feel what they had seen and felt (i.e. the “precarious” positioning of the worker on the chair and the “cold bum” of the young person). He found it difficult to see himself in action and in relationship with the young person, he seemed to only see the young person as “not motivated to change”, “at the end of the day it is a tug of war. I will give you the support to come up but you have to choose to come up” (Mark). Through witnessing himself in action, he was able to see what was happening in his work context, but it seemed to keep him distant emotionally. Further work with Mark might have meant finding ways to engage him more in embodied role work himself where he might get to feel what it was like for the young person.

However for the rest of the group, witnessing Mark's sculptures brought about empathy. Emma noted that witnessing Mark's sculptures made her feel for the worker and become aware of the dual "pressure" that both youth worker and young person feel in their first meeting, and that in the youth worker's haste to provide a solution, they forget to take into account the fact the young person may be feeling "intimidated or pressurised on the ground".

It made me think about how our clients may feel, how we go in with certain expectations and we also go in feeling a bit of pressure in the first meeting as well. It is obvious, with all our willingness and what we are trying to do with the young people that we work with, that sometimes it's good to take a step back and think about how they may feel in those first encounters (Emma).

New awareness: “I am stranger, I don’t expect you to trust me first off.”

Witnessing Mark’s sculptures facilitated a new awareness in Emma of the pressure she put on herself in her initial meeting with young people, and it reminded her to “take things slowly”:

In the first meeting I’m always conscious of how I’m presenting to them, so a lot of time I don’t take in how they are presenting to me. So I think now when I meet people, I am going to get that down pat, make it so it’s easy for myself and not over thinking. Take time to assess what young people are thinking and feeling. I think just naming that and saying I am a stranger and don’t expect you trust me first off. You know... naming it, saying things they might be feeling. And me as a young person I appreciate honesty... so for them to tell me things that have happened in their life that are full on. It has reminded me to take things slow maybe.

In summary, through witnessing each other’s work participants felt “reaffirmed and validated”. Witnessing also meant they were made transparent in front of each other and themselves and this initially brought up anxious feelings around doing the right or wrong thing. However, witnessing also enabled empathy in that participants could relate to the anxious feelings of the youth worker and the young person. Having input and feedback from peers was also powerful in that it deepened understanding, which was both helpful and challenging, although this was not always the case, such as in Mark’s sculptures.

Through embodying the role of the young person, it put the worker in touch with the young person's vulnerable feelings, creating further empathy. They recognised that in their willingness to help, and their own anxiety to do the right thing, they often forget the child might be feeling as anxious as them if not more. Through witnessing each other's sculptures, many could also recognise the precariousness of their work roles and the need to take care.

Active witnessing and distancing.

Group Two took up roles spontaneously and very quickly and had very short one to three word responses to "I feel...". They identified a straightforward trajectory with simple feeling words; happy, joyful, etc. Being in role, while playful and wanting to engage with the child in a playful way, for some felt at times confusing and "entangled", in that they, and those watching, were not quite sure of their roles. Insights arose after embodiment, when they could look at what they had created: "it's like that physical thing where you're getting outside of you so you can look at it" (Michelle, Group Two). Dave commented that "there was a self-conscious thing realising how I did things... it was more about finding out more about me I guess".

Witnessing in Group Two brought about distancing for participants, who spoke about "entangled" (Toni) relationships with children: "they are confused as to who I am or why you are here" (Jasper). Distancing brought about self-awareness; for example, Simon commented after witnessing himself being played by Jasper "my body changes a lot", acknowledging that he was "still not very comfortable" working with children.

Michelle at first thought nothing needed to change in her sculpture, but on witnessing said:

I actually looked at you guys and I was like, actually something did need to shift so there is more of a connection... and even like understanding both ways.... like myself I see myself as learning from the kids, like I have learnt so much from them, and three months ago I was more unsure but still like trying to learn like I really wanted to know and make sure that I felt comfortable so that the children would feel comfortable. So there was that definite like unsureness and like "oooh am I doing this right", stuff like that. And then, that got better cos I started to enjoy it while I was still learning from them, and the last one's more of a connection.

In summary, this group generally felt quite "under distanced" in their relationship with children/young people. They found it very difficult to separate out themselves from those they worked with, which proved both valuable (in that they could relate, be on the same level and have fun) but also challenging (in that they often did not know how to manage behaviour, or their own emotions in the work). Through the body sculptures participants were provided with distance to witness themselves in relationship with the child, enabling physical and emotional distance to comment on what they saw happening. For those embodying the role of the worker, they were able to express the feelings of the worker, witnessed by the worker, which felt validating and acknowledging. For most participants in this group, this arts method highlighted the conflicts and tensions of an emerging identity for someone who wants to work with children and young people in a fun way.

Chapter 8: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine a professional development experiential workshop program that uses arts-focused/active methods to understand how it is experienced by participants. A second aim was to investigate the role of core dramatherapy processes through which arts methods influence care workers' capacity to respond to young people in their care.

The previous chapters presented an analysis of findings and some discussion of the experiences of participants, and how these may have influenced their engagement with the children/young people they work with. The analysis was based on what participants said during the workshops and afterwards, but also on what they did and how they engaged with the arts processes. Originally the program was conceptualised to build the skills of participants in the use of the arts in their work with children and young people. My study, however, was focused on researching participants' experience of the program.

It is important to note that although some participants did comment on acquiring new skills, the findings suggest that participants valued learning about themselves in their work more than learning any specific knowledge or skill content. The findings suggest that through participation in the program, most participants reported new understandings of themselves, young people, and their practice. The analysis showed the importance of group processes and climate for enhanced learning. It also demonstrated understanding of how change, through core underlying processes, happens through arts practice.

This chapter provides a more detailed discussion of the findings, followed by the theoretical, methodological and practice implications of this research study.

Participants' Experiences of Firemaker

The Firemaker Program was set up to provide care workers with: 1) experiential learning of play and the arts, with relevant supporting theory, 2) skills to implement arts activities in their psychosocial work with children/young people and 3) space for personal and professional reflection. As documented in Chapter 2, Firemaker, in its structure and methodology, is informed by arts therapy practice and theory that are central to how the program is experienced. These elements involve: 1) setting up a safe space through contracting, the containing circle, opening and closing rituals, and a basic set workshop session structure; 2) working in relationship with facilitator and other group members; 3) working over a number of months, with time in between each workshop to practice new skills learnt; and 4) the use of arts activities with an understanding of purpose and outcome.

While adapted for the Australian context, this core practice method was adhered to but run over four days, with a month in between each workshop. In addition, three focused arts/active methods were designed to use as moments of data collection. As outlined in Chapter 6, the findings suggest that key features of the program and the specific arts-focused/active methods used as research data collection points (Chapter 7) were the two main aspects of the experience that led to new understanding of self, the child or their practice.

Creating Conditions for Change: Essential Program Features

The findings show participants emphasised the underlying program methodology in describing what had been important in their experience of Firemaker. These include: how the space was set up to feel safe (the circle and ritualised opening and closing fire metaphor activity); group process and relationship; the creative process

(allowing an idea to emerge, without judgment or expectation); freedom to choose and work with art materials in whatever way felt comfortable (not prescribed, no right or wrong, no directions, feeling anxiety and excitement); experiential active involvement (doing and the capacity to feel); reflecting on the process (capacity to think); and making connections between professional work and workshop activities. Taking time out from work to participate was also important, as was time to create and time (that is one month) between workshops for the opportunity to try out new learnings from the program.

These findings affirm Cassidy et al.'s (2014) systematic review of dramatherapists' understanding of the meta-processes of change, which are: safety, working in the here and now, working alongside clients, being actively involved, and allowing clients choice and control. In my study, participants specifically spoke about the importance of reflection: thinking and speaking about the process retrospectively. This may well have to do with the fact that the program was specifically aimed at professional development, so one would expect focused reflection time on work practice. Despite not being a therapeutic clinical intervention, the findings suggest similar conditions are necessary for participant change in professional development programs. Cassidy et al. (2014) focused on the dramatherapist's perspective of change; they recommended that further research should examine how participants experienced these meta-processes. The current study provides further evidence of participants' experiences of the meta-processes of change, albeit in a different context and setting.

Arts-Focused, Active Methods

The aspect of participating in Firemaker that the majority of participants commented on was the experience of the three arts-focused, active methods (clay and

box, small object worlds, body sculptures) that do not ordinarily form part of the Program. They were designed as research intervention tools. It is important to note that during Firemaker, participants took part in many activities, but it was these three that they commented on. These particular methods are the most commonly used by dramatherapists in their practice (Dokter & Jones, 2008). Dramatherapy is defined as an “active experiential approach to facilitating change” (NADT, 2014), and being actively involved is one of the five meta-processes of change offered by Cassidy et al. (2014) in their model of change. The findings of the current study, supported by dramatherapy theory (Cassidy et al., 2014; Jones, 1996, 2008), suggest that it was from the active involvement in these methods that new awarenesses for participants arose, particularly in how they viewed their relationship with young people/children.

By creating an image of themselves and the young person through clay, using small objects, and through body sculptures, a third relationship (Jones, 2008) was established. This enabled the child to be present even though physically absent, creating a connection to child/young person for the care worker. As previously discussed, this is important in any work with those who work with others. Figure 10 (below) illustrates the connection made through the arts active method between worker and young person. It is this space of connection that has been the focus of this research. Participants’ experiences of the art active methods are important as this research examined more deeply what it meant to be actively involved and what changes occur as a result. The findings suggest that these active methods do enhance care workers’ capacity to think and feel in the here and now about their child clients and the relationship with them. To follow is a discussion of participants’ experiences of these methods.

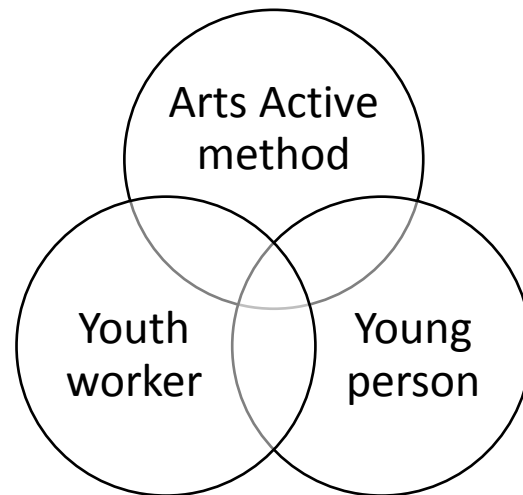


Figure 10: Connection between worker and young person through arts active method

Participants' Experiences of the Arts Active Methods

Participants' experiences of these methods support art therapist Kapitan's (2010) assertion that the primary goal of the arts therapist is to "activate the process of creation followed by reflective technique" (p. 31). The findings suggest that for most participants the 'process of creation' involved the experience of not knowing, leading to feelings of anxiety and excitement, having to be present in the here and now and trust that an idea would emerge, having the freedom to choose and use materials, and then, finally, feelings of accomplishment.

Another important aspect to participants' experience was the notion of time: time to create as well as time to reflect. The creative process through the arts active method mirrored in many ways the relationship between worker and child in practice. These parallels concern: meeting the child for the first time, feelings of anxiety and excitement, not knowing what might emerge and not looking for an immediate solution, playfully trying to engage the child at their level, allowing the child to lead, giving children choice, taking time to get to know them, slowly developing a relationship, and working towards an outcome. The 'reflective technique' that followed the process of

creation was experienced by participants as the time where connections could be made with work in meaningful ways.

Significantly, the findings show that within each group the majority of participants reported that they had experienced a different focused arts method to be particularly impactful. For example, in Group One it was body sculptures and in Group Two, the clay and box activity. This suggests that each group's experience of the value of particular focused arts methods might be dependent on their context and training, but also linked to core dramatherapy processes of change. This will be discussed in more detail under the core processes section below.

Significantly, the findings show that participants' experiences produced new understandings of self, the child/young person and/or practice. To follow is a discussion of, firstly, the shifts produced and, secondly, the underlying core dramatherapy processes.

New Awareness Through Arts Active Methods

As the literature in Chapter 3 outlined, there are both personal and professional benefits to participating in professional development programs (Coulsen, 2009; Ho et al., 2012; Wood et al., 2012) for those working with children and young people. Some of these benefits have been reported as unintentional effects of participating in these programs (regardless of whether or not arts methods were used) for child care workers, such as: an improved understanding of children's feelings, increased confidence to work with children, and an improvement in how professional boundaries are maintained. An additional benefit reported was recognising the need to utilise supervision more effectively (Coulsen, 2009). Participants revealed personal and professional insight-

related benefits, reporting new understandings of themselves, the young people they work with, and their professional practice.

While some argue that just having participated in a program is enough to provide benefit (Coulsen, 2009; Wood et al., 2012), this research highlights what it is about program involvement that leads to new awareness and understanding. From the participants' perspective, it was their experiences of the arts active methods that led to shifts in their understanding. Like experiential learning (Kolb, 1984; Rasmussen, 2014; Thompson & Pascal, 2012) and reflection in/on action (Mezirow, 1981, 1998), the findings provide evidence consistent with previous theoretical and empirical work, that it is through the intentional use of specific arts methods that new awareness is facilitated. I turn now to briefly discuss the new understandings that participants experienced in relation to the arts active methods.

New Awareness of Self

In much of the literature the personal benefits of participating in arts therapy based programs for professionals are fairly generalised, including improved expression, communication and general wellbeing (Ho et al., 2012; Van Westrhenen & Fritz, 2012; Wood et al., 2012). Developing awareness and understanding of oneself and one's feelings is important in work with children and other people (Keller-Dupree & Perryman, 2013) as the work draws on one's subjectivity. This subjectivity has the potential to be a resource or a hindrance, dependent on one's capacity for self-awareness. While participants in this study reported a variety of personal benefits, such as feeling more energised, the focus of the analysis was narrowed to examine any new self-understanding in relation to children that resulted. Reported new self-understandings included recognising the need to acknowledge one's feelings in work

with children (both comfortable and uncomfortable) and recognising that despite anxious feelings, one can be open to emergent experience. Participants reported discovering problematic aspects of the need to know and offer solutions, and acknowledged how difficult it is not to offer solutions and to let go of the need for certainty.

New Awareness of the Young Person

In the literature reviewed, increased tolerance and understanding of children and young people is a common benefit of care workers participating in professional development programs (Coulsen, 2009; Ho et al., 2012; Wood et al., 2012). I argue that in the typical training that care workers receive in working with young people there is the potential to undermine the care workers' capacity to respond to complexity by regulating their responses. This is analogous to the way children and young people are undermined in their capacity for resilience or choice through over-regulation by adults (Jones, 2009; Kellett, 2010). Experiential professional development programs that use the arts have the potential to explore the power dynamics at play and the very important relational aspects of working with children and young people. The findings of this study suggest that through the active arts method, the dynamic nature of relationship was both felt and witnessed (this will be discussed later under core dramatherapy processes). It was this experience that allowed for deeper reflection and resulting new understanding.

New understandings for participants included: some recognising their identification with the young person, and others feeling uncomfortable with evident relationship power dynamics, wanting more relationship fluidity and less authoritarian interaction; awareness of how a young person might feel on first meeting the care

worker, that is, recognising that both worker and child felt anxiety; recognising the young person as someone who could speak for themselves concerning needs and feelings; and recognising that young people and children, like adults, need choice and a measure of control.

New Awareness of Professional Practice

Professional practice typically focuses on skills development. While skills are important, they do not encompass everything that professional practice entails (Gouthro & Jarvis, 2015). The findings of this research show that awareness of practice primarily concerned the dynamics of building relationship and working in relationship with children and young people. New awareness in this regard included: awareness of role boundaries; recognising the counterproductive pressure to offer solutions; new understanding that every engagement with a child or young person has the potential to be meaningful; the importance of building relationship and taking time to get to know the young person or child; new awareness of the need to be less prescriptive when facilitating; and, finally, that the arts provide alternative ways to engage young people than simply talking permits.

In summary, the findings support literature that there are personal and professional benefits to participating in professional development programs (Coulsen, 2009; Ho et al., 2012; Wood et al., 2012) for care workers working with young people and children. All Firemaker participants reported that missing from their work and training was the opportunity to reflect on their practice and gain further knowledge concerning what they were doing and why. Thus, an unexpected benefit for participants was the self-reflection and resulting self-awareness that resulted from program participation. Gouthro and Jarvis (2015) highlight that the arts have the potential to

bring about a sense of purpose, and new perspectives and insights in the work place, which the findings of this research support. Significantly, the arts active methods allowed participants the chance to tolerate ambiguity and complexity (Deaver & Shiflett, 2011; Gouthro & Jarvis, 2015) in their work.

However, much of the literature referring to the use of arts or arts therapy in programs with care workers did not detail specific arts methods, examine participants' experiences, or discuss how these might facilitate change (Ho et al., 2012; Van Westrhenena & Fritz, 2012). My research attempted to make significant links between experiential benefits, new awareness/understanding, and specific arts active methods. Arts active methods enable the capacity to think, feel and see oneself in relationship with the young person or child, leading to new insights. What follows is a discussion of how these insights came about through core dramatherapy processes.

Core Dramatherapy Processes

The findings suggest that the shifts experienced by participants can be understood using specific dramatherapy processes (Jones, 1996). As evident in my results, play, embodiment/role, dramatic projection, active witnessing, distancing and empathy are the processes that bring about change for participants. This supports the claim that change occurs by means of core underlying processes evident in the arts practices underpinning dramatherapy. As noted earlier, these processes are interrelated and occur simultaneously (Jones, 1996).

Play and Creativity

In the literature review, play and creativity were outlined as core transformational processes (Jones, 1996; Karkou & Sanderson, 2005). The findings of

this research extends the idea that play does not stand alone, but rather underlies the entire Firemaker program. As a foundation, the qualities of play are present in all the other core processes. Play encourages spontaneity, as suggested by Moreno (1953), and becomes a stance or attitude that is encouraged in work with other people, opening up new possibilities and creative opportunities. As discussed, the ability to be open to whatever emerges is part of the creative process, and an important attitude to cultivate in work with children (Jones, 2008; Karkou & Sanderson, 2005). The findings support dramatherapy theory that play and creativity underlie all the other core processes. My findings also support the developmental play theory (Jennings, 1990, 1999; Jones, 1996, 2007; Slade, 1954) assertion that drama processes lie on a continuum and that play is fundamental to all change processes. Play begins as a sensory experience, is proceeded by symbolic thought, and then followed by more developed role play. Play in this context is seen as an attitude, a stance, and as practice, developing the capacity to play physically, to play with thoughts and feelings, and to respond playfully in the interpersonal space with young people and children.

Embodiment and Role

Embodiment as a process emerged as important in all the active methods. As a process it has been written about extensively in dramatherapy literature (Jennings, 1990, 1999; Jones, 2007, 2010; Jones & Dokter, 2008; Landy, 2009). For example, embodiment in the clay activity enabled not knowing and entertaining feelings of uncertainty. The process of embodiment is linked with experiential learning in that a felt experience is needed for change to happen (Heron, 1993; Kolb, 1984; Rasmussen, 2014). The findings are significant because they suggest that all the arts active, focused methods used in this research are in fact embodied in some way (working with clay,

image making, using small objects, and purposeful physical knowing in the form of body sculptures). Importantly, the findings show that participants described experiences firstly as a felt bodily experience, bringing about the arousal of emotions, for example anxiety or enjoyment. Secondly, reflecting on these felt experiences afterwards led to fresh insights. The findings support what developmental drama theorists have argued (Jennings, 1990, 1999; Jones, 1996, 2007; Slade, 1954), that the body enables experience, which is then available for extension and elaboration via verbal reflection.

The primacy of embodiment varied between each group. In Group One, who were not arts trained, embodiment was the most confronting and valuable process for them; having to trust experience without grasping it cognitively. The findings of this research suggest that for some care workers who typically adopt an emotional distance from the children, embodiment enables a felt experience to occur that disrupts and challenges this habitual distancing. While evident in all processes and important to process of change, bodily experience was valued more by the youth worker group in body sculptures. As an extension of embodiment, role play (the end of the developmental play spectrum) demands complex understanding of self and other, and the ability to flexibly adopt and relinquish roles. Role theory has been written about extensively by Robert Landy (1993, 1994, 2009) as a core process of dramatherapy. For this research, role play was evident in the use of body sculptures, but the limited research time available did not permit more elaborate role work.

Dramatic Projection

The third important process the findings show was relevant to all the arts methods was dramatic projection. As described earlier, this process allows for an

internal conflict or theme to be externalised so that the participant can see it (Jennings, 1999; Jones, 1996). Dramatic projection operates on two levels; firstly it expresses something not yet fully articulated, and, secondly, it creates space to reflect on and give verbal meaning to what was created, hopefully leading to integration. Dramatic projection is particularly important for reflection and bringing about distancing. Dramatic projection for both groups proved to be a powerful means to externalise what was happening internally and in the work space. However, in the case of the arts practitioners in Group Two, their practice involved doing and engaging in arts practice all the time, with little opportunity to intentionally reflect on their practice. This group experienced dramatic projection, through the clay and box and small objects exercises, as the most valuable, giving them the opportunity to step back and reflect on their projective products.

Distancing/Empathy

In work with children and young people, the findings suggest that distancing and empathy have a significant role to play in bringing about insight. Perhaps how these processes work, particularly for those working with children and young people, is the most important finding of this research. My findings further suggest how art active methods can facilitate this process. In clinical practice distancing might be used with, for example, a group of teenagers who could benefit from some perspective or emotional distance from their experiences of their lives. Similarly, a dramatherapist might use more embodied methods to encourage empathy in groups who felt very underdistanced emotionally (Jones, 1996).

The intentional relationship (Jones, 2008) formed in working with children requires both empathy and distance, pointing to the equivalent importance of boundaries

and affective connection. For example, the youth worker trained group welcomed a focus on themselves and their feelings in the work. The need for affective access to self suggested that embodiment and empathy were important to help them connect with their feelings. The group of arts practitioners welcomed space to reflect and think about what their work looked like with them in it. The need for cognitive reflection suggested that distancing and dramatic projection were foregrounded, and that these processes cultivated reflective space not readily available or habitual in their working lives. The findings suggest the need to balance the capacities of thinking and feeling when working with children and young people.

Interesting to note is that while these two processes may seem antagonistic, the findings show that distancing can sometimes facilitate empathy. In addition, active witnessing is implicated in this process. For example, in the body sculpture activity it was the distancing that active witnessing provided that enabled a care worker to feel empathy for the young person in role. Thus empathic closeness and reflective distance are complementary capacities that need to be balanced when programs are designed and facilitated.

Active Witnessing

The findings suggest that active witnessing was an important process of change and present in all the arts active methods. Active witnessing, as earlier described, has two aspects to it (Jones, 1996; Karkou & Sanderson, 2005; Sajnani, 2010). The first is the process of witnessing others or being witnessed by others (as in traditional performance with actor and audience), and the second is witnessing oneself (either through projection or role play). The importance of experiencing this program in a group context, and that the act of witnessing or being witnessed was significant, was

evident in participant reports that the program made them feel affirmed and validated in their work. This was significant given that many participants described this experience as conspicuously absent from their work contexts. The findings suggest that if care workers do not feel validated and affirmed in the work they do with children, this may be conveyed and find negative expression in the children's experience too. The findings further suggest that active witnessing afforded a valued opportunity to self-reflect and receive feedback from colleagues, particularly during the body sculpt activity, when participants discovered what their relationship with the young person looked like.

Life-Drama/Arts Connection

The connection made between the arts method and the participant care workers' working life in particular, was important as a space for active reflection, one that led to new insights. The reflective capacity that Kapitan (2010) speaks of is a metaphorical space in which connection between otherwise discrete aspects of one's life is made. It is here that participants could reflect on their professional actions (Mezirow, 1981, 1998) and what these conveyed about their own subjectivity.

In summary, while acknowledging the role of core processes in individual change, the findings suggest that the context, background and training of each group meant that certain dramatherapy processes were foregrounded. The processes discussed above provide significant research evidence to show how arts practice, using active methods, may facilitate positive change. Dramatherapy does seem to have a role to play in developing the capacity to respond to young people. Understanding how change happens in dramatherapy is valuable in how professional development programs

are designed in order to facilitate change e.g. space, here and now, choice and control, etc. Further understanding of what core change processes are operational for individual care workers, within the context of their practice and training, is valuable for what and how arts methods are facilitated, in order to bring about new self-awareness.

Theoretical Implications

In attempting to answer the question of what role dramatherapy can play in developing the care workers' capacity to respond to children and youth in their care, I outline how the findings of this research builds on dramatherapy theory and how change happens.

Dramatherapy and Change

Meta-processes of change.

The findings suggest that dramatherapy may have a role to play in developing youth care workers' capacity to respond to children and young people in their care, thereby contributing to the theory of the arts therapies, particularly dramatherapy. The possibility of change is offered through increased insight and self-awareness, working through an art form (Jones, 1996), and in the relationship with the therapist, other participants, the broader interpersonal environment, and surrounding socio-cultural contexts (Kapitan, 2010).

How change takes place through the arts has been a central focus of this research, and dramatherapy theory emerges as valuable in thinking about change through the arts generally. This research has provided further evidence of the meta-processes of change, as formulated by Cassidy et al. (2014). My research thus builds on and extends, while illustrating this model of change from participants' perspectives.

This research has implications for how this theory may be applied to the design of programs intentionally structured to promote change. In particular, it highlights the importance of participants being and feeling actively involved in a creative process (Cassidy et al., 2014). In being actively involved there are specific dramatherapy processes that are explicitly mobilised, or function more implicitly to enable change.

Core dramatherapy processes of change.

The findings support and extend the theoretical understanding of how Jones' (1996) core dramatherapy processes operate in enabling change to happen. Play, embodiment/role, dramatic projection, distancing/empathy and active witnessing were evident across all the active arts methods used in this research, suggesting they have an important role to play in creating new awareness and insight. My research also suggests that, while these processes are interrelated, there is a developmental process from embodiment, projection, distancing, and witnessing, to the life-drama/ arts connection.

This supports the research of others (Daher & Haz, 2011; Ho et al., 2012; Van Westrhenena & Fritz, 2012) who have attempted to explain the nature of change in arts therapy based professional development programs. Daher and Haz (2011), in their work with Chilean women, reported that projection, revelation and integration were core processes of change. Figure 11 (below) attempts to capture these processes by representing how change through arts active methods involves an active experience sequence involving emotional arousal (play and embodiment), followed by some emotional regulation and reflection (dramatic projection), and then understanding and connection (distancing, empathy witnessing, life drama connection). Importantly these processes need to happen in the context of meta-processes (safety, working in the here

and now, working alongside participant, choice and control, being actively involved) as suggested by Cassidy et al. (2014).

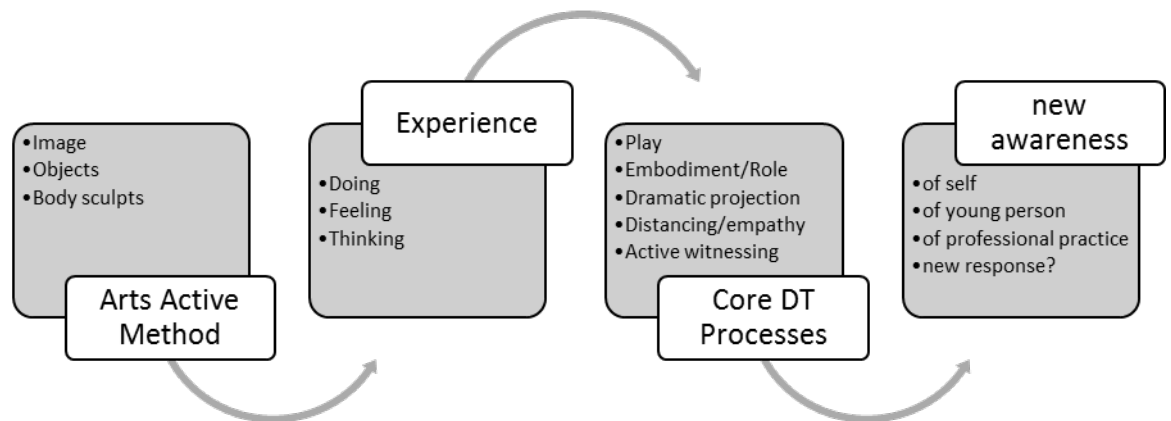


Figure 11: The relationship between arts active method, experience and change in response

Experiential learning theory.

In understanding change through dramatherapy processes, theoretical links can be made with experiential learning theory (Heron, 1999; Kolb, 1984; Kolb et al., 2001; Rasmussen, 2014; Seely & Reason, 2008). As mentioned earlier, the primary method of the arts therapist is to “activate the process of creation followed by reflective technique” (Kapitan, 2010, p. 31). This leads to potential new insights or understandings. In experiential learning, Heron (1999), Rasmussen (2014) and Seely and Reason (2008) postulated three types of knowing: experiential knowing, presentational knowing and propositional knowing. My research highlights the links between experiential learning theory, the process of arts therapy (the process of creation, reflective technique) and the underlying core dramatherapy processes of change, as represented in Figure 12.

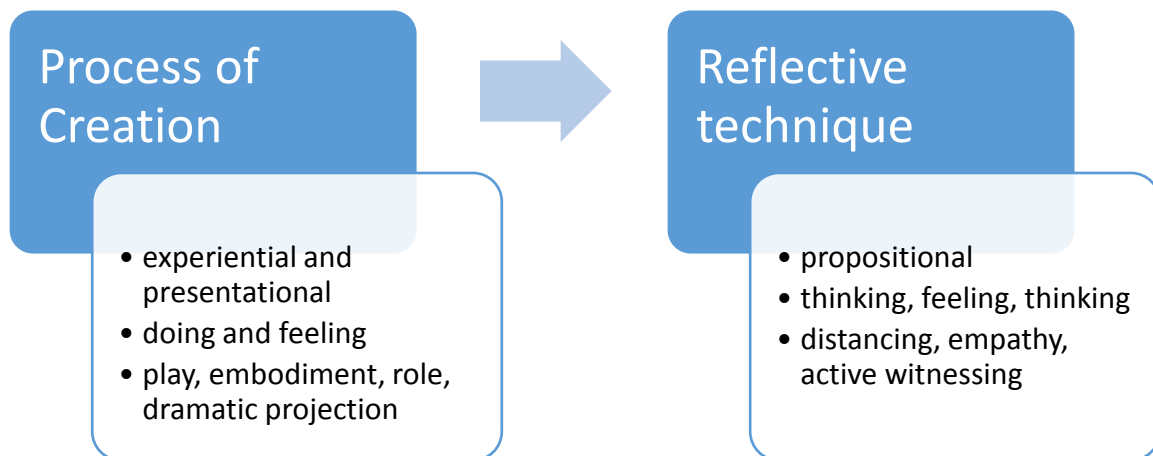


Figure 12: Relationship between arts therapy method and processes

Dramatherapy theory on the core underlying processes of change enhances literature on experiential learning, by offering new ways of understanding how the ‘knowing’ comes about. Play, embodiment, role and dramatic projection are seen to be present in experiential and presentational knowing. Propositional knowing comes about as a result of distancing, empathy and active witnessing, illustrating how specific underlying core processes produce new awareness. How dramatherapy can be used in experiential, transformational learning, suggests it has a role to play in learning as well as therapeutic contexts.

Methodological Implications

My research employed a multi-case study design that included practice led inquiry and pre- and post-workshop interviews with two different groups of care workers. Data was analysed using theory-informed thematic analysis. In attempting to answer the question regarding what role arts therapies practice might play in research

methodology, I discuss the methodological implications relating to practice led enquiry and arts-based enquiry.

Practice Led Enquiry

Barrett (2010) and Lees (2011) argue that practice led research builds on the skills of practice while providing evidence produced through practice. As previously discussed, the practice of arts therapists involves researching clients' lived experience of the world and working alongside them to make sense of this experience (Kapitan, 2010). This research study is illustrative of practice based evidence, building on practice skills, while offering valuable methodological considerations of how research may be participant led, process driven, and include reciprocity (participants gained the opportunity to attend a professional development workshop).

My professional modes of practice provided a valuable structure and guide for this research study. The method, I believe, was strengthened in terms of research tools. This is evident in the consultative process I engaged in, which included: pre-workshop interviews, ascertaining what participants would like to gain from the Firemaker; informed voluntary consent; running an experiential program; responding to the needs of each group with a focus on process; joint meaning making in the workshops, and a follow up interview procedure. As detailed in Chapter 2, collaboration and critical dialogue is central to ethical practice (Sonn, 2009) and care workers are recognised as core members of the community within which they live and work, thereby establishing an ongoing relationship based on their needs and that of the organisation.

The program content is dynamic and adapted according to needs of particular communities. Delivering the program as simultaneously practice and research entailed several additional aspects: voluntary informed consent, research-driven participant

collaboration, dynamic and adaptable content tailored to the needs of each group context, and critical reflective dialogue with participants.

The research context did not permit formal ongoing relationships with and mentoring of group participants, although I did offer follow up workshops. The reciprocal nature of the research meant participants benefited by gaining new skills and a space for personal and professional reflection. Participants also received a resource book of all the arts activities and theoretical contextualisation of these. Importantly, for all participants, the research process was mostly a positive experience, through which they gained new insights and felt validated and affirmed in their work.

Arts-Based Enquiry

As outlined in Chapter 4, there are many different understandings of arts in research, including arts-based research, arts informed and arts informing research (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2015). While I have called this research arts-based, using arts methods as my way of knowing, I have not used art to present my findings. While this may well be perceived as a limitation, my intention was to examine the tacit knowing of my practice and give words to that knowledge. As Jones (2012) and McNiff (2012), both arts therapists engaging in research point out, the links between practice and research are often disconnected and there is a need for a larger evidence base in research that supports practitioners. My own research makes a case for the claim that when using dramatherapy in specific contexts we need to develop methods for undertaking research that are sensitive to client participation and allow clients a voice in our attempts to grasp how change happens and is understood. This research study goes some way to address these practice-research gaps. Firstly, it provides evidence supporting the use of dramatherapy in a professional development context. Secondly, it

provides an exemplar of how research can respect and draw on clients' voices in the attempt to understand the mechanisms and dynamics of complex change events and processes.

I turn now to discuss the practice implications of this research in both professional development programs for care workers working with children, and the practice of dramatherapy.

Practice Implications

Practice Implications for Professional Development Programs for Care Workers

Program design.

This research validates and reinforces the importance of how professional development programs are set up for creating the necessary conditions for change to happen. Especially important is participant emotional safety, working alongside participants, participant choice and control in an uncertain and unpredictable process, being actively involved, and working in the here and now (Cassidy et al., 2014). By becoming more aware of these factors, intentionally building them into our practice, and using them to challenge how we think about learning, professional development programs may best realise their potential as opportunities to gain new insight and empathy (Jarvis & Goutho, 2015).

Skills or process focused?

As outlined in the literature review, possibly one of the most important roles of professional development in our current time is to develop “creative, critical and self-reflective capabilities” needed to “deal with ambiguity and complexity” (Jarvis &

Gouthro, 2015, p. 67). The findings of my research support this assertion, particularly given that skill acquisition was not highlighted as the most important gain by participants. While some participants valued the opportunity to learn new skills, the majority tended to value self- reflection and the opportunity to reflect on work practice. It was the experiential aspects of the program that they valued most, implying that the experiential learning process was important for them. This has implications for how CPD programs are designed, implemented, and facilitated. By designing process focused programs, care workers are better enabled to respond to material (internal feelings and external art materials) in the here and now. As documented by Cassidy et al. (2014), working in the here and now was found to be the most important meta-process enabling change to happen.

Importantly, Jarvis and Gouthro (2015) also stress the importance of the relationship implications of conducting such training in a group setting. In Firemaker, group is so important because it builds relationship into the very conception of change as an inherently relational phenomenon.

Play.

As part of being process focused, the inclusion of play emerges as significant in programs for care workers. My findings clearly show how the creative program process mirrored the process in participants' work practice. For example, commencing the group and finding a place in it paralleled the professional task of meeting a child for the first time, playfully trying to engage the child, developing the relationship, and then working towards an outcome. The capacity to play is linked to being in the here and now (Cassidy et al., 2015) and spontaneity (Moreno, 1953), and being open to new possibilities.

Time.

What emerges clearly from this research is the process and outcome significance of time: the time it takes for change to occur and the restorative impact of time for the practitioner to regularly dwell in creative spaces that encourage reflection on process. Time was also significant in the process of relationship building and permitting reflection on this. Additionally, the time between workshops proved important, allowing further process and practice to happen in the temporal 'spaces' between scheduled workshop meetings. The dimensional issue of time offers a whole new perspective on professional development and flags the problem of concentrated, brief, or burst-mode models that deny the importance of a developmental learning process.

This has implications, too, for the form these programs might take. I offer that we need spaces that are not only about clinical supervision, case management, or even professional skills development. Rather, I suggest we need to offer spaces that are regular creative, reflective practice learning spaces (Timm-Bottos & Reilly, 2014), making use of arts active methods and the meta-processes to learn from experience. Important in this regard is that these activities are participant led and that facilitators are trained and understand how to work with arts methods.

Role of the facilitator.

A further implication for practice in professional development is how the facilitator works in relationship with participants. The findings show participants valued working alongside the facilitator and other participants, suggesting the role of joint discovery was important. In work with care workers who work with children this is particularly important. There is a tension between needing to know when working with other people in a helping capacity, and being open to the therapeutic necessity of not

knowing (Jones, 2008). This is especially salient in work with children, where the care worker is placed in the powerful position of professional adult who should provide the solution to the child's life difficulties. Experiencing the facilitator as someone who was not all-knowing and was willing to discover alongside care workers, allowed participants to entertain a modified way of professionally being with their young people.

Utilising the arts.

The findings of this research strongly support the value of arts in professional development programs and for transformational learning (Daher & Haz, 2011; Ho et al., 2012; Mendel, 2015). Significantly, by examining participants' experiences of the arts methods, certain shifts leading to new awareness and understanding became evident. The findings of this research support and provide further evidence of Jarvis and Gouthro's (2015) claims that the use of arts in professional development programs led to significant outcomes. They identified these as follows: learning to use arts in professional practice, using arts to illustrate complex concepts and dilemmas, arts for empathy and insight, the role of the arts in the construction of professional identity and self-awareness, and interpersonal skill development. A brief discussion of Gouthro and Jarvis' 2015 findings in relation to my own research follows.

Skilling to use the arts in professional practice.

Learning to use the arts in working with children and young people is an original primary goal of Firemaker. While not a focus of this research, it does deserve some discussion as it has implications for ongoing practice. In this research study, Group One participants were not trained or experienced in arts practices. They reported feeling comfortable using warm ups and ice breakers in their work, but not the more complex arts activities. While they recognised the benefits and values of the activities, they did

not have the confidence to implement them, nor the language to justify to policy makers why these could be beneficial. Participants in Group Two, however, who were all arts practitioners, felt confident to try out many of the activities in their own work settings. Of course, participants' level of experience in the arts has implications for programs such as Firemaker and the intended outcomes of such programs.

A second implication in this regard is around skilling care workers to use the arts safely when working with children. Participants in both groups expressed a fear of children expressing their feelings, especially negative emotions. Encouraging the expression of feelings, of course, is not inherently dangerous; in fact it is healthy, and the arts have always been used as a means of affective expression. However, we need to be aware that arts processes can so powerfully access unconscious feelings, leading to associated anxieties and fears of being overwhelmed (Kalmanowitz & Potash, 2010). While the perceived dangers of children's emotional expression are overstated, there are ethical implications to the use of these processes, and it is therefore important for trained arts therapists to run programs like this. This is necessary in order to permit the requisite condition of safety, which was the intention with Firemaker.

Arts for empathy and insight.

The findings of this research strongly support the role the arts play in developing empathy and insight (Jarvis & Gouthro, 2015). Through careful examination of the core dramatherapy processes, this research has shown how empathy and insight can result.

Self-awareness and interpersonal skill development.

Findings suggest participants most valued the opportunity for self-reflection, supporting Jarvis and Gouthro's (2015) assertion that the arts promote self-awareness.

Participating as a group and having to witness and listen, receive and give feedback, were all seen as encouraging self-reflection

Arts Practitioners Involved in Transformation Work

The findings of this research offer to those who work in the arts with the aim of creating transformation—be it personal, social, political—a shared knowledge and understanding about how change happens through arts methods. Possibly the most significant contribution this research makes is to understanding how change through arts methods occurs, delineating the influence of embodiment, dramatic projection, distancing, empathy, and active witnessing. I hope that the evidence for the change impact of these processes provides other applied arts practitioners with conceptual references to better articulate change through the arts.

Implications for Dramatherapy Practice

Expanding the therapeutic space.

The findings have implications for the practice of dramatherapy and, by extension, the arts therapies generally. At the start of this thesis I aligned this research with dramatherapy, which is concerned with “enlarging therapeutic space” (Sajnani, 2010, p. 194) or widening the meaning of arts therapies (Coombes, 2011). However, this research challenges arts therapists to extend ourselves by becoming more socially aware and offering our skills in creative reflective to those who work with young people. As discussed, Firemaker emerged in response to a particular context, encouraged collaboration between and across modalities, but also challenged the professional identity of dramatherapists, challenging them to adapt and respond to changing contexts. The blurring of boundaries that Sajnani (2010) wrote about can be

seen through this research where dramatherapist practitioners, as facilitators of active methods, harnessing an understanding of how these methods work, can bring about new awareness and understanding of self and other. Understanding the meta-processes of change, as conceptualised by Cassidy et al., 2014, and how these function to create a climate for change, are important for the ongoing practice of dramatherapy in clinical and community contexts.

Applying this knowledge intentionally and responsibly to professional development programs may foster better awareness of what facilitates change in the relationships between care workers and their young clients. The overarching question is how to work more collaboratively with communities and organisations in thinking about their needs and goals, being mindful that change and transformation does not only happen in the context of therapy.

Ongoing critical reflection.

Research such as this raises more questions and highlights the responsibilities of working in an applied way. The aims and goals of such work, having clear intentions about what the program is for, is important. As has been highlighted before (Coombes, 2011; Klamowitz & Potash, 2010), reflective space and the ability to critically reflect on one's practice and interrogate basic assumptions in an ongoing way, is important. But one has to ask what happens when this kind of knowing becomes mainstream? Does it detract from exactly what the arts are meant to do: challenge from the margins? By engaging in formal research I am collaborating with the mainstream dominant narrative about needing 'evidence based' practice, the very thing I am invested in critiquing. I can only acknowledge the paradox, trusting that it is a generative one.

Playful internal attitude.

Coinciding with critical reflection is the necessity for dramatherapists to do precisely what we encourage others to do, that is, hold a playful internal attitude towards our practice. In facilitating spaces that encourage open playful internal attitudes towards children and young people, it is equally important for us to be open and playful to new possibilities and opportunities. In the same way we encourage care workers to think about children in a playful way and to tolerate not knowing, perhaps we need to become more trusting of this process too. The rupture of assumed identity (Coombes, 2011) is in fact the very thing we need to welcome if we are to find other ways of expanding our practice in socially relevant ways. Learning to not know and discover together is about intentionally building relationships that foster spontaneous, and thus alive, new and mutually transformative understanding.

Chapter 9: Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations

I embarked on this research journey with the hope of becoming clearer about my practice and how it works. While there have been moments of illumination, the research process has highlighted further tensions and tolerance of not knowing for me, particularly in relation to professional identity. While wanting to see it as a stand-alone, manualised program, I also wanted it to remain emergent and unfixed. While sometimes wishing that anyone with sufficient emotional commitment might be able to facilitate Firemaker, I have realised that, as a dramatherapist, I have a particular skill set that allows me to create a safe space, work in the here and now, work with and alongside others, actively engage them, and offer containing choice. I also bring an understanding of the processes of change in dramatherapy that I believe may also work across other arts therapy modalities. This is what I have to offer. Whether these skills remain in the private clinical space, the community space, or the learning space, these are all spaces with the potential of change. I am further challenged to imagine and think of how to remain a resource to communities, organisations and individuals who may desire change but also be the deciders of it. That part has become clearer. This is what I believe arts therapists have to offer.

Challenges and Limitations

Trying to Know but Encouraging Not Knowing

Qualitative research has its well documented challenges, as does arts-based research (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Kapitan, 2010; McNiff, 1998; Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). Part of what I set out to do was to find a way to communicate what I do so that I can advocate for the transformative nature and agenda of the arts. Research

involves striving for knowledge, but how to proceed in this regard if a not-knowing stance is fundamental to our therapeutic stance? This tension I experienced throughout the research process, often second guessing myself with questions like “but how do you know this is what happened?” Having different data sources and supervisors helped, but also added to the complexities and multiple ways of understandings and led to further internal tension of wanting to know, wanting there to be a definitive model.

Research represents a compromise: whilst it acknowledges multiple ways of knowing, in practice and certainly in qualitative research this is not possible. This research has used arts to understand but traditional methods to explain. Such an approach frees me up to be open to possibilities.

The Missing Voices of the Young People

A limitation of this research study includes the absent voices of the young people, whose pre- and post-program experience of the care workers would have provided another vantage point from which to evaluate the program’s impact. In attempting to examine care workers’ responsiveness, the research would have made a significantly greater contribution if the young people’s experiences of their care workers could have been included in the data set. The qualitative data underpinning this research is rich in meaning and depth, and any attempts to include more data would have resulted in an over-ambitious project that would have collapsed under the weight of its own complexity.

Managing Researcher Bias

A further limitation and reflexive consideration was my investment in the Firemaker program, acknowledging and factoring in my inevitable bias. In some ways I

might have been considered 'under distanced' in dramatherapy terms, and in many ways this was true. I began this research process with the conviction that Firemaker, as a program, offered something special. As the process progressed, I interestingly became more distanced through the active witnessing of the program. Strategies that helped with this were: 1) keeping a researcher journal to write and reflect in, 2) video recordings of the workshops, 3) having three supervisors with three critically different perspectives to draw from, and 4) having a critical friend in South Africa, a dramatherapist and facilitator of Firemaker, to skype with every two weeks. Her insider and outsider knowledge kept me grounded. In addition her critical stance on the Firemaker offered up very valuable insights around the program.

In becoming more distanced, I was offered the space for more critical reflection and then new awareness and understanding. What I had thought was so special about Firemaker emerged as not being about the specific program components and their articulation, but rather a cultivation of the meta-competencies, that could (and do) occur in a variety of process orientated programs. However, I acknowledge that this requires skill such as how programs are set up to engage the active involvement of participants, and being able to respond in the here and now in a dynamic way. Similarly to how some participants experienced the program, distancing and active witnessing led me to new awareness and understanding of the program. Ironically in many ways, distancing has brought me closer to the program.

In asking participants whether or not they had experienced any shifts, I was aware that participants might feel pressured to answer in the affirmative. It is important to hold in mind that not all participants experienced shifts and I acknowledge that because of the diverse social and cultural contexts of the two groups of participants, different aspects took primacy: that was a combination of the lived experience, training

and work context of each group. As one participant reported, while acknowledging he experienced “small changes and I can’t measure them” (Anthony, Group One) these changes, he said, could be attributed to many things that were not “specific to the stuff we are doing here”.

Multiple Roles

With the multiple roles I brought to this research there were inherent ethical dilemmas (Kapitan, 2010). As facilitator and researcher the relationship with participants is innately unequal. Furthermore as participants were invited through their workplace organisations there was a secondary potential power imbalance at play. While my ideal of an egalitarian process was there I had to consider the realistic context. I did address these concerns both in setting up the research with team leaders as well as with each individual and as a group.

I was particularly concerned in Group One that the person who arranged the group was also the group’s manager and in the group and I wondered how this might affect the dynamics and freedom of the group. I addressed this with the team leader and each person, stressing confidentiality. I also gave them the opportunity to talk about these issues in the post workshop interviews. While nothing was articulated or surfaced during the workshops, one can never assume there were not power dynamics at play. Having said this it is important to note that all these workshops were not assessment based in any way and there was not reporting to direct managers. There might have been the pressure to attend and felt obligation as there would have been questions had they not attended.

Despite the challenges and limitations involved, I would like to suggest that this research offers hope and encouragement to arts therapists to recognise the value of their

practice as potential evidence and, indeed, method of research enquiry. Furthermore, despite the complexities of this research, I hope it goes some way to demystifying the qualitative research process in the context of arts-based practice, extending a challenge to traditional research paradigms, while encouraging new ways of knowing in our supercomplex world (Barnett, 2008).

Recommendations

I conclude this dissertation with my recommendations. Firstly, that dramatherapists take up the challenge in recognising the potential role we have to play in extending our practice beyond the clinical. That we continue to strive for critical reflexivity in recognising the intertwining of the psycho, social and political in stasis and change. That we open up dialogue on how we may offer up transformational learning spaces that are not intentionally therapeutic, but draw on therapeutic change principles. That we consider how these principles might be extended to teacher training and parent and child programs. That we work in partnership with arts practitioners too.

Secondly, there are implications for how we rethink professional development of care workers, as spaces that consciously encourage internal playfulness, and the capacity to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty in challenging times. That we seek alternative ways to support those working with children and young people, by creating spaces not to fix, control and regulate but to understand, create relationship and play. That we find ways to build arts practice into these spaces in collaboration with organisations and communities. That we engage care workers in active methods that intentionally create a third relationship, and space to reflect on it.

Thirdly, I recommend that further research into the core dramatherapy processes of embodiment, dramatic projection, distancing, empathy and active witnessing be explored in collaboration with other arts therapy modalities, in understanding core change processes that may be applicable to all.

My last recommendation is around developing further collaborative research opportunities to explore the roles of empathy, distancing and active witnessing through arts practice, with those who work with children and young people.

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Appendix A

Table of the Chronological Development of the Firemaker Program

Timeline:	2003	2004-2005	2006	2006-2007	2007-2008 (18 months)	2008-2010	2010-2013	2013-2016
	<p>HopeHIV conference.</p> <p>Outcome: Firemaker conceptualized</p> <p>Proposal developed with drama art and play therapist</p>	<p>Pilot Firemaker:</p> <p>Run in three sites</p>	<p>South African Institute of Traumatic Stress</p> <p>Formal evaluation</p>	<p>Integration of some of the recommendations made in evaluation.</p> <p>More child development theory</p>	<p>Train the trainer</p> <p>Train eight trainers across SA to train facilitators to run training and supervise facilitators</p>	<p>Firemaker run locally and in Zimbabwe and Brazil</p> <p>Adapted to form professional development program for trauma mental health workers in Beirut. Music Therapy now also included.</p>	<p>FM run over a year in partnership with a single organization, training care workers within that organization. Workshops run</p> <p>With 2 facilitators and one intern to increase pool of trainers</p>	<p>After initial selection, a contract is signed between Zakheni and partnering organisation. Care workers are recruited/selected by each organisation and then asked to fill in initial personal application form. (see appendix)</p>
Workshop outline:		<p>Two workshops:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introductory: intensive 4 days Group supervision 2. Consolidation: intensive 3 days Follow up focus group 		<p>Three workshops:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intro 3 days supervision 2. Consolidation 3 days supervision 3. Application 3 days supervision 	<p>Run over 18 months</p> <p>To have 12 FireMaker Introductory Workshops running in each of the Provincial 'Homes' and surrounding areas. Initially, supervisors would run the workshops with FM facilitators co-facilitating. Following this, the transition will be made to FM Facilitators facilitating with supervisors observing and finally to FM Facilitators facilitating on their own with supervisors supervising.</p>	<p>Firemaker workshops as before.</p> <p>Beirut Prof development: 4 day intensive workshop</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Considering the creative arts 2. The stories we tell: considering our individual and collective stories and histories, through art-making 3. The stories we hear: responding to and revisioning our lives 4. Our lives as ritual: knitting community and networks 	<p>Include wellbeing:</p> <p>One year partnership</p> <p>Four workshops</p> <p>1: wellbeing</p> <p>2: introduction</p> <p>3: consolidation</p> <p>4: application</p>	
Challenges		<p>Questions around methodology and outcome of workshops</p> <p>Participants from a number of different organizations in each province</p>		<p>Questions around need for training to happen in African indigenous languages, and to create sustainability by training local community facilitators to run the programs</p>	<p>Community facilitators were full time employed and the training was time demanding.</p> <p>Not enough consultation with community facilitators.</p> <p>No official accreditation of training.</p> <p>Questions around ethics and training of non-therapists to train others in use of therapeutic arts.</p> <p>Potential trainers had no previous experience of arts practice.</p> <p>Program too complex and layered, needs adaptation to meet needs of a number of professionals and paraprofessionals</p>	<p>Recognize need to have different Firemaker workshops aimed at different levels.</p>		

					Possibly address Western notion of therapy			
New developments		Donor requests a formal evaluation	Recommendations made by formal evaluation		Firemaker to be run by arts therapists and increase facilitator pool by training newly qualified arts therapists (preferably black).	Integrate wellbeing into Firemaker workshops Need for reflective practice for facilitators	Major funding from Lottery Board received Participants all from one organization	Move away from therapeutic arts to a focus on play and creativity as a way to develop relationship with child/young person

Appendix B

Organisational ZATF Application Document



**ZAKHENI
ARTS
THERAPY
FOUNDATION**

**FIREMAKER
APPLICATION DOCUMENT**

**YOU ARE INVITED TO APPLY FOR THE
FIREMAKER PROJECT OF THE ZAKHENI
ARTS THERAPY FOUNDATION**

CLOSING DATE	
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**APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE CLOSING DATE WILL NOT BE
CONSIDERED**

APPLICATION DOCUMENTS MAY BE POSTED TO:

**ZAKHENI ARTS THERAPY FOUNDATION
142 LOWER MAIN ROAD, OBSERVATORY 7925**

OR

EMAILED TO: xxx@zakheni.org.za

THE FIREMAKER WORKSHOP

Background

The levels of trauma, violence, poverty and HIV/AIDS in South Africa are having an ever increasing impact on communities. To date most of the work being done is in crisis intervention and care. There is a growing realisation that we need to address the emotional impact these social issues are having on individuals and communities.

The FireMaker project is a development project of the Zakheni Arts Therapy Foundation. This project sets out to address the psychosocial support needs of communities affected by HIV and AIDS, poverty and conflict, with a focus on the creative arts and children. We aim to build capacity amongst care workers already working in the field.

Vision

To enhance the psychosocial wellbeing of children in the context of HIV and AIDS, poverty and conflict, through the creative arts

Mission

To equip care workers with creative arts tools in the psychosocial support and care of children.

Narrative:

Between 2002 and 2003 HopeHIV funded various Creative Arts Therapy projects in South Africa. A HopeHIV Conference held in South Africa in November 2003 brought the Creative Arts Therapists they were funding together.

In response to a need identified at this conference, a project was conceptualised to develop skills and build capacity amongst care workers and organisations working in the field of HIV and AIDS across Africa, using creative arts processes.

The Therapists have identified aspects of their work which will be valuable yet **safe** for the care workers to use. These 'tools' will support and enhance the work the care workers already do. A pilot phase of FireMaker was funded by HopeHIV in 2004.

The pilot project was evaluated by the South African Institute of Traumatic Stress in Johannesburg. While highlighting areas that could be developed, the report concluded "The Firemaker Project is meeting a real need of South African communities and the care workers that

serve them. The Zakheni Arts Therapy Foundation should continue to find ways to make such skills available to care workers in South African communities.”¹

Subsequent to the pilots further FireMaker workshops have been conducted in a number of regions, including the Eastern and Southern Africa Region, South America and the Middle East. As the project has developed, it has expanded to include all vulnerable children.

Intervention

In order to formulate an effective and accessible training program, which addresses relevant and specific needs of particular communities, we have approached it in the following way:

- We are working in a partnership with each site, in order to understand each community’s specific needs.
- We aim to give practical understanding and equipping of simple and creative tools to enhance their work with children.
- To provide ongoing evaluation and supervision to trained participants in order to support the development of their creative work with children.
- Once participants are competent in using the creative arts tools they will be equipped to work with children :

In building relationship and trust

Exploring the themes of safety and resilience

Expressing feelings the issues affecting their lives

Being aware of the importance of care for the care worker

The Workshops

Children express themselves naturally through art, drama, music and play. But in a world where families struggle to survive, children’s need to emotionally develop through play often goes unnoticed and unmet, with damaging consequences.

Children who are orphaned, sick or particularly vulnerable need special emotional care to communicate their difficult feelings. Given time, tools and support by adults, they can build up positive coping mechanisms and resilience.

The FireMaker project is a series of four, three-day workshops, supervision and

¹ Craig Higson-Smith, Beverley Mulder, Nomphumelelo Zondi, Report On The FireMaker Project: A Formative And Summative Evaluation, South African Institute For Traumatic Stress, 2006

mentoring for child care workers in Southern Africa. The course focuses on experiential learning and equips participants with techniques like puppet making, storytelling, art and clay activities as well as exploring basic child development theory.

BREAKDOWN OF WORKSHOP AIMS AND CONTENT

A brief summary of the content of our workshops follows:

Wellbeing Workshop (3 days)

- awareness of the emotional impact of care work
- development of self insight and awareness, through experiential creative processes
- equipping care workers with practical tools in self care
- creating an awareness of organisational dynamics and the impact of this on individual staff members and on care work practice

Introductory Workshop (3 days)

- Personal Development through experiential Arts Processes
- Experiencing myself in a group
- Experiencing the Arts
- Experiencing Role Model Facilitators
- Self awareness and Insight

Consolidation Workshop (3 days)

- Creating a Safe Space
- Working with Drama, Art and Music
- Building Resilience
- Developmental Stages of Play
- Interpersonal Skills (Listening, Building Trust, Building Relationships)
- Effective Facilitation Skills (including planning a session)
- Creative Facilitation Techniques

Application Workshop (3 days)

- Deepening and refreshing the FireMaker techniques and methodology
- Looking at using these techniques responsibly

- Offering supervision: Giving support around what careworkers are doing in their work
- Building confidence to use the techniques
- Offering PSS programming support and facilitating planning
- Putting systems in place so that FireMaker principles become part of the organisation.

The Wellbeing and FireMaker workshops are not only about individual development, but also about organisational development. It is important for your organisation to be able to accommodate the development and changes which might occur due to these skills development workshops.

A. ORGANISATION DETAILS**1. Contact Details**

Name							
Physical Address							
Postal Address							
Telephone							
Facsimile							
Email address							
Contact Person							
Position							
Cellphone							
Website							
Type of Organisation	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">NPO/ NGO</td> <td style="text-align: center;">CBO</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Other</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">If Other, please specify.....</td> </tr> </table>	NPO/ NGO	CBO	Other	If Other, please specify.....		
NPO/ NGO	CBO	Other					
If Other, please specify.....							
Registration number	0						

2. Scope and Background

2.1 Describe why the Organisation was established

--

2.2 Please give details of all services provided

2.3 Please tell us more about the context and community within which you operate

2.4 What is the reach of your Organisation?

Geographically

How many people benefit from you services..

2.5 How many centres, offices, clinics do you run and where are they located?

2.6 Would you describe your Organisation as (Please tick)

Well funded		Reasonably funded		Lacking funding	
-------------	--	-------------------	--	-----------------	--

Who are your funders

2.7 Please tick any of the following services you provide

	Psychosocial support		HIV support
	Capacity building		Hospices
	Advocacy		Services to OVC
	Counselling and support		Youth/adults life skills
	Home-based care		Other

2.8 How many staff and volunteers do you employ?

2.9 Please tell us about your any capacity building partnerships you have and specify what training they have conducted in your Organisation

--

B. CAREWORKER DETAILS

1. How many Careworkers do you employ?

2. Who of these do you want to refer to the FireMaker Project training?

Of these, how many are directly working with children?

3. Are they running any psychosocial support groups?

4. Please describe :

-how many per week?

-what is the nature of them?

3. Describe the kind of Careworkers you employ (tick as many as you want)

	VCT counsellors		Home-based Careworkers
	Individual counsellors		Social workers
	Family counsellors		Healthcare workers
	Group counsellors		Teachers (primary/secondary school)
	Support group facilitators		Other (please specify)

4. Please give us an overview of their average academic level

	Did not complete school	Number of staff
	Matriculated	Number of staff
	Degree/ Diploma	Number of staff
	Other(please specify)	Number of staff

5. Please describe any other training that is relevant to their work

First Aid Training

Skills Training

6. What support is currently in place for the wellbeing of the Careworkers you employ?

7. What first languages do your Careworkers speak?

8. Can they communicate in English?

C. BENEFICIARY DETAILS

1. Who are the recipients of your services?

2. Please give an average number of children who benefit from your services

Beneficiaries

Number of people

Children aged 0 - 6	
Children aged 6 - 12	
Youth aged 13 - 17	

D. OTHER DETAILS

1. Please indicate whether you will be able to fund or co-fund this programme

2. The minimum requirement is for our partners to provide a **venue, catering** and **nominal fee** for the workshops.

2.1. Would you be able to provide these?

2.2. Please indicate what amount you will be able to contribute

R1,000.00 – R2,000.00		R5,000.00 – R10,000.00	
R2,000.00 – R5,000.00		Other Amount	

3. Please motivate why you feel your Organisation will benefit from the Zakheni Wellbeing Workshop and FireMaker Project (approximately 300 words)

4. If your application was successful, how will your organisation use this opportunity?

Signed _____ on _____

Appendix C

ZATF Firemaker Care Worker Application Form

THE FIREMAKER PROJECT



ZAKHENI
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Application form for FireMaker Care Workers

To be completed by applicants.

Please attach a photograph for identification purposes.

Your comments will be used to improve further workshops and may be used for further research purposes. All comments will remain anonymous and your privacy and confidentiality will at all times be maintained.

Name:

ID or Passport No:

Organisation:

Position in Organisation:

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

Nationality:

Home Language:

Other Languages:

Gender:

Academic certificate:

Tick which applies

No schooling

Primary school

Grade 9 school leavers (old std 7 or 8)

Matriculation exemption

Post Matric qualifications:

Qualification	Institution	Date

1. List other certificated training courses completed, and description where necessary. Include all childcare and counselling courses specifically:

2. Describe the work you have done with children in your community. Tick as many of the following as you like.

Parent / Foster parent

Grandparent

Other caregiver

Individual counselling

Family counselling

Group counselling

Support group facilitation

Home-based care

Social work

Health care worker

Teacher (primary school)

Teacher (secondary school)

Other (please give details)

3. Describe the way you would interact with a child that you are working with when you first meet them?

4. Working in this field can be extremely stressful. What do you do to take care of yourself?

5. In what areas or communities is your organization currently working?

6. What do you like most about working with children?

7. What do you find most difficult about working with children?

8. Have you had any experience in Art, Drama, Play, Storytelling and/or Music?

9. Is there any other information you would like to give in reference to your application? Please include any special requirements that you might have.

Signed: _____

Date: _____



ZAKHENI
ARTS
THERAPY
FOUNDATION

Appendix D

ZATF Firemaker Evaluation Form

FIREMAKER PROJECT WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS' EVALUATION

FUNDED BY



FACILITATOR'S NAMES: _____

WORKSHOP DATES: _____

We would appreciate you spending some time completing the questions below.

Your comments will be used to improve further workshops and may be used for further research purposes. All comments will remain anonymous and your privacy and confidentiality will at all times be maintained.

1. Please indicate the extent to which the skills you gained on the course will be of value to you.

Not valuable at all	A little valuable	Valuable	Very valuable	Extremely Valuable

2. Please indicate the skill of your facilitator:

How clearly did you facilitator present the workshops?

Very confusing	Unclear	Clear	Very clear	Exceptionally clear

3. How was the pace?

Very slow	A bit slow	Just right	A bit fast	Very fast

4. Did you feel cared for and listened to?

Not at all	A little	Somewhat	A lot	All the time

5. Please describe the most important things you learnt on the workshop.

6. Which of the following words best describes your experience of the workshop? (You can tick more than one if you like)

Somewhat upsetting	
Boring	

Unpleasant	
Too theoretical	
Not theoretical enough	
Interesting	
Enjoyable	
Fun	
Playful	
Exciting	
Creative	
Valuable	
Healing	
Empowering	
Exhausting	
Too long	
Too short	
Disappointing	
Unusual	

Other: _____

7. What did you enjoy most about the workshop?

8. What did you **not enjoy** about the workshop?

9. What improvements to the workshop would you suggest?

10. Other comments about:

- The facilitators:
- The workshop arrangements:
- Did this workshop help you on a personal level? If so, how?
- Did this workshop help you think about the work you do? If so, how?

11. Please feel free to make any additional comments:

Appendix E

Background to the Firemaker Program

Background to Firemaker

The Firemaker Program was developed by the Zakheni Arts Therapy Foundation, a not-for-profit, non-government organization. It was initiated in 2005, after a Conference on HIV and AIDS, at which care workers expressed the need for professional development and creative techniques and skills to use in their psychosocial support work. It has also been piloted in Beirut, Zimbabwe and Brazil

Firemaker is a unique interdisciplinary program underpinned by arts therapy theory and methods (notably art, drama and play therapies) to instruct care workers, through experiential learning, to use the arts to build resilience in vulnerable children. The Firemaker is different to other current psychosocial training programs in that it does not provide a formulaic directive approach to working with children who are emotionally vulnerable. Rather, it offers something unique in that it is underpinned by arts therapy processes and an explicit theory of how these processes work, that engage the care workers in experiential creative processes with ample reflection time and space. While the arts program that participants will take part in is underpinned with arts therapy knowledge and theory, the program itself is not therapy. It is a skills program that helps participants experience and think about the use of the creative arts in their group work. Participants are encouraged to consider their own pre-existing knowledge, limits and strengths. The experiential activities have been carefully chosen to enhance learning, but that will not be confused with personal therapy.

The Firemaker intentionally uses arts methods to facilitate creativity, spontaneity, imagination, learning, insight and growth. Furthermore, it represents an arts program that integrates arts as learning and arts as therapy in collaboration with participants in community contexts. It is an example of how arts therapists have had to be different and collaborate across disciplines and practices. It brings together the personal and the collective, both in method and goal. The program is run by qualified and nationally registered Arts Therapists who also monitor and supervise the work of the care workers in order to support the development of their creative work with children.

The Program Outline

The program consists of a series of four three-day intensive block workshops spread over 8 months. The groups are closed and consist of carefully selected care workers within various child service organizations who undertake to do the training. Firemaker works in a partnership with each organisation, in order to understand each community's specific needs.

The structure of the Firemaker has evolved and changed over the years into its current form, which is:

- Workshop 1-wellbeing

- Workshop 2-introduction to the Firemaker method: play and arts techniques and processes
- Workshop 3- consolidation of Firemaker method and arts techniques and processes
- Workshop 4- the application and deepening knowledge and practice of techniques learnt.

The most recent addition to the Firemaker has been the Wellbeing workshop. Through practice and ongoing monitoring and evaluation, it became imperative to include a 'space' for the care workers to process their feelings around their work as well as time to reflect on the importance of self-care, before focusing on learning new skills.

Each workshop begins with play activities and engaging care workers in spontaneous creative play, freeing them up to do more complex drama and art activities. Typically, the first day of each workshop intensive consists of play activities. The second and third days lead into drama, music and art activities. Each workshop builds on and deepens techniques from the previous one. Most of these arts activities draw on local culture or have been adapted for and from the South African context.

Firemaker has a monitoring and evaluation system in place. A formal independent evaluation (formative and summative) of the program was carried out by the South African Institute for Traumatic Stress (Higson-Smith et al., 2006). Details of this evaluation cannot be included here, but the report noted: 'Their vision challenges all South African mental health and welfare professionals to look critically at their work, and to search for more effective, culturally embedded ways of building psychosocial care in our country' (Higson-Smith, 2006, p. 1).

Appendix F

Information to Participants Involved in Research

You are invited to participate

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled:

‘Examining the role of an arts-based program in enhancing care workers capacity to respond to children and youth’.

This project is being conducted by a Graduate researcher Kirsten Meyer as part of a PhD study at Victoria University under the supervision of Associate Professor Christopher Sonn and Dr Romana Morda from College of Arts and Associate Professor Tarquam McKenna from the College of Education.

Project explanation

This research focuses on youth workers and how participation in an arts program (the Firemaker Program) might enhance their capacity to respond to the children/youth they work with.

The Firemaker Program was developed in South Africa by creative arts therapists at the Zakheni Arts Therapy Foundation (www.zakheni.org.za), to provide psychosocial support through the arts to children affected by poverty, violence, loss, conflict and HIV. The term Firemaker evokes the tradition whereby communities would gather around a fire to share stories and connect with each other. It also comes with the understanding that the ‘pilot light’ of health exists within all of us, representing the fire of hope, health and creativity.

The Firemaker program equips youth workers with creative arts tools to use in your own professional work. Participants are encouraged to consider your own pre-existing knowledge, limits and strengths. The experiential activities have been carefully chosen to enhance learning, but that will not be confused with personal therapy.

This research project aims to examine your experiences of participation in workshops based on methods from the Firemaker Program, and 2) seeks to explore how participation in this program might influence your understanding of your role as youth worker and your interactions with children/youth.

What will I be asked to do?

If you choose to participate in this research project there are 4 things you will be asked to do:

1. You will be asked to participate in two 30 minute face-to-face interviews, before and after the workshop program. These will be a chance for you to talk about some of the challenges you may face in your work with youth. With your permission these will be audio taped.

2. You will be asked to participate in a shortened version of the Firemaker professional development workshop program, consisting of four days spread over 6 months. The program will be run in a closed group of maximum 10 participants and no-one will be able to join the group once it has been established. During the course of the workshop program you will also be asked to participate in arts activities (play, art and drama) and reflect on the process and your experience of engaging with the activities. These activities are designed to facilitate your learning of how the arts can be used to build resilience in young people. They are also activities that you will be able to incorporate into your group work with young people. With your permission, the entire program will be video-recorded.

3. At 3 specific points in the workshop program (day 1, day 3 and day 4) a specific focus activity, using the creative arts, will be facilitated and you will be asked to think about your work with youth and the challenges you face. If you agree, with your permission the researcher would like to take photographs of the artwork created during these activities. The researcher would also like to use these photographs for research purposes, meaning that they could be published in her PhD thesis and academic journals or presented at conferences.

4. Additionally, you will also be asked to keep a journal of the activities you use and your reflections on using these with the groups you run in your daily work.

What will I gain from participating?

You will potentially benefit in terms of your personal and professional development as follows:

- 1) Learn valuable creative facilitation/group work skills

- 2) Understand how the arts, when applied in a specific way, enable young people to:
 - communicate and express feelings difficult to verbalise
 - express feelings safely without being overwhelmed
 - develop the imagination, creativity and problem solving abilities
 - engage mind, body and emotions
 - interact socially and build community

3) Experience being part of a group that gives you space to explore your experiences of working with groups

4) Experience a supportive space to reflect on and think about your practice as a facilitator in the following ways:

- to develop self-awareness (how you think/talk about your work) self confidence
- think about group process and dynamics
- find new ways of creative self and group expression
- collective problem solving and support
- learn to tolerate uncertainty in yourself and those you work with
- not strive for unrealistic expectations of yourself and those you work with

In addition you will receive mentoring and supervision as well as a Firemaker Manual with creative arts activities and supplementary theory.

How will the information I give be used?

The information you provide during the program, including direct quotes and photographs of artwork and activities, may be used in:

Kirsten Meyer's PhD thesis and various scholarly publications and/or conference presentations

In order to maintain your confidentiality, pseudonyms will be used in the thesis, conference presentations and other publications. If you agree to be audio and video-taped, these recordings will only be used for research purposes to help the researcher accurately record observations.

What are the potential risks of participating in this project?

Participating in group arts processes and the reflection process that follows will involve some sharing of work and personal experiences. It is possible that reflecting on these experiences may bring up uncomfortable and potentially distressing feelings for you. However, the facilitator/researcher is a trained counsellor, skilled in managing emotional distress.

Furthermore, you will be free to interrupt or terminate your participation in the group at any time, without consequence to yourself. Should you feel the need to further discuss any distressing experience related to the program, you will be able to speak to Dr Gavin Ivey psychologist and staff member (telephone 9919 2138) at Victoria University. Dr Ivey has agreed to provide counselling support free of charge.

How will this project be conducted?

After signing a 'Participation Consent' form, arrangements will be made through your organisation to conduct the workshops at mutually convenient time and place for all participants.

The recorded workshops, photographs and journals will be transcribed and analysed to identify central themes relevant to the topic. Both general patterns and individual experiences will be reported in a thesis and manuscripts prepared for conference presentation or publication in scholarly journals. Should you be interested, research results and any subsequent publications will be made available to you.

Who is conducting the study?

Chief Investigator: Associate Professor Christopher Sonn on 03 9919 5226,

Student Researcher: Kirsten Meyer 0416 965 910 (Cert IV in Training and Assessment and qualified and registered Dramatherapist)

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the Chief Investigator listed above.

If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Ethics Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001 or phone (03) 9919 4781.

Appendix G

Firemaker Workshop Plans

DAY ONE: INTRODUCTIONS, ICE BREAKERS, CONTRACT, BUILDING TRUST AND PLAY

TIME: 9:00-16:00

AIMS: To establish working contract,

Get to know the group and create safe working space

Introduce play techniques, developmental stages of play, listening skills and idea of safety

	Activity Description	Resources	Notes
9-9:10	Welcome and introductions Fire ritual: making imaginary fire		
9:10-9:40	Explore room Fast speed handshake Emotional greetings Categorical groupings Names and stories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a Name Badge • Show group and Story of your name 	Paper, textas name, labels, ball	
9:40-10:10	Expectations and Contract: thinking about making a contract with a children and youth Find a partner and discuss 1 thing you would like the group to know about you today AND 1 reason why you have come to this workshop, or what you want to get out of it. Introduce your partner to the group telling them the 1 thing they want the group to know about them and the 1 reason why they are on this workshop. These are our expectations and in order to achieve all we want we need to agree on a working alliance. What do we need to agree on to allow maximum participation? Facilitate group negotiating their contract <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write up on flipchart as contract. • Prompts: confidentiality, safety, voluntary, nothing is compulsory, time, etc 	Flip chart and pens reflective journal template	

Talk re research and multiple roles

Purpose of journals and how to use them: hand out reflective question template. Remind that

10:10-10:30	TEA BREAK	
10:30-12:00	Focus reflective activity 1 See Appendix E	
12-12:30	Reflect on interpretation and art/image making	
12:30-13:00	LUNCH	
13:00-13:30	Intro to FireMaker Method (theory and discussion input) hand out manuals	Firemaker Manuals
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the Arts in psychosocial support • Different ways of communicating through play: art, drama and music • Non judgement, no interpretation • Children communicate, grow and develop (themselves and with each other) through play. • Language of the unconscious/inside world • Building Resilience (moving out of isolation into group interaction, building trust, regaining sense of safety, expressing feelings, having them acknowledged through reflection, developing self-esteem) • Building Group Safety – central theme, building contract, group cohesion etc. 	
13:30-15:00	Who do we work with:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making an Image of a young person: in groups of 3 participants draw an image of the typical young person they work with. Age, gender, clothes, hobbies • Reflect on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the history of this young person? Why have they been referred to you? 2. What is the personality of this young person and what is their behaviour? 3. How do they play/what do they do in their spare time? 4. What are their needs? 5. What is your relationship to this young person? 	

- Reflection: Introduce the image of the youth to the group
 - Each group thinks about the word “Resilience” – what do they understand about it and how do they build it?
 - FireMaker Model of Building Resilience
- 15:00-15:30 Journey Song with Movement
- In a group of 3, create and rehearse a short performance piece with movement and sound which describes the ups and downs of your working lives. Include all the names of the people in your group, and think about celebrating each person for what they bring to their work. You may find a tune you already know and change the words, or simply a rhythm with words spoken or sounds over this. Also find movements and shapes with your body that add to the piece. Enact this for the other groups. Reflect.
- 15:30-16:00 Reflection and Closure
- Reflect on the day
- Reminder about journals
- Housekeeping: next workshop dates/close fire ritual.

DAY TWO: PLAY AND ART

TIME: 9:00-16:00

AIMS: To learn techniques to encourage child’s expression through creating and playing with puppets

To think about developmental stages of play

Time	Activity Description	Resources	Time
9-9:30	<p>Warm Up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fire ritual: welcome to fire <p>Re-igniting the fire by finding the imaginary sticks that hold the flame taken at the end of the Introductory session. Asking the group first what is needed before lighting the fire. Whole group use stick torches to light the fire together, again keeping their torch safe.</p> <p>Ask group what happens around the fire (with the aim to illicit the following: tell stories, move, dance, share, connect, make music, sing, express ourselves) Reaffirm this is what FireMaker is: something our ancestors knew was important to do to keep their community strong!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feeling and Name for group 		

- Transform the movement
- (The Wind Blows for /sun shines on)
- Share with partner anything left over from workshops last time and one

thing they want group to know about them this morning

- Partner tells group

Consolidate/recap learning from last workshop

We are here to deepen understanding of working with creative arts. There will be new activities, but everything will build on theory introduced in the first workshop.

- Use scarves to decorate the room as team

Reflection the importance of changing the space to create comfort and safety

9:30-11:00 **Focused Reflective Activity** (see Appendix K).

11:15-11:30 **TEA**

- Reflection on the above process
- Developmental Stages of Play Model – Intro

12:30-13:00 **LUNCH**

- Squiggle Game

Group work discussion: What is Art for them, Value of Art, their experiences of art in their past, art in this method (Include in discussion – traditional view, non-judgement, way of expression, safe way of communicating, no interpretation)

14:30-15:30 **Change the bottle**

Storymaking

- Intro to story structure: beginning, middle and end; climax; characters; where; when In groups of 3, creating Puppet Stories
NB! Keeping the puppet characters from the morning
- Puppet Shows

- De Role (poster on why de role)
 - Reflection: Audience reflects what they saw in puppet show and drawing out feelings they were left with. Share
- 15:30-16:00 Reflection with posters around
- Process of distancing
 - and developmental stages
 - why and where use it and age appropriateness
- Closure**
- Shake, Stretch, Breath and Massage
 - housekeeping
 - Close fire and space

DAY THREE: DRAMA

TIME: 9:00-16:00

AIMS: To introduce story making and enacting as tools of expression and processing of emotionally relevant themes

	Activity Description	Resources	Notes
9-9:30	<p>Warm Up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire ritual: welcome to fire • Name and Feeling • Reconnect and feedback on past weeks 		
9:30-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do what I do • Intro today: Drama, ro <p>TEA</p>		
11:30-12:15	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person to Person • Walking on different surfaces • Excuse Me, what are you doing? • Pass Imaginary object • Task: Accepting offers 		

- In a circle, one person starts by forming an imaginary object with their hands. They give it to the person next to them saying, “Here, take this...”. The receiver says “Thank you, with this... I’m going to...”
- 12:15-13:00 **Keep the Ball in the Air**
- Change the Scarf
- What’s the story? Creating frozen sculptures in the middle of the circle, 2 participants at a time, one swapping out.
- 13:00-13:30 **LUNCH**
- 13:30-15:00 **Main:**
- Focused reflective Activity 2**
- Body sculptures: see (Appendix K)
- Once participants have a handle on this, develop into moving scenes with words. Facilitator shouts ‘freeze’ and someone is swapped out.
- Working with story text:
- Facilitator tells story to group (to be decided)
 - Acting out the story
 - De Role
 - Reflection on flipchart
- how did it feel
 - storytelling vs. books or TV – imagination and embodiment
 - age appropriateness with children
 - other stories with relevant themes
 - distancing
- 15:00-16:00 **Reflection and closure**
- Review where we are
- Way forward
- Housekeeping

Fire ritual

DAY FOUR: CONSOLIDATION**TIME: 9:00-16:00****AIMS:**

To focus on consolidating methodology from previous workshops

To build on tools and techniques from previous workshop

To look at applying the FireMaker Method further within a variety of work contexts.

	Activity Description	Resources	Notes
9-9:30	<p>Warm Up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire ritual: • Name and Feeling • Transform the Movement • Stretching and Breathing through body parts • The sunshines on.... • Master to the Jack • Moving in the space • Take a walk exploring the room, notice how your body is feeling, gradually moving faster, being aware of one another, making eye contact, filling in the spaces as you move around, eating up space with your body. 		
9:30-10:30	<p>Contexts: what I am and what I am not....</p> <p>Keeping the arts and participants safe: containment and relevant theory including importance of cultural sensitivity</p> <p>(Depending on the group this may be a good time to introduce the containment theory behind it: mother's role to contain the child's feelings.)</p> <p>Let us think about some of the things we did in this group to make it feel safe over the past few days. Why did you feel safe to explore your creativity and feelings in this room? Think back to day 1, what are some of the things put in place to make the experience safe?"</p>		

Lead a discussion, with the aim of drawing out:

1. The contract
2. Physical spaces (including the actual room being safe and not interrupted and the activities having containers: the circle, the stage, the cloth on which the play happens, the storybook covers, the box for the clay, puppet theatre etc.)
3. Strategies like use of beginning and ending ritual, the shape of the session, distancing, de roling, story structure, listening and reflecting back.

10:30-11:00

Resilience Refresh

In groups of 3, sitting with the image of the young person you made, discuss what you remember about resilience, what does it mean and how do we try and build this with youth? Participants can write notes for themselves. Share these findings with the large group.

Facilitators refer back to the FireMaker Model of Resilience flipchart:

- Building trust
- Regaining a sense of safety
- Moving out of isolation
- Expressing feelings
- Feeling listened to and acknowledged
- Building self esteem
- Overcoming obstacles
- Developing Imagination

11-11:15

TEA

11:15-12:15

6 part story

Participants each get a paper and TEXTAS. Facilitator shows them how to divide the paper into 6 parts and guides them step by step to draw: 1. Landscape 2. Main Character 3. Task 4. Obstacle 5. Friend and 6. Resolution.

12:15-13:00

Reflection

Participants share their 6 part story with a partner, who goes to join them in their world. They are encouraged to 'tell' their story actively with found objects, 'playing out' the story they created on paper.

13:00-13:30

LUNCH

13:30-15:00 **Group evaluation** (see appendix K)

15:00-16:00 Closure

•Mention dates and intention of next workshop.
Before next workshop put FireMaker into practice so you can come with lessons learned. Mention the post program interview

- De Role the space

Collecting flip charts, toys and stories into centre of circle

- Expectations

Revisit expectations. Invite anyone to comment on whether their expectation was met or not.

- Clearing Space

Facilitator gather flipcharts, each person takes clay image, puppets, 6-part and name badge.

- FireMaker Closing Ritual

Leaving behind anything in the fire, taking what you want. Rolling up the fire and sending it to the stars in the sky. (Each person already has their torch to light their own fires with youth and next time we meet)

Appendix H

Advertising Flyer

The Firemaker Program

Mindful Facilitation through the Arts

A professional development program for people who work with or care for children and youth.

The Firemaker Program was developed in South Africa by creative arts therapists at the Zakheni Arts Therapy Foundation (www.zakheni.org.za), to provide psychosocial support through the arts, to children affected by poverty, violence, loss, conflict and HIV. The term Firemaker evokes the tradition whereby communities would gather around a fire to share stories and connect with each other. It also comes with the understanding that the ‘pilot light of health exists within all of us’ (Emunah, 2006, p. 6), representing the fire of hope, health and creativity.

While same level of social adversity is not present in Australia, youth who are considered ‘at risk’ are present in many contexts. Professionals, faced with changing social contexts, needs and standards of professional practice, will continuously be required to acquire new skills over the course of a career. This program equips youth workers with creative arts tools in their own professional work.

While the Firemaker is underpinned with arts therapy knowledge and theory, the program itself is not therapy. It is a skills program that helps youth workers experience and think about the use of the creative arts in their group work. Participants are encouraged to consider their own pre-existing knowledge, limits and strengths. The experiential activities have been carefully chosen to enhance learning, but that will not be confused with personal therapy.

Our ethos, which underpins our approach as well as our considerable experience in this field, is that experiential learning is the only valid way to develop the skills needed for this kind of work.

What are the benefits of participating?

Personal and professional development focussing on the following:

- 1) Learn valuable creative facilitation/group work skills
- 2) Understand how the arts when applied in a specific way, enable young people to:
 - communicate and express feelings difficult to verbalise

- express feelings safely without being overwhelmed
- develop the imagination, creativity and problem solving abilities
- engage mind, body and emotions
- interact socially and build community

3) Experience being part of a group that gives you space to explore your experiences of working with groups

4) Supportive space to reflect on and think about your practice as a facilitator in the following ways:

- to develop self-awareness (how you think/talk about your work) self confidence
- think about group process and dynamics
- find new ways of creative self and group expression
- collective problem solving and support
- learn to tolerate uncertainty in yourself and those you work with
- not strive for unrealistic expectations of yourself and those you work with

In addition you will receive mentoring and supervision as well as a Firemaker Manual with creative arts activities and supplementary theory.

What will your participation involve?

If you are interested in taking part in this program, please note that you do not need any previous experience of the arts, in the same way you would not expect those you work with to. You will be invited to be part of a closed group of not more than 10 people to take part in a shortened version of the original Firemaker program consisting of 2 short face- to face interviews and 4 x 1 day workshop program to be run over 6 months (2014):

Workshop 1: 1 day Work contexts and play

Workshop 2: 1 day Firemaker Art methods

Workshop 3: 1 day Firemaker Drama methods

Workshop 4: 1 day Consolidation of Firemaker methods

About the trainer

Kirsten is a trained (University of Hertfordshire, UK) and registered (ANZATA and HPCSA) Dramatherapist with 15 years' experience with diverse communities. She has 20 years of training and facilitation experience and is an Australian certified trainer and assessor (Cert IV). She was involved in the conceptualisation and development of the Firemaker, and has run the program extensively in South Africa and Beirut. She brings with her a sound understanding of the creative arts and how they can be used effectively in education, healing and transformation.

For further information contact:

Kirsten Meyer Email: kirsten.meyer@live.vu.edu.au Mobile: 0416 965 910

Reference: Emunah, R. (1994). *Acting for Real: Drama Therapy Process, Technique and Performance*. New York: Brunner Mazel.

Appendix I

Consent Form for Participants Involved in Research

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS:

We would like to invite you to be a part of a study into the role of an arts-based program in enhancing care workers capacity to respond to children and youth.

This study focuses on youth workers and how participation in an arts program might enhance your capacity to respond to the children/youth you work with.

It aims to:

- 1) examine your experiences of participation in workshops based on methods from the Firemaker Program
- 2) and seeks to explore how participation in this program might influence your understanding of your role as youth worker and your interactions with children/youth.

You will be invited to take part in two short face-to face interviews (before and after) and four, one day arts workshops. The workshops will be run in a closed group of maximum 10 participants and no-one will be able to join the group once it has been established. Workshops will be facilitated by Kirsten Meyer. Participating in group arts processes and the reflection process that follows will involve some sharing of work and personal experiences. Group confidentiality will be discussed and negotiated.

CERTIFICATION BY SUBJECT

I, (Name): _____

Of (Suburb): _____

certify that I am at least 18 years old and that I am voluntarily giving my consent to participate in the study:

“Examining the the role of an arts-based program in enhancing care workers capacity to respond to children and youth”,

being conducted at Victoria University by:

Associate Professor Christopher Sonn

I certify that the objectives of the study, together with any risks and safeguards associated with the procedures listed hereunder to be carried out in the research, have been fully explained to me by:

Kirsten Meyer

and that I freely consent to participate in the below mentioned procedures:

- Partake in two face-to face interviews (before and after the program) that will be audio-taped
- Partake in four, one day arts workshops, based on the Firemaker Program, with Kirsten Meyer from Victoria University
- Have artwork and activities created by me photographed by the researcher YES
NO
- Be video-taped as part of the group process for research purposes only
YES NO

I certify that I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered and that I understand that I can withdraw from this project at any time.

I have been informed that the information I provide will be kept confidential.

Signed:

Date:

This project is being conducted by a Victoria University Research team. Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to Associate Professor Christopher Sonn on 03 9919 5226 or Kirsten Meyer on 0416 965 910

If you have any queries or complaints about your involvement in the evaluation, you may contact the Ethics & Biosafety Coordinator, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001 phone (03) 9919 4148.

Appendix J

Individual Interviews

A. Interview schedule before program starts

- Introduce myself: I am Kirsten Meyer from VU.
- Hand Information for Participants Sheet (Appendix F) and Background to Firemaker sheet (Appendix E) to participant
- Go through sheets and answer any questions participant may have
- Ask participant to sign consent form. If they would like more time to think about it, terminate interview and make arrangement to contact them at a later stage.

Because of the nature of the project and the fact we will be working in a group, it would be helpful to get a deeper understanding of your needs and so I have a few questions:

4. Please tell me about your current work. Where you work, who you work with and what kinds of groups you run.
5. What are the things you enjoy about your work?
6. What are the things you find challenging about your work?
7. What do you like most about working with children?
8. What do you find most difficult about working with children?
9. Have you had any experience in Art, Drama, Play, Storytelling and/or Music? If so could you please briefly tell me more about your experiences?
10. How do you manage the challenges you may face in working with youth?
11. What would you like to gain from participating in this project?
12. Are there any questions you feel I should have asked?

B. Follow up interview schedule

4. Looking back over the Firemaker Program, what have you learnt about yourself and your work?
5. Are there aspects of Firemaker that you would like to keep in your work?
6. Have you gained any new skills or knowledge?
7. Has anything changed in your experience of yourself, or how you see yourself in your work with youth?
8. How has participation influenced our ways of working with young people?

9. Can you comment on a particular process or activity in Firemaker that made an impact on you (positive or negative) and can you say a bit more about that.
10. Any questions I haven't asked that I should have?
11. Did you feel in anyway persuaded to talk about FM in positive light?

Appendix K

Summary of Focused Activity Schedules

Focused Reflective Activity 1 Day One	Activity: Clay and Box Image	Resources	Time
	<p><i>(Note: A sheet of paper or piece of cardboard can be used as container for this activity if it seems box representing the workplace is not containing enough – depending on organisational structure and needs of participants.)</i></p> <p>Participants are invited to warm up with the clay before starting with the activity, simply exploring the texture, temperature, weight of the clay in your hands. Close eyes if comfortable. To start, you are not to make anything, just explore the different ways your hands can work with the clay – pinching, slapping, squeezing, rolling, stroking.</p> <p>Gradually start reflecting on your feelings about your work. How do these feelings translate into how your hands work with the clay? Open your eyes and see what shape has arisen from these feelings (without any judgment – we are just here to explore)</p> <p>We are going to make an image of you in your work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a box to represent the work you do with youth (imagine: what the work looks like, smells, feelings, others). Is the box big, small, open, closed? • Clay: make an image of yourself in your work. Think about your feelings about the work that you do. Allow yourself to explore what is difficult in your work. You will put the image of yourself into the box. How do you fit into the box/ How do you fit into the work you do? Do you fit? Perhaps there are others in the box too? How big, small, in relation to others etc. what surrounds you, what do you look like in it? You can also use other recycled materials to add to your image. 	Clay, boxes, found objects, recycled materials	60 mins

- When finished bring your clay images into middle of circle.
- Look at the image you have created....please could you share what you have made with the group.

Possible question prompts: One sentence about how you see yourself. What work do you do with youth? Please describe in as much detail as you can. Do you use the creative arts? If so what and how? What is it you feel about yourself and your work? How would you describe the way you respond to the youth you work with? What do you enjoy, what do you find challenging? Do your groups enjoy what you do with them? Why? Why not?

What do your groups not like? Why? Why not? How do you imagine they see you? If you could change something what would it be?

- Feedback and reflection on working in clay: what did you like, what did you not like, what did you notice about yourself, any other general themes you noticed? What did it feel like listening to others?
- Photograph all clay images.

Focused Reflective Activity 2 Activity: Object Worlds
Beginning of Day Two

Resources

Time

- 1. Warm up** into objects: pass round 3 objects
 This is...
 This is not....
 This could be....

60 mins

- Invite participants to choose objects (one to represent themselves) and a scarf and create a picture of their worlds right now (personal, social and professional).
- Walk around to view no comments as if in gallery. Discussion re Child's Monuments (Slade).
- One sentence form creator of object image and group responds with a physical position (mirroring).
- Participant gives their own image a title.
- All participants have a chance.
 - Share in pairs.
- Deconstruct Safe Place.
- Share in big group.

These will be photographed.

Focused Reflective Activity 3
Beginning of Day Three

Activity: Body Sculptures or Tableau

Use of the body to create a frozen picture/statue/sculpture. The body/bodies form a still image, like a 3-dimensional photograph. This technique allows participants to use their bodies to express ideas or situations, working individually or in groups. Embodiment.

Where are we now? Sculpts

1. Warm up into body sculptures: *walk, grab and tab (tableau)*

- Invite participants to move around the space, tell them that whenever you call out 'move' they must move around the room.

Resources

Photographs of
clay in boxes

Time

60 mins

- Then when you call out 'grab' they must quickly get into groups of two, three, four (or whatever you suggest).
- They will now be in groups and you can ask them to form a still image or tableau. You will need to give them an idea, issue, object or place, which they will have to express in a frozen picture or tableau. Examples may be: a caregiver and child, a soccer game, friendship, bullying.

Participants will be invited to look at the photographs of the clay in a box image they created on day one and asked to reflect on where they are right now in their work. They will then get into groups of 4 and one person sculpts the other 3 to show what the relationship looks like with a young person.

They will be asked to create 3 sculptures

Now....

3 months ago...

Future...

These will be photographed.

- Reflection: the group will have time to reflect in their journals as well as in the group. what did you like, what did you not like, what did you notice about yourself, any other general themes you noticed? What did it feel being sculpted and sculpting others?

Possible question prompts: Is anything changing in the way you work?

Group Evaluation Activity 4
End of Day Four

Activity: Journey Map of Work

Journey maps are commonly used as reflective tools in group work. They allow participants space to map out their experiences in an embodied way, and then step back and look/reflect on what they have created.

Participants will be invited to look at the photographs of the clay in a box image they created and the body sculptures they created from the previous two reflective arts activities. They will then be asked to reflect on where they are at the present moment in their work.

Scarves,
 photographs,
 found and
 recycled objects

60mins

Create a road/pathway of your experience of the Firemaker program

(your road will start when we started the first workshop and will end in the future)

- Introduce – objects are ‘representations of...’, It may include stop signs, rough patches, dead ends highlights etc.
- Think of symbols to represent each phase: tree, clouds etc.
- When you think about the Firemaker workshops so far and looking at it represented here, what stands out as the most shining moment for you? Mark it in the right place and time: find a symbol to represent this.
- What has been the most difficult experience in Firemaker? Mark this in right place and time.
- What have I learnt about myself so far?
- Mentors: add mentors you have had along the way

- Think about how you feel at the moment. Look at the journey you have made to get to where you are today. Put an object at a place on your journey or create a symbol to represent how you feel about your work today.

- Stand at end of journey and look back.....over the past 6 months, have you found anything useful and has anything changed in the way you work as a result? The way you see yourself? The way you see the children/youth you work with?
- Thinking about where you have come from and where you are now, create an image representing your future.

- Share individually with the group and researcher asks further questions if necessary.
- Share one aspect with group - “I notice about myself....” Or “A theme I noticed”.
- Group Reflection –Journal time.

Appendix L

Participant Case Summaries

Group One

One: Anthony

Background

Anthony is Jewish, white Australian, in his mid-30s with a young family and trained as a social worker. He works for a care organisation but has been working with this youth services centre since 2012 in a full time placement as part of a partnership agreement between the two organisations. His “*target*” is to work with “*the disengaged or families who are at risk of disengaging from education*”. He works with children and their families in a family systems model, most of who are based at a council housing estate where he is based. The families and children he works with come from multicultural and Indigenous backgrounds and his work involves case management, some group work and advocacy and networking. He says his work is a “*very community development style role*”.

He officially works with children aged 5-12 but he also runs a preschool group that includes siblings so actually works with ages 0-12. He enjoys seeing children “*developmentally flower, each in their own different way but genuinely marvelling at their talent*”. What he finds challenging in his work with children is working in a group context “*when one unsettles the other and then I lose control*”.

Why he wanted to engage in the Firemaker

By participating in the Firemaker Anthony wants some professional development (PD) and specifically he mentions learning new skills and getting new

ideas for group work. He comments that he has attended many PD programs before. He also says that he'd like time out of the office as a chance to reflect on his work and experience the arts himself. He also mentions that he has questions around arts processes and lacks the confidence to use them effectively with children. He is interested in art therapy and is concerned about its capacity for containment.

Overview of general experiences of participating in Firemaker

Anthony has an interest in music, especially drumming, and is highly reflective, articulate, strongly critical and deeply questioning. He is enthusiastic about activities, spontaneous, not afraid to take creative risks and is playful. The use of objects and materials in the arts activities for him *“has a life outside of your brain transforming certain parts and feeling that’s why it’s such a responsibility to work with this stuff... I definitely think it is very powerful”*.

Anthony is practical and pragmatic, concerned with having *“tools”* to access in his work with groups and children in particular. By *tools* he means small objects or art materials *“the acorns and army men or... a drum or piano or one paper and one pen”*. He also refers to *“tools”* as being activities to use in his work, such as the ice breakers explored in the Firemaker. Anthony chose through the device of sculpting to sculpt the way he sees himself at work around the actual piano in the workshop space: *“I feel excited when there’s a tool in front of me (the piano) and something we can engage with together so it’s not just me trying to talk at him or to him”*. He emphasises this in the post interview when he reports that he has implemented a couple of the warm up activities from Firemaker and his aim is to create a *“go-to ice breaker list”*.

He reports the importance of time to process thoughts and feelings to *“reflect into the model”* (or tools) as important. He sees the importance of the *“tactile stuff... ”*

the clay and moving of the things and to form it in so many different ways, and then being given the opportunity to explain it - I really enjoyed that, it was meaningful.”

Focus on self and role as care worker/experience of focused arts active activities

Clay and box activity: Anthony works quietly with intensity. He seems to enjoy playing with the clay. When we regroup after the activity to reflect on it, he is the last to speak. He is animated when he speaks and progressively gets quite agitated explaining his image: *“there’s a lot going on... sometimes I feel like it’s a bit all over the place”*.

At one point he drops the box, small clay balls, representative of the children he works with, drop to the floor and he continues talking and without noticing *chucks* the clay balls back into the box which surprises him:

I just threw a kid, I kicked a kid or something... it was so bizarre... really, really weird and the next balls I picked up I placed very carefully. I wouldn’t want to work with kids like that in harsh way... I put the meaning into what I was doing so the intention is there.

The clay activity has been very evocative for Anthony. It has brought up feelings that have surprised him and he is curious about this. He seems resistant to those feelings which are significant but we do not explore them further. It also somehow confirms his fear of using art processes to surface feelings and potentially *“muck with the kids feelings”*, which he does not want to do.

Objects: As indicated earlier Anthony enjoyed the *“tactile stuff”* and creating a world with objects brought back memories of playing with toy soldiers from his childhood. He reflects that the process of creating his world was like working with the

clay and that there are a number of things happening at once “*like when you put the meaning into the objects and then you start putting words, there’s the meaning, the object and then there’s the words, there’s so much happening and yeah...*”. He notes despite the complexity of the process he is surprised by how “*good*” the final image “*looks*” when he’s “*done*”. “*It’s not about who’s a talented artist...*”

Body sculptures: The stand out moment for Anthony was working with body sculptures and role work as he found it helpful to gain a different perspective of himself in his work and to reflect on it. Importantly he notes he felt “*validated*” by witnessing himself reflected back to him by the other group members.

That feeling of having it validated and reflected back and other people really taking time to think and share their views on the work, style the situation itself and the transitionso for me that was very powerful, a significant moment. It helped me see things a little bit differently.

He also speaks about feeling transparent during this activity and the significance of being able to witness each other’s work

that’s not to say we are all doing it right we can learn a lot from each other, and that’s what also this exercise helps me work through as well, seeing other peoples’ work styles and just that thing about self-awareness and what it would be like... helps us keep that in mind.

Changes/shifts in thoughts, feelings, knowledge, practice, identity of youth worker

Anthony speaks about a new awareness of what children make, draw and create: around “*taking time to honour what the kids come back to you with (drawing, toy etc.) ... and not dismiss it*” he says is “*definitely a direct result of Firemaker*”. He

“realises” even having paper and crayons available in his office for children when he is seeing their parents “needs a bit of thought, it is not just willy nilly”. He speaks about how he has become more patient at home with his own young children. He gives an example of how they might be drawing or painting before dinner and then when it is dinner time he gets them to hurry up, “chuck” whatever they were making “out” and get to the dinner table. Now he says “everything is packed away carefully and held... very powerful as well and hopefully for kids as well”.

Taking part in the activities and being able to “experience them” himself has enabled him to become a “bit more relaxed... a bit less prescriptive” about how an activity is facilitated. He gives the example of the ‘talking stick activity’ and allowing people to speak gives them “power to think of something in your mind and ascribe it to something else”.

Despite feeling like Firemaker has given him new work skills and a chance to reflect on his work, Anthony feels safe to only implement the warm up activities. He describes how in homework club he has got the children to “decorate” their “homework” folders, but that is as far as he feels comfortable to go with arts processes at this stage. He also reports that what the program lacked was the fact that I had not observed them in their work before and after participating in FM, so that I might be able to give them “tips” by being able to “measure before and after”, observing them in their work. He felt I could have pushed them a bit further in relation to their work. In conclusion Anthony was brought to a place of validation that he comments “you don’t get much in this kind of work”. The program gave him “the opportunity to look at work from a different angle in a way that you really don’t get from professional development, where you are left to make your own connections back to work. This is really in depth.”

Reflection on underlying core processes at work

For Anthony there was something about *embodiment, play* and doing that was important. He comments how much he enjoyed the “*tactile stuff*” and that through the doing he was able to make “*connections to work*”. This he says was different to other professional development programs he has participated in where “*you are left to make the connections yourself*”. For Anthony, who is highly articulate and reflective, *embodiment* allowed him to feel and then think back on what had happened. For example in the clay activity he unconsciously throws the clay balls back into the box, then notices how dismissive he was of the children (represented by the clay balls), how angry he is and how tired he is. I wonder about his resistance to his feelings in these contexts (he says “*you should never treat a child like this*” but he just has) but he has nowhere to explore the feelings and frustrations of working with children and young people.

Two: Mark

Background

Mark is a 24 year old white Australian male and very enthusiastic and passionate about his work. He is a 'youth connections worker' and is tasked with mentoring youth who are "*disengaged*" from school. Typically he says they are on drugs, on benefits, demotivated and not able to express themselves. He has a set number of "*kids*" he has to work with and "*plug*" them into some training or education program so that they can access their Centrelink payments. He acknowledges that there is not much follow up and that his job is to get the *kid* into something and that "*hopefully the kid stays in school and tracks along*". He says "*all the government is interested in is: have I worked with 50 kids and how many of them have I linked in successfully?*" He notes his work "*exercises [his] empathy and compassion as it's all over the place in community services*". He speaks of how when he first started working he thought it would be about supporting a young person "*as if it was some sort of massive humanitarian thing like we just rock up with the food parcel, job done*". But he says he now realises

it's more a case of we provide the opportunity but they have got to take it. If they don't take it you've got to leave them, you can't do anything for them, you can't help someone who doesn't want to be helped. It's tricky that way emotionally....

Mark is religious (Christian) and speaks about being influenced by a youth worker when he was young and "*scared, not finding my way in life*" who inspired him to become a youth worker himself. He finds "*kids that don't want to participate*" challenging, and a "*second big challenge is that a lot of young people have a lot of trouble really expressing what it is they are feeling or what it is they... or what the*

reasons are, why they're really not going to school". Mark acknowledges there might be "*deep underlying issues*" but that his frustration is about the young people not being able to clearly articulate and express what their problems are and what they need help with, "*if a kid came and said I don't want to go to school, I want to get some counselling, that would be ideal*".

Despite his frustration he finds his job "*is best done when I work from their point of view*". Throughout the workshops I am aware of the contradictions and tensions of this work. Sometimes I hear the group say the 'right' thing but then contradict themselves at a later point. Mark is a fine example of this, as while he thinks he may be working from the young person's point of view, he disapproves of them and wants them to change and be more like him. And at the same time I am also aware of the contradictions that lie within us all and our work, and how hard they are to acknowledge.

Why he wanted to engage with Firemaker

Mark's reasons for participating in Firemaker are twofold. Firstly he wants to know more about the arts as many young people he works with say they enjoy arts as activities, so he would like some tools on how to use them. Secondly he wants "*knowledge how to help young people express themselves more so they can understand what's going on*". Mark feels that if young people were able to do this, he might be able to point them in the right direction.

Journal note

I wonder about Mark's ability to express himself. He says a lot in the first interview but there are contradictions when I see him in the group and doing the activities. It is also the first time I am learning about youth workers and their work and I am reminded of what it means to work with statistics and government with a model that seems to be one size fits all. I wonder if this will come into the workshops at all.

Overview of general experiences

Mark is the only participant in this group that is not part of a team that the others make up. While they all work for the same organisation, the others are office bound and work together. Mark works from his car, driving to a young person's home and taking them out for a milkshake or to relevant services. He imagines he might be able to use activities with young people "like at a coffee shop" or something. I am not so sure. Mark is at every workshop and always arrives on time. He is enthusiastic, participates actively and engages with enormous energy. He feels very willing to please. He asks questions and reflects openly about his experiences. He has a lot to say and speaks really fast, saying "cool" and "dude". He is determined to achieve (he is a fixer) and wants to change the 'kids' he comes in to contact with, show them there is a better way. He doesn't like silences and is often the first to break them/fill them in a workshop.

When we start Firemaker, Mark comments he finds the activities a bit "weird". I sense some anxiety and the need to 'get it right' in him. The first activity of making a name tag stays with Mark as his most challenging moment:

everyone got up real quick and I was like I have no idea what we are doing...

I really prefer activities when you get told you have to use these 3 things to

describe how you feel... when you have such a wide scope I did not know

what to do. When someone says make something, I need more steps, for what

is it functional for a wall do you hang it... I need more parameters. So that was really difficult for me so I kind of cheated by watching everyone else make it.

Despite his anxiety, Mark finds the activities ‘*fun*’ and enjoys taking part in them “*instead of like how you get those emails telling you how to do an activity. If you have never tried it, you don’t know how fun awkward or scary it can be*”. He particularly likes the ice breakers and the clay activity where he felt challenged to be in the here and now and allow an idea to emerge while *doing* the activity, without having the answer beforehand.

I always want to have an answer or prep before you walk in....this was one of my first experiences when I really didn’t have an idea and it did come out, so that was quite cool and really definitely one of my highlights.

Mark notes that spending time “*hanging out with*” and getting to know the group over the four workshops helped him feel more comfortable and “*safe*” when talking about real difficulties at work. It also helped him relax more around engaging in the arts activities in a way that was not about “*having to do what’s good enough*” to get him through, like an assessment task at school.

He liked that the arts activities provided him with an opportunity to show things and be “*subjective*” in a “*pictorial*” way that helped him express what words alone could not. However his reflection on the processes remained at a very concrete/literal level.

He thought the clay activity was helpful in that it was a tool that might help a young person express what was going on for them. He liked that there were “*lots of*

activities” that he could group together when running a group activity “*to bring kids to the same level/platform which is really cool*”.

Focused arts activities (on self and role as youth worker)

Clay and box activity: Mark’s stand out moment in Firemaker was the clay activity. During the activity he chooses a coca cola box and flattens it and makes a kind of map on it. He chooses the coke box because of its links to pop culture, and comments that the youth he works with are all influenced by pop culture.

Journal note

Before we reflect I ask the group to go around and look at all the image, without making a comment. Mark says “*it feels weird not to make a comment*”. He likes to “*get information off the other people*”. I sense the unknowing and not knowing is very frightening for him. He also comments it is weird to not get instructions like you would at school and to be given such freedom in creating something. This is scary for him. And I wonder how the young people he works with must relate to him, especially when he seems to kind of expect them to be able know and to say what they want and where they want to go.

He explains his clay image:

I did like a little man cave and I feel very much like a road map or a hiking guide if that makes sense... so my job is to see them inside and find out where they want to go and take them to it... join them to mainstream school or if they say no... no I don’t want to go to a community school... then I pick them up and go for a drive around.

Journal note

I am interested in the fact that he flattened his box. While he explains it as being a kind of map and his role as taking young people out of their 'man caves' and linking them with the relevant services, I wonder if he feels in anyway flattened by the work he does ('where the kids are at the moment... always in the man cave at home... like trying to get them out cos they want to but they don't know what direction to go in'). I comment on the flattened box but he talks about it being a coca cola box and having connections to pop culture.

While Mark's work literally does not have four walls, I wonder if he has a safe place. I want to say it looks like he has been stood upon but I don't. He comes back in after lunch and sees it again and laughs and says "*it looks like someone stood on me*". I don't take it up but I notice that I had thought that earlier and wondered about what he might really feel like in his work having to make things happen for young people who don't know/are not able to know themselves. I wonder about this model of working that really isn't about hearing what matters to the young person, but about flattening them into a model provided.

In the group evaluation and post interview he mentions he found playing with the clay "*cool*" and to see how his image could emerge without knowing or having an idea when he started. Mark is surprised by the clarity of his image at the end and that the process of doing without thinking could lead to it: "*I didn't have an idea when we started so I had to do that natural process without realising what I was thinking.*"

Objects: Mark enjoyed using objects to show '*pictorially*' what his world and his career looked like. He chose a toy soldier/ '*army man*' to represent himself because he feels like his job is about "*doing the right thing but it's hard, you're on the ground working with kids one on one in their homes and stuff... can be pretty rough cos they don't want to do anything*".

Body sculptures: In sculpting two other participants into the way he sees himself at work, Mark chooses to place the youth worker on a chair (for all three sculptures), with the young person on the floor. His sculptures are powerful and have an effect on

the entire group. The group are struck by the precariousness of the youth worker on the chair, who puts his hand out to try and lift the young person off the floor, described by another participant as a “*tug of war*”.

In the first sculpture (now) Participant A as Mark the youth worker says “*I am feeling like in this particular position that I have latched on, but haven’t done any of the heavy lifting yet... it’s neutral but safe, there’s a connection*”.

Participant B sitting on the floor as the young person says “*I feel like my bum’s really cold... also feel like I am about to be saved. I don’t know what is going to happen*”.

In the second sculpture (then) Participant A (as youth worker) says: “*I am the target but I need a miracle here...anticipation and hope engagement*”. Participant B (as young person):

I feel apprehensive, intrigued (hand what’s on offer) and still hesitant cold bum still stuck to here...feel like I could be doing so much more than sitting on the ground and having a cold bum... but guarded as well and I’m not giving anything yet.

Journal note

This feels like a moment of “do I challenge and push Mark here or do I go with the process as planned?” I note how Mark’s sculptures have affected the group. I note my feelings too of wanting to be directive and point out to him the danger of what we can see. I decide to ask the three audience participants for any comments on what they see.

Participant C, another participant in the audience space who witnessed the process later said:

the chair was interesting for me...how to think about how else we might work, and what that chair is for you and other ways in assisting in that step up.

Good to see the connection cos I know that is something you do so well with young people you relate to them strongly that's your strength as a worker... but interesting, how else do you help them up and make safe for you cos don't want it to be dangerous to you.

In the third sculpture the youth worker remains on the chair and Mark sculpts the young person as standing up with one foot on the chair as if being pulled up. The youth worker now holds out two hands to pull the young person up. After de-roling we spend quite a bit of time thinking and reflecting on Mark's sculptures. Participant A speaks about his feelings being Mark. He notes he felt unsure about what to do on the chair:

I reckon I could have hurt my back and had a lunge at it....and tried so like from a safe spot of boundaries on the chair, or work policy or style of work... I could lunge down, even step down, there are lots of things I could do so I thought.... it would have been jeopardising for my safety and in the professional context as well

Mark wants to explain his sculpture and comments that he feels misunderstood:

I didn't want to put the worker on same level as the young person because we are not on the same level, we are not the next door neighbour. We have a functioning life, we have a functioning job, we are not in debt and don't have a drug habit so we are not on the same level as them which is why we are trying to get them up to our level to a functioning life... come get this job so if there was step down like idea of being on riverbank can't save someone

from drowning if you are drowning yourself, you have to be on riverbank to yank somebody out.

He has become defensive and I feel we need to leave it there.

Journal note

I am again struck by the model of needing to make the other like me, that our way is the right way, well what if it's not? I wonder about the concept to save. What if we were to really ask and listen to what the young person wanted? I wondered what Mark really wants too and I begin to wonder again about how safe he feels in his work. The expectations of him and of himself. Yes you have to be on the riverbank to save, but I wonder if young people want or need to be saved, and from what? This feels to be the missing bit with Mark, he needs to know, he is afraid of the unknown, not knowing.

I know I could have taken this process deeper and been more challenging. I choose not too as we do not have time and others still need to do theirs. I wonder too though if I lose credibility with some group members at this point. As Anthony later reports he thought I could have pushed them more during this activity.

In the post interview Mark mentions this activity again, saying he felt misunderstood, and that what he was trying to communicate with *the chair* was

so I can reach out and pull the kid out river, but they have to be willing and take my hand and work with it. If not it is their life and responsibility to get out of river. And sometimes lots of kids are not going to change, and you have to accept it. It doesn't mean you are a dodgy youth worker, it means they or their parents are not willing to make changes. Cos you can always get caught in the trap of: "if you are a good youth worker I am going to fix people".

Journal note

It's interesting that Mark begins the post interview by telling me how relaxed he's been and that he has been reflecting on how close he was to burnout. Yet he is not able to make the link that what his sculptures might have been communicating was exactly this. It feels difficult for him to imagine another perspective. He feels caught in the trap he mentions; while acknowledging you cannot fix people and change the kids, he can't seem to think there might be an alternative way, or the model may need to be changed. Instead he puts the blame onto the child and their family. And I am aware of my own countertransference feelings of wanting him to see this. Am I responding to Mark in the way he responds to the youth?

Changes/shifts/insights in thoughts, feelings, knowledge, practice, identity of youth worker

Mark sees the significance of arts activities as tools for expression. He says he can see himself using some of the ice breakers with groups. When he speaks about his experience of engaging arts activities without having an idea to start with, I ask him directly if this has influenced the way he works/thinks about young people. He says

yes it has, kinda let me like.... give me the idea not to have the kid worked out before I start meeting with them, like to let their ideas change and form and the way I react to let that happen naturally as well. Instead of... Cos like often I will sit down with a kid I have been working with for a while or like taking him to school.... And I have already got a contingency plan... this is what I am going to do if he does this... kind of like more organic now... and still provide safe structure which is important....but I find I can be more engaged with the kids cos I am more honest with them... about how I am feeling. Be more honest about how they are working with me in terms of getting them where we want them.

In our last workshop we revisit the images the group made in the first workshop of the young people they work with. Mark's group created an image of a young male teenager with long hair and a joint in his mouth. Mark expressed his disapproval of the drugs, hair and way of life. In revisiting the images I invite the group to write their wishes for this young person's future onto the image. Mark doesn't write anything, instead he takes scissors and cuts the young person's hair, takes the joint out his mouth and puts a tie on him. The rest of his group say nothing. So despite me thinking he might have begun to think differently about his role and identity as a youth worker he does not seem to have. And I comment "you can't help yourself can you Mark?"

Reflection of underlying core processes at work

While the underlying core processes are often interwoven it felt to me that play was the most significant process at work in thinking about Mark's experiences of Firemaker, his role as youth worker and his reflective capacity.

Mark's engagement in actual play and the arts activities highlighted this tension of needing to know and being open to new possibilities. I was also aware that he has been trained to "do the right thing" but the reality of the work is such that one model does not fit all. Mark was at first uncertain of playing with the art materials and of not doing the right thing. He wanted parameters and steps on how to do activities. He also wanted feedback on whether or not he was doing the right thing.

As the workshops progressed he reflected that he enjoyed seeing how he could create something without having a set of instructions or set idea to start with. The play space seemed to open up for him, once he started to feel more comfortable with the group and process, it then got easier for him to play. Playing, for Mark, was about letting go of the need to know and seeing what might emerge. However, while Mark

had moments when he experienced this feeling, he found it difficult to hold onto or internalise it. He would shift back to “wanting it to be right”. As the body sculpture vignette illustrates, Mark found it difficult to see himself in action and in relationship with the young person, he seemed to only see the young person. His play seemed to remain at a very concrete level, and while he liked to use the objects to show things, his reflections were often literal. At times I could see possibilities and would question Mark a bit deeper, he would either laugh and say yes or become defensive. It felt to me that once the possibility of play opened up inside him, he either became frightened by it or he was just not able to take it further. Even when other group members were affected by what he had created through witnessing and embodiment, they offered him valuable insights, but he was not able to see or feel what they had seen and felt. I felt that Mark had only just begun to discover the value of play but that it wasn't enough for him to fully internalise it.

I also have to reflect on my own internal playfulness as facilitator and how, so often, with this group I felt the need to get it right too. How much of my own tension between needing to know and being open as a researcher was present? How did this impact the playfulness between me as facilitator/researcher and the participants?

Three: Liz

Background

Liz is a white Australian female in her early 30s. She is a project manager at this youth services organisation, managing an education engagement project, which is essentially a research project. She works with a team and her role encompasses many things including data collection, management, analysis and input. Liz does not work directly with young people herself but has monthly action group meetings with youth workers, social workers, psychologists and those “*who are on the ground working with young people*”. Liz is the person responsible for arranging for Firemaker to happen. Based on the research from these meetings, targeted professional development programs are recommended, which is why Firemaker is happening in this organisation. Liz values collaboration and comments that the “*real success and richness*” of her project is that people have got to know each other and support each other to “*help the kids*”.

Journal note

I am aware that Liz is the person who recruits participants from her organisation. She is going to participate too and consequently I am concerned about the dual role she brings and the affect this might have on the other group members, having a ‘manager’ in the workshops. I ask her about this and she points out that she is a colleague to most of them, and is not a direct line manager of any of them. While she recognises there might be the possibility of them thinking she’s a manager, she says “*I would like to think they see me as someone who is helpful and a resource rather than someone who scrutinises their work*”.

Why she wanted to engage in the Firemaker

Liz explains that through the action meeting groups they have identified they would like professional development on alternative methods of working with young people. Liz is very interested in the benefits of arts and arts methods and hopes that

they might be able to “*implement a service that a lot of young people can benefit from*”. She is an artist herself, values the relationship between “*art and life*” and wants to learn more.

Overview of general experiences of participating in Firemaker

Liz attends all the workshops. She is passionate and knowledgeable about the arts and the benefits of participating in them. She is highly reflective, articulate and insightful about her own and others’ processes. She has worked with many groups and this is evident in the way she engages in the group. Liz is open and honest about her own process, she listens attentively and gives feedback to group members in a very supportive way. She is enthusiastic about activities and engages easily and deeply. She understands the language of the arts and what they are able to communicate and having her in the group feels both positive and supportive.

Journal note

Liz is highly skilled in group work and the arts. At times she feels like a co facilitator. She also organises tea and snacks each workshop. Her insights and observations about processes are helpful to me, but I wonder if she feels she can be a participant. I am conflicted when on the second workshop she calls to say she will be late, I feel anxious to not have her in the group but at the same time relieved that she can ‘not be there’ and leave the responsibility of the group to me.

Liz started Firemaker thinking about the workshops in terms of tools to use with young people. In the second workshop she says she realised the tools were “*equally powerful for me in terms of self-reflection*” and she began to “*look at things differently after that*”. She liked having a space to express her feelings through the art form and to be guided through that: “*I was really like tossing (the clay), didn’t really have a hold on things which is very consistent with how I am feeling*”.

She felt the Firemaker process created a “*lovely*” bond between the group members and she felt comfortable to share personal and professional “*stuff*” along the way. During the group evaluation using objects, she commented that the process looked like they had “*become 3 dimensional people*”. For Liz, while she physically participated in the activities, she felt that the “*majority of the work was done outside of the workshops*”. She says that “*going away talking, thinking and coming back*” was where she felt most of her work was done. The fact that Firemaker happened with time in between to process was helpful for her. In particular Firemaker helped her reflect at a “*strategic planning level*” on the kind work they are doing and the “*kind of limitations*” that puts on them.

Most of our organisations have clear expectations about what they want us to achieve... get kids into education or whatever, I think that sometimes that our training is so formulaic and so Western and is a business model... makes so much sense to us because we have studied it... but reflecting on other data coming in....and a great sense of frustration about their disengagement or their lack of motivation and thinking about what that is... frustrating because it goes against what we do and what we ask you guys to do. And this has really allowed me the space to think about some of the cultural assumptions that lie behind that and re-evaluate time and allowing us time to do this and slowing down with the young person and really finding out what is meaningful for them... because for the majority of them it's not getting into education or training, that comes later, but that what motivates them has to be something that is meaningful for them and not us....thinking around how do we create space to allow you do to this and encourage it and record it....what's been fabulous to watch is how much you have all valued what you

have learnt through this process and that first step to go back and give that gift to young person....meaning engaging and creating and give the gift of voice to a young person... when we label a person disengaged they are robbed of a voice and a story to tell about their experience... so I think sitting down with a young person and changing the conversation from why are you not doing stuff to what is your story is a really nice way to allow them to own their story.....

Liz found the Firemaker process powerful and was particularly concerned about how the group might take their experiences further: *:there are a lot of things that go into making this fire and that it doesn't just happen on its own, you can't just leave it, it will be interesting in how we take it further*". The experience was about "self-reflection and team building" and she wanted to somehow find a way of sustaining that once the workshops were over.

Focus on self and role as care worker/experience of focused arts activities

Clay and box activity: Liz enjoyed the clay activity. She enjoyed playing with the clay and noticing what her hands were doing. She comments she was aware of "tossing" the clay and that it is consistent with how she feels at the moment (tossing up potential new job positions, being newly pregnant). She also commented on the anxious feelings many participants spoke about when given the clay, that "whaaah" feeling. She links these feelings with the feeling of trying to do the right thing, but points out that for the child they must be feeling this way too.

Objects: Liz was not able to make the beginning of workshop 2. She arrived just as the group was about to create their worlds out of objects.

think it's really interesting that you can... I just arrived and sometimes it can take you a while to tap into these sorts of activities but I am a very tactile and artistic person anyway so, it was interesting for me to be able to just jump straight in and immediately be able to go "ah yeah that looks like how I feel", um yeah and then capturing that is really important... objects I previously had no connection with all of a sudden hold this really personal meaning - to then dismantle that is hard.

Body sculptures: These put Liz in touch with feelings of loss. She missed having direct contact with young people in her current role and wanted more:

I have missed being able to... in the past I have worked with these kinds of activities with young people so doing activities and reflecting on... how do we better support workers to be better able to do this work with the young people?

I like putting myself in the shoes of the young person because it's always great to remind ourselves of what they might be thinking and feeling... I also find myself wondering how I might use that with young people in trying to do a role play and what insight they might be able to give or just listening to them....

Changes/shifts/insights in thoughts, feelings, knowledge, practice, identity of youth worker

For Liz, in her research position in the education engagement program, participating in Firemaker provided her with the opportunity to learn more about the youth workers she works with and who are generally “*devalued*” by the organisations that employ them. She gained new insight into their personal difficulties with their work, as well as realising the value of arts methods in providing youth workers with the time and space to reflect on themselves and their work playfully. She comments on the current supervision model they have scheduled in every week, that they are required to do this because they “*have to tick the box*”, but she does not feel it is meaningful as she often does not have anything “*constructive*” to say. The guidelines are clear and structured in such a way that she ends up feeling quite emotionally distanced from the process. Liz found working through the arts processes

far more valuable because it accesses things that you are not prepared for... you get there indirectly as some of the stuff that is about you and more genuine and more powerful to bring to your own attention... and the attention of your supervisor, and supervision fits in a Western model... but maybe we need a different model to think about.

Liz recognises this and wants to try and find a way of sustaining the use of reflective arts processes in their meetings.

Liz’s knowledge and thoughts about the value of the arts are confirmed through Firemaker. This leaves her feeling both excited but also concerned as it’s

almost like having this knowledge awoken in them and then seeing now possibly more than ever which they wouldn’t have had, had they not done this 4 weeks with personal reflections, about the implications that this could have on their further work and wanting more guidance on that.

She is aware that despite new knowledge being awoken, how to sustain this will be challenging and that in terms of youth workers actually implementing activities, a lot more support needs to be in place:

because I think there is a big cavernous gap that people who are not arty or not creative all the time feel within them, so when they engage in those processes and tools they feel they really need to be guided through in it. Even though they have done it themselves it's almost not enough... they need you to come and hold my hand while I do it with the group. I need you to talk me through it before I go out and feel confident doing it with the group. And I think that is probably a reflection on training cos we are not taught to value play and all of the training is about being efficient meeting objectives and all of that sort of stuff. There's no room for any kind of flexibility or fun or not knowing....

For Liz Firemaker facilitated new thinking around how she might implement arts methods in the research she does with young people, and find ways to engage them directly, giving them voice. She was also reminded of the value of play, which brought up frustrating feelings regarding youth work training and the models of work and supervision they are expected to adhere to.

Reflection of underlying core processes at work

Liz mentioned the value of play a number of times throughout the workshops. Play for her meant engaging spontaneously with the art form, expressing her feelings without thinking about what she was doing, using objects to create meaning, stepping back and looking at things differently. She felt that engaging in the activities facilitated a playfulness that enabled her and the rest of the group to begin from a place of not

knowing and to discover new things. In playing (feeling and doing) with the objects and clay she realised in the second workshop how the activities are not only tools for the young people but for her as well. And this made her “*see things differently after that*”. She recognised and linked the value of play as time to self-reflect without the pressure of having to “know”. This allowed a depth of participation that talking would not have allowed: “*we are not taught to value play and all of the training is about being efficient meeting objectives and all of that sort of stuff. There’s no room for any kind of flexibility or fun or not knowing....*”

She notes how much the group learns about each other through playing and in working with young people how important it is to “*work or start from where they are at and getting to know them before moving*”. The opportunity to play for her also highlighted the contradictions and tensions in youth work training and practice, which she says is ultimately a “*business model*” that

leads to real disconnection between worker and client (I hate to use that language)... the language people use in this work is all around the young person, the client “the this and the that”they are really under the pump to get outcomes and get the person into something, handballing like a hot potato... just like “ok I have this young person... what am I going to do... vovovovo... ok you fit into that hole, doesn’t matter if you fall straight through again”... it doesn’t make sense in my mind that they feel more comfortable doing that than they do with sitting with a young person and finding out what’s going on for that young person, or what might be meaningful for them.

She says having one day a month for themselves during Firemaker, where they were able to play side by side and actively look closely at their work and personal lives, brought up some feelings of guilt for some of the group members. She mentions that after one Firemaker workshop she had to go back to the office for a meeting and another participant saw this and immediately felt she had to go back too for fear of what others in the office might think of the fact that she had been out of office and then now going home. She comments that youth workers are “*completely devalued*” and feel guilty about “*doing fun things*”. Engaging in play was fun for Liz, but it was also meaningful. Working with the metaphor of fire in the last workshop she says “*this fire is a feel good fire... an acknowledgement that it does take work, there are a lot of things that go to make this fire and that it doesn't just happen on its own, you can't just leave it....*”. Importantly she also speaks about the bond that was created in the group and that this allowed trust to develop that encouraged people to play. This highlights the importance of a safe play space in which feelings can be expressed.

Four: Emma

Background

Emma is a white British female in her 20s. She is a youth support worker and runs a number of programs including: an events program within her council jurisdiction; an after school recreational learning transitional program with 9-13 year olds; a fitness group, and a young mum's group to encourage social connectedness. She also does some "*client facing*" work and has two clients at the moment: one whom she describes as "*slightly disengaged*" from school, and another who needs more "*one on one*" support like writing her CV. Emma enjoys that her job is varied, and she "*loves working with young people*". She sees "*hope*" in young people and thinks that "*when they have been through a lot and they have support or the support needed, they can often pull through*". But she also acknowledges that they can be "*challenging*", like "*when they don't want to do something*". Emma acknowledges that she finds it difficult to not take her work home, and as a result feels stressed. She carries a lot of tension in her body and goes for regular massages.

She comments on how she has to adapt her way of working as a lot of the time the young people she sees "*have not been taught values or havn't been taught how to do things that I would have taken for granted when I was growing up*". She gives an example of how her mum would have supported her in any way possible, while many of the mums she meets do not seem to have the time or don't know how to support their children. She thinks it is important as a youth worker to be "*positive and dependable*".

Journal note

I notice how Emma speaks of values being different in her clients and I wonder why she doesn't speak about other differences, e.g. cultural.

Why she wanted to engage in the Firemaker

Emma would like more “*techniques*” to work with young people as “*the more you learn the better*”. She notes that not all “*things*” work with all young people, so she would like to expand her skill set.

Overview of general experiences of participating in Firemaker

Emma attends all the workshops, but is not well for most of them. She presents with cold like symptoms and then just a general feeling of not being well. She is tired too and looking forward to an upcoming holiday. She is softly spoken and thinks carefully before she speaks. I often need to prompt her for a comment or a reflection. She has a quiet, gentle presence in the group and wants everyone to have a positive experience; she likes to make things ok. She come across as a conscientious and committed youth worker who is hard working. I also sense some anxiety in making things nice.

Emma participates in the activities carefully and thoughtfully. At school she participated in drama, but says she was “*more confident*” then. Now she says she prefers to “*watch*” rather than “*do*”. It is the same in the workshops; she seems more comfortable sitting and watching than doing.

Emma found the warm ups and ice breakers relaxing at the beginning of each workshop. She particularly liked the symbolism of the fire ritual that we opened and closed each workshop with. She found this ritual “*powerful*” and that it gave the

process “*more meaning and felt more special*”. She saw value in all the activities and would “*love to one day use them with a young person*” but she said she would find it hard to “*apply*” or “*justify their benefits*”.

Emma comments on the closeness she felt with the group and that Firemaker gave them “*the opportunity to debrief and discuss our thoughts, feelings and experiences in a non-judgmental environment and that there was something about that which was extremely therapeutic*”. She notes that had it not been this group that experience might have been different.

While participating in Firemaker Emma attended a Childhood Trauma Conference. She was pleased to see the connection with Firemaker in that they were given a list of activities very similar to those in Firemaker to “*give young people a chance to explore and find a chance to express themselves using art*”. She said it was valuable to have her learning reinforced.

Emma did not like creating images of the young people she typically works with, as she found it negative and uncomfortable. She said “*normally we are so quick to find positives, that’s how we work... so seeing the negative words I found it confronting*”. Even though we revisited these images at the end when participants were given the opportunity to write their wishes for the young person down, she felt it would have been better to have “*addressed that right away*”:

when we did this it was just so negative. This poor person who is actually based on a real person and was feeling sad, bad barriers and bad past and going through a really difficult time in their life.... I know we face it all the time in our work, but I find it hard when a young person is faced with so many challenges and does not have the support network that maybe we have

or some of us have, everything else was how we can apply to young people, all these words... I don't know when I look at this, I don't know, it feels like a negative thing.

Focus on self and role as care worker/experience of focused arts activities

Clay and box activity: Emma “got excited” when I introduced the clay activity because

there were no restrictions, I knew we could make something and then talk about it afterwards. It reminds me of art at school. When we started I turned to Amy and said, “this is lovely, creativity rather than thinking about what we should be doing”.

Emma chose a running shoe box to represent her workplace. She puts herself at one end of the box (almost like a traffic controller) and says “*it's a bit like we are segregated, like youth and worker and I wanted this (points to mass of painted faces facing her) to represent the community... we like to keep an open door policy, and this is us trying to point people in the right direction*”. She goes on to speak about how it can be difficult when you try and show a young person the way “*or help them see their passion or desire or figure out something that's happening in their lives, but unless they are willing, you can't make it happen*”. I comment on the space in the box between her and the community that I see and ask her if there is any meaning in that. She laughs and comment that “*maybe it feels like an entire crowd is coming at you*”.

Objects: Emma's stand out moment was working with small objects as it “*had the most impact on me personally*”. She was completely immersed in the process and enjoyed the small group reflection with the two other female participants. What stood out for her was the opportunity to focus on her journey.

In our job a lot of the time we focus on other people's journeys and how to support them in their journey... I don't think in my life I have ever really looked at my life and journey like that before, it was very powerful to use symbols and items to describe your journey, I thought it was something I would never have done myself and it would take something like this for me to do it.

Body sculptures: She had “*thought lots*” about the body sculpture activity and found it “*interesting*” to learn more from the young person’s perspective. She found watching one of the other participant’s sculpture process particularly powerful when the young person

felt intimidated and pressurised being on the ground... and it made me think about how our clients may feel, how we go in with certain expectations and we also go in feeling a bit of pressure in the first meeting as well. It is obvious with all our willingness and what we are trying to do with the young people that we work with that sometimes it's good to take a step back and think about how they may feel in those first encounters.

Changes/shifts/insights in thoughts, feelings, knowledge, practice, identity of youth worker

For Emma participating in Firemaker reinforced the “*importance of self-reflection*”. She valued the opportunity to have time to “*explore how I feel about the work I do and how that impacts my life*”, and comments the process felt “*therapeutic*”. She particularly mentions the focus activity where she could use objects to explore her “*torment*” of coming to live in another country.

In the group evaluation, Emma mentions how anxious she often feels when meeting new clients and how “conscious” she is of how she presents to them. She says that “a lot of time I don’t take in how they are presenting to me”. Participation in Firemaker has made her more aware of what the client may be feeling, and importantly that they most probably feel more anxious than she does. In her training and practice as a youth worker she often feels she needs to get it right first time and can “over think” how to come across professionally. Through the experience of being able to explore and express her own feelings she hopes to be able to “present” more authentically to the young people by taking time

to assess what young people are thinking and feeling. I think just naming that and saying “I am a stranger and don’t expect you trust me first off”. You know... naming it, saying things they might be feeling. For me as a young person I appreciate honesty... so for them to tell me things that have happened in their life that are full on. It has reminded me to take things slow maybe.

Emma also realised the importance of an opening and closing activity when working with groups and how this helps create a space that feels contained and safe.

I think when we have groups we don’t necessarily leave it by summing up or having an official closure until we next meet.... don’t know how I would do that, but I found it powerful - it meant that what we’d created and what we had learned and time spent together was meaningful because of that.

Core processes

For Emma the core processes of witnessing, embodiment, dramatic projection and distancing all seem to be present in her capacity to reflect on her role as youth worker.

Witnessing: sculptures young person's perspective

It is obvious with all our willingness and what we are trying to do with the young people that we work with that sometimes it's good to take a step back and think about how they may feel in those first encounters.

Dramatic projection:

I also found the journey we did with stones and cars, our life journey that was a massive thing for me. That week I felt torn between 2 places which is very much my life. But putting that down and making an image out of it was really powerful and that has stuck with me personally. Maybe because it is something I torment with all the time but don't really address that often. It was a good time for self-reflection and I think will be a powerful tool to use with young people.

Like when people ask you why you here etc.... it's like you are really off and don't put too much thought or feeling into it... it can be sad when you talk about home and the things you sacrifice to live in another country but I think you don't sometimes feel what you talking about... maybe because I did it in another way than I normally do... I used images and things. I thought the images were way more powerful than my words. When I explained to people they could relate to it.

RESEARCHER: your first meeting with young person and those feelings might be there for them too and how you make that connection with them.

E: *Definitely, and I think like we meet with young people that haven't originally lived in Australia and probably been through a lot more traumatic things than I ever did moving here. But being able to recognise that and homesickness can be as consuming as anything, any other kind of mental illness or depression and related. Young people who are experiencing this and don't even speak the same language, I can't imagine how that must feel. Trying to find your place is a huge thing, so even if I explain that activity to a client I think it might be something they could do.*

Five: Amy

Background

Amy is a white Australian female in her early 20s. She has recently joined this organisation and her role is a program officer for a recreational based program at the playground of a council housing estate. The program has a breakfast club, a walking school bus, afternoon and all day drop in, holiday programs and partnerships with sporting organisations. Amy works with children and young people aged 5-15. The focus of the activities in the program is mostly recreational but she says *“there is a bit of a shift maybe in the focus to make the engagements more meaningful for the young people”*. She describes her work as being a lot about *“community and engaging with groups”*.

Amy likes that *“no day is the same”* but feels challenged by *“challenging behaviours”* of young people who she says show signs of *“early stages of mental health and really aggressive and violent behaviours”*. She says she is always looking for *“other ways to engage”*. She comments too that she is

trying to find my feet and build relationships with people who have already had relationships with everyone, and it's not like it's the first time the family of the young person is coming to the service, like a rebuttal, they don't want you... yet another person and another service...

Apart from being in a new role in a new organisation, Amy has recently lost her brother and is trying to cope with this as well.

Why she wanted to engage in Firemaker

Amy shares an office with two other participants and feels it would be good to be part of Firemaker too, so that they can share experiences and learnings. She would also like to develop new skills but is interested in Firemaker as a program that *“is not just about the art but the group and community you do it in and I think that is a really meaningful thing”*. She would like to see if they could implement something like this in the future with communities they work with.

Overview of general experiences of participating in Firemaker

At the start of Firemaker Amy was dealing with the recent death of her brother, so her participation in Firemaker coincided with her mourning the loss of her brother and *“finding her feet”* in a new work role. The first session was difficult for Amy and she struggled with anxiety around *“doing arty stuff and am I doing it right or wrong”*. She also felt *“vulnerable”* because *“there were so many things in my life I was uncertain about”*. Despite this initial session, over the next three workshops, she became much more animated and playful in workshops, laughing a lot. I could picture her in the playground with children, playing with them. She reflected after the program that her experiences of Firemaker were tied up with what was going on personally and professionally but that she felt *“much calmer and in a better headspace”*.

Amy engaged well with activities and said the sessions were *“like all fond and happy”*. Her images and symbolism were mostly positive (e.g. the sun) and she often remarks that they are literal: *“should I be drawing something deeper?”*

She enjoyed getting to know her new work colleagues in a different way and felt there was a *“stronger relationship in the group”*. She liked the warm up activities and had used a few of them at the beginning of some group sessions, which she said *“has been really good”*. She commented that a positive of experiencing Firemaker together

was that they were able to implement activities in group work where they co facilitated. She liked that they got “*to do*” all the activities as it now felt like “*it was in my head*”.

Amy’s stand out moment was working with objects when she could “*acknowledge in myself that it was ok to use this for my personal wellbeing as well... it coincided with a lot of personal letting go and moving forward, so it was a very powerful session then*”.

In general she felt the Firemaker gave her the opportunity to focus on her “*professional development and where I am at in my job and in this role and to think about the impact I can have, or maybe not even impact, but how I can work with young people and what is meaningful*”.

Focus on self and role as care worker/experience of focused arts activities

Amy’s role is multifaceted. She works with young people in many different contexts and feels like there is no “*real structure or pattern*” to her role. She is confident she enjoys playing and laughing with children and that they see her in this way too.

Clay and box activity: Amy chooses a wide open box to represent her work place. In one corner she puts three-dimensional solid ball-like figures and in the corner diagonally opposite, she creates three, two-dimensional stick figures, one with a big smiley face. She comments on the two aspects to her role (being new in an office with experienced workers and being in the playground with the young people). She puts herself in the corner where “*the other people are bigger than me because they know what they are doing*” and she depicts herself with the young people as “*the big one smiling in the playground*”. She reflects that at the moment she feels new and uncertain in the role with her colleagues but feels big and strong in her role with the children.

Reflecting on the process directly afterwards Amy said “*when I started I closed my eyes and started breaking the clay into bits... ties in with what I am trying to do in my work... all the bits and roles*”. However it was only in the last workshop during the group evaluation that Amy was able to reflect on how difficult this activity really was for her. She acknowledged that she “*struggled a lot with this activity*”, anxious about whether or not she was doing the right thing and didn’t know how she “*was supposed to mould*” the clay into how she sees herself at work. She thought “*crap how do I see myself?... I felt very vulnerable cos you put yourself out there amongst peers and you think crap people are going to think I’m weak and stuff....*” She went on to say that if she had to do that activity again it now, it would be a “*very different picture*” and would be “*just sunshine*”. She comments that her “*journey has been different*” and that “*usually you start off positive and ready to go, but with me it was the opposite*”.

Journal note

Amy cries in the first session as she is reminded of her brother who has recently passed away. It feels like a significant moment in the group as it pulls them closer. She comes back to this moment in reflection often saying how much better she feels now, but a part of me wonders if she felt embarrassed by it, and needs to create ‘sunny’ images to ease the pain and show that she is happy. I wonder about other deeper feelings but have to be careful of stepping into therapist role.

Objects: Amy found, like the other two female participants, that working with objects changed the focus of Firemaker for her. After this activity she felt she could “*acknowledge*” in herself that “*it was OK to use this for [her] personal wellbeing as well*”. She found the process

therapeutic to sit there caught up in my own world and looking at it. As I was building it I would take something away and I would kind of reassess and “ah

no that's probably not..." cos I started off and I had like four of the little soldiers round the front of the rock and I was "ah no like they are actually not..." , it was an idea of protection but then I was sort of like "no I am not really in that spot anymore" ... and then I kind of put like a man who's meant to be like my right hand man but he was on my left, because of the way he was facing, so it was like that symbolises like my personal journey of where I am at and where I am going to, as a way of moving forward as well, so I thought it was really good to process everything, cos even from when we did our very first week, where I've gone, feels so different, like a completely different person....

Body Sculptures: Before this workshop Amy has run a full holiday program in her new role. At the beginning of this session she tells the group she is feeling happy as she got great feedback. She also shares that there was "a full on incident" at work that she worried she would not cope with, but she has. She feels she has achieved a lot since the first workshop.

Amy is able to show clearly through the body sculptures how she has felt in her role over the past three months. Three months ago she sculpts the youth worker and young person as quite disconnected:

Participant A as youth worker: *"I feel very not at ease, tension."*

Participant B as young person: *"I feel like I really do not want to be here, I couldn't care less."*

In the sculpture representing how she sees the relationship now:

Participant A (youth worker): *"I am smiling."*

Participant B (young person): *“I feel like we are looking at the same thing... I feel I can choose to be in this conversation or not... and relaxed.”*

Amy reflects on the process:

aah looking back everything I have done over the past 3 months I wouldn't have changed anything. I am getting better at relationships with the kids and am having fun at playground which is the most important thing getting more comfortable with being able to have more fun with the job... coming from my previous job to this one, it's a very different head space.

While Amy found the process of creating her sculptures “*reaffirming*” as a youth worker, she found the experience of being the young person in Marks’ sculptures had an impact on her and put her in touch with feeling “*vulnerable as the young person, because sometimes we can get disconnected from that*”.

Changes/shifts/insights in thoughts, feelings, knowledge, practice, identity of youth worker

Amy acknowledges that there were “*lots of things happening*” both personally and professionally while participating in Firemaker, and that there seemed to be “*a flow-on effect*” in her life, making sense of things and feeling more comfortable generally.

She notes she has become “*more mindful of other people*” in that she has gained a “*different kind of awareness around how every engagement with a young person has the potential to be meaningful*”. She says she always knew they mattered but something is different in that she is “*more aware of how I respond or how I react and engage with*

a young person.” She felt more affirmed as a youth worker and the work she does but also felt she was more touch with the young person’s vulnerability.

She spoke about the impermancy of life and has found that as a worker she is *“being more present and having more meaningful engagements, because I am responding on their level... like play and having fun at the playground”*. Amy goes on to explain that she has noticed the way she responds to young people, especially *“those who have experienced trauma and grown up with abuse, if I am going to try and have a meaningful engagement, I can’t be angry and say ‘what are you doing that for?’”* She says six months ago she would have *“bought into that”* whereas now she tries to *“find another way of engaging”*.

Amy was anxious at the start of the Firemaker and afraid of doing *“arty stuff”* but once she could acknowledge her feelings in front of the group, and witness others doing the same, she became less afraid of doing the right thing. This affected how she engages with young people:

like I have found that even just sitting next to a young person... and at a table... and I just sit down and they’re sitting there being quiet and I sat down and started drawing and she started drawing, and another person came and started drawing and we all sat there quietly just drawing and then through pictures you talk... “aaah what have you got here”... before I might have been a bit scared to do it before.

Amy also comments that what she takes from Firemaker is the importance of *“doing an activity”*, not only for her to have an experiential understanding of what it feels like but also to join in the play with young people: *“how am I going to expect them to do it if I am not”*. She has found herself joining in more than usual: *“I have been*

trying hard at volleyball and all these things I am useless at, but I am giving it a go”.

She says this has made a difference to how the young people engage with her and vice versa.

Firemaker has also created a new awareness in how she “*sets up the space*” and thinks about how to make the space engaging for young people. Amy adds that these are things “*she probably did before but never really thought about it and now I understand the meaning behind it*”.

Core processes

At the core of Amy’s work is play. It felt like it was central in her experience of Firemaker too. She found at the start of Firemaker she was afraid of doing the wrong thing, but by taking risks, playing and doing the activities, she gained confidence and was able to feel less “*scared*” of implementing and taking part in activities with young people. She was able to play with her feelings of loss and express them. Being able to play enabled her to play with children without fear.

Group Two

Six: Michelle

Background

Michelle is female, in her mid-20s and comes from a background that includes Caribbean, Swiss-German and European ancestry. She had recently completed a paramedic degree but was unsure about a career in it. She spoke of the racism and sexism in the system and how her being there might help facilitate change but that she didn't know if that is where she wanted to put her energy. She was also very interested in gender issues and felt passionately about working with young women and girls. Michelle is a freelance arts practitioner (musician and actor) and facilitator. She has worked with this arts organisation for a few years on a number of programs where she has been a lead facilitator in various educational, dance, song and drama programs.

The children she works with range from 6-18. Of her group work she said

I love that the work we do is fun. We go back to our child. It's good to look a bit stupid sometimes, not everyone looks cool all the time and as an adult as well that's about trying to look like you know what you're doing all the time and be cool. I guess at x [educational program] you are not thinking about yourself, you're more thinking about how can I help this kid understand or feel more comfortable and join in... it's more focused on that. I love that we're making a difference in these kids' lives, not only their lives but they will influence others, a ripple effect really, that's the most powerful thing for me.

With regards to her challenges, she mentioned she is the youngest of her siblings so felt she was not that experienced in working with younger children: "So at the start,

finding out about them, about what they are like, and how to interact with them on a social level, um that was challenging but it was good.” She also found that often the teachers maintained an authoritarian position and found that *“when teachers don’t want to participate and join the dance circle it is a shame... and are probably learning adults shouldn’t participate and that’s how adults should be. The challenge is how to approach the teachers”*. Michelle gave an example of a teacher giving a child she was working with an offensive (racist) nickname and that she did not know how to respond to the teacher. In spite of these challenges, she believes her work is *“building their self-esteem... so next time he won’t feel so bad or low when someone asks about his culture”*.

Why she wanted to engage in the Firemaker

Michelle mentions that recently they had professional development around planning of sessions which she found interesting. She was looking forward to *“thinking more about that”* and having the space to *“reflect on what we do as facilitators and how it affects us”*.

Overview of general experiences of participating in Firemaker

Michelle has a strong presence in the group, albeit quiet and thoughtful. She listens attentively, thinks and then speaks. She asks questions about the application of activities and is able to make direct links with her work throughout the workshops. She is also questioning of activities and sometimes critical, giving thoughtful reflections on her own and others processes. She seems to be the only participant in this group that is able to see her role as clearly defined in relationship to the children she works with.

Michelle’s energy fluctuates over the course of Firemaker and it impacts the quality of her participation in the program; some days she has high energy and others

low. She is able to express this through the opening fire ritual "*the fire looks low today*". Her many work commitments along with some physical health issues seem to account for the changes in her energy levels. She found the opening ritual in particular very helpful in keeping her in the present moment "*cos we are always so busy, and that was the only time, that for so long that I actually have been somewhere not thinking about being somewhere else or doing other things*".

Michelle found many of the activities to be of value to her in her work with groups "*I've used so many of them... which is perfect timing cos I was running out of activities to do in workshops*". After each session she would try out activities and then feedback on how they had gone in the next workshop. She particularly found the group 'contract' activity helpful as well as the warm up games that involved sharing of personal information. She liked "*being creative and playing with... um like making things, like crafty things*".

The fire came to represent a "*safe space*" for Michelle and "*always having that safe space*" is a theme that she refers to often during the workshops. She felt safe in the workshops as she does in the organisation she works for, however she is aware that this is not always the case: "*we forget we will work with people who work in different ways, but what they created here is lucky, we are privileged....it is safe*".

Michelle enjoyed getting to know her colleagues, "*learning about the other people in the group, even though we, you know, know them but learning different sides to them*". She did not like that some participants did not come to all the workshops as it felt "*disjointed in some ways... um I don't know just not fair that not everyone could be here, and we could experience it together, and learn about each other and stuff together*".

Most importantly Michelle felt Firemaker gave her the opportunity to reflect on herself in her work, and this was her standout moment.

Focus on self and role as youth worker/experience of focused arts active methods

Michelle generally saw herself as a big sister to the children and young people she works with. She felt supported in the work she did in the organisation and felt it was good to have a team to work things out with. The theme of safety is present in all three methods and she is able to connect the links after the body sculpture activity.

Clay and box activity: Michelle was the only participant to represent the organisation in her image. She chose to represent it as a “*family around the fire*” in her clay image. She placed herself and the other participants alongside each other as siblings, with their leaders/mentors as the “*mums*”. She commented on the “*foundations*” of safety and support she felt in this context. She also wanted the front of the box open to

emphasise that the doors are like open, like it's an open kind of thing... um so the front door is open and then I opened this up because it's kind of allowing for that energy to rise and kind of like there's no limit to what we can achieve and how hot the fire can get kind of thing... um and then this is kind of like a path or... like ... yeah... so these are people being attracted to the fire and what we are creating... and they're on the path towards the open doors...

Objects: In creating her world with objects, Michelle works fast; she knows exactly what objects she wants to pick and creates her world quite quickly. She then sits and looks at it for quite a while as the rest of the group finishes the process.

In reflection she says

so my safe place, yeah I finished it early, like mine was really simple. And I knew when I was finished pretty much so I had a lot of time to just look at it and analyse it which was really interesting cos then I thought... cos mine was like that thing that um my stone was in, was like a womb I kind of saw it like a womb, and then I had objects around it which were like a support network so things that help guide me and give me the tools I need to work through problems. And I didn't have items representing the problems, because there's always problems and they're always different. So I thought it's kind of irrelevant if I have the items there cos they are just there anyway and the ground, like the material I had I guess kind of represented like turbulence. I had a lot of time to think about it and then I kind of asked myself why did I choose like a maternal kind of safe place and then it made me, obviously think of how I have grown up, like my mum has raised me, it's been mainly like female um role models I guess yeah... and for me the paternal side is a bit, quite unknown really so I guess that was really represented in the safe place that I made.

Body sculptures: Michelle has low energy in this workshop, but manages to engage in the activity. In all three sculptures she puts the child and youth worker at the same level (consistent with all her images of people in a circle, next to each other, working together). She comments that

I put them at the same level on purpose because, also I am learning from them... cos the normal assumption is that the children are learning from you, but I feel like I learn much more and they are like oblivious cos they are just doing their own thing.

She later reflects that what she brings to her work is “*safety... because growing up in my teen years and even like kids, the ages of the kids we’re working with, I was very like... I didn’t often put myself out there, I guess cos I didn’t feel safe, I guess within myself. So maybe that’s why it’s important to me*”.

This activity has enabled Michelle to reflect and recognise the reasons she places safety at the core of her work.

Changes/shifts in thoughts, feelings, knowledge, practice of youth worker

Michelle says Firemaker for her was about “*reflecting*”. It provided her with a space to reflect and think “*about the work we do and myself in it and thinking more consciously like why I do things or why I react to certain things or certain people, like just consciously thinking about it and being more aware*”. As a result of Firemaker she says

I think more about how I am affected by the work... and what I do to counteract negative effects that I might experience... and thinking more deeply about how the workshop affect the students, and their behaviour in the, the dynamic of the group and the behaviour of the group in the sessions.

Through her experience of Firemaker, she was able to deepen her understanding of groups and reflect on ways in which to use alternative facilitation techniques in her practice:

1. Being present. Michelle speaks about how powerful it was to feel “*present*” in the here and now through the Firemaker opening ritual, and as a result realises the importance to help groups be present when she is working with them.

2. The group agreement. Michelle implemented the group agreement process at the start of her sessions with primary school children and said it had made a difference to how disruption is managed and resolved in the group.
3. The talking stick. Michelle describes how in a rehearsal session she was part of, there was disagreement and *“people would talk over each other when we were trying to discuss things and it would seem like we were getting nowhere so I made a talking stick and used that for one of the, like before a warm up, just to get it...., also cos when I was at Firemaker, I commented that when we did that talking stick activity, after that it still had an effect, so I thought ok maybe that would help during the whole kind of process and it did. So we used the talking stick and got rid of it and then we were doing other things, but people were a lot more conscious of talking over other people....”*
4. The circle. In the example above, Michelle mentions she got people in a circle before they did the talking stick activity: *“I think being in a circle is powerful as well, so I learnt that from Firemaker as well. Being in a space, in a circle, yeah so I kind of took control of one of the... I think before the second show, I think it was, cos I realised after the first one, is this how we are going to do it?”*.

From the start Michelle would often speak about the importance of “*safety*” in her work. Safety for her meant creating a space where people could express feelings without fear. Through Firemaker she was able to deepen her understanding of that need personally, when she made the connection to her own upbringing

...because growing up in my teen years and even like kids, the ages of the kids we're working with, I was very like I didn't often put myself out there, I guess

cos I didn't feel safe, I guess within myself. So maybe that's why it's important to me.

Core processes

Dramatic projection and distancing (similar to Toni).

Seven: Simon

Background

Simon has Ugandan background in his mid-20s. He is a musician and recently began facilitating on the hip-hop educational program run by this arts organisation. He is also the partner of Michelle. Simon speaks of having lived on the east side of Melbourne and feeling very other due to his dark skin. Since he moved west and began work at BA he has enjoyed feeling more “normal” with so many other Africans and dark skinned people around. He is a musician first and writes lyrics and songs that have helped him to deal with some of his earlier experiences that were difficult. He has recently begun to facilitate and is enjoying what he is learning. He speaks Ugandan as a first language and identifies strongly with children at the schools he works in who don’t speak English as a first language. He started school in Australia in year 8 so he knows what it feels like to not be able to *“pronounce the words correctly”* because *“I was that kid”*.

Like most of the participants in this group Simon is involved in a number of programs. Weekends are often times of work too as he plays in regular musical gigs. He has come later into the hip hop educational program than the others, and it is the first time he is working with children (primary school aged): *“it’s been a good change to work with kids and is totally different... at first a bit intimidating... but now more comfortable”*.

Journal note

Simon is very relaxed and at ease, laughs a lot and I like him. He also reminds me of home. I wonder what his journey here has been like. I wonder how he makes sense of Australia and I imagine how much he must miss Africa and long for things African in this often cold and white environment (or does he?). I also pick up in the first session something about him being called to twassa (become an African traditional healer). He is surprised when I pick up on it. I wonder how many people in this context would be able to understand this and the irony of me as a white woman actually understanding it more than most.

When Simon speaks, people laugh, partly about his sense of humour but also about the way he expresses things... which he does in a way with the complexities of the English language and sometimes articulates things in an idiosyncratic way that says much more. I also wonder about the relationship between him and Michelle. They do a lot of work together and are working on a joint album to release soon. I wonder how they will be/feel together on the Firemaker. He participates in each workshop but at times I wonder if he is truly here and if the words and talk sometimes feel too much for him. Also at the end he doesn't do the post interview after contacting him three times. He says he's just too busy or doesn't respond to my texts.

Simon enjoys that he is learning about children and says he has been "*observing*" his colleagues in the educational program. He mentions learning about "*body languages and stuff, because body language here is very different*". He talks of growing up in Africa and not having "*the choice to participate*", whereas in the Australian context he is still learning how to "*deal*" with a child "*who is very cheeky*". By observing how others speak to children he says he is learning a lot. Simon finds it challenging to know how to "*respond*" when asked questions by children (particularly around race, culture and difference). He sees the work they are doing in primary schools in the hip hop program to be having a positive effect on the children's self-esteem in that they are asked questions about their cultural practices that results in them feeling "*proud about who and what I do. Before we asked he was low self-esteem, head down*".

What he would like from engaging in Firemaker

Simon is not sure about what he wants to gain from participating in Firemaker, he says “*experience is always fun... I want to know more... getting the book and seeing what’s in there*”. He does not say what he would like to know more about.

Journal note

I am not sure about Simon’s motivations for participating, I get the sense he is participating because his partner and the others are, and wondered if he felt more obligated to attend rather than wanting to participate.

General experiences of participating in Firemaker

While Simon participated in the pre interview and all four Firemaker workshops, he did not attend the post interview. Simon found the 10 am start difficult and was often tired in workshops. Being a Saturday, he also had a few musical gigs on after some of the workshops.

...sometimes uh it was really difficult for me to get up in the morning. So, especially when doing this session, it was good to reflect, I can’t believe my brain stayed up, my eyes and my brain was listening, not zoning out, to some other island.

Simon participated in all the activities in a playful way. He laughs easily and comes across as very relaxed. While he is comfortable with the English language, it is not his first language and he often asks me to repeat activity guidelines, or questions. Despite the possible language barriers, “*talking about things we are doing is one of the worst things you could ask me about... and possibly I don’t like talking*”. He values music because there are no words.

In terms of talking, in workshops there is lots of talking... usually for me you start with the music, it's the music that makes the people feel comfortable first and you figure out... how they are responding to it... it's the words that make people feel uncomfortable more. So in the workshops it's the words first....

For me I got so comfortable with music I forgot how to talk...

Talking reflection was difficult for Simon: he would have preferred the arts processes to speak for themselves. In the group evaluation he comments that it is difficult to reflect but that he recognises that evaluation is important. He does not say what stood out for him and he does not know anything that he did not like. The only thing he mentions is “*positivity*” which he says is within him and sustained him when he felt very tired in the workshops.

He uses the words comfortable and uncomfortable a lot, a theme he brings. He is trying to find out where he fits, in Australia, in himself and in the workshops with children and in Firemaker. His identity is emerging.

Journal note

Simon does not reflect easily with words and I realise how reliant I am on words, and the group using words. Having him in the group is a reminder of working with participants in South Africa, most of whom speak English as 5th or 6th language. I am reminded of how language and too many words are a barrier. I wonder about this and the need for words to leave me feeling more comfortable.

Simon makes personal meaning in the workshops connecting with Africa and where he comes from. At the end of workshop he speaks of returning to Uganda. When I meet up with some group members later they tell me he has gone to Europe and will be heading back to Uganda. Longing for home was present in the workshops but I have no idea if Firemaker facilitated this and made it clearer for him or was just a moment

along the way of his journey. It offered a space to play with identity and feelings of being comfortable and uncomfortable. He enjoyed playing with clay and objects and he enjoyed the silence these activities brought which felt to him like “*mediating*”.

Focus on self and role as youth worker/experience of focused arts active methods

For Simon, like many in this group, the activities became a chance to explore personal development. He does not separate himself out from the children, he sees himself together with the children

Clay and box activity: Simon chose a long box for this activity. He created a clay microphone on one side with a basket and a door next to it. On the other side of the box he created a house. From the microphone he created frequency waves with connection to a wise old man. Again the theme of journey appeared - wanting to get to the house and make/have a home. He explains that the microphone is central as it has given him expression and words and meaning and opportunity.

When asked where he is in the image he says he and the children are the “*frequency*”. The basket has meaning from home (Uganda) and it has holes in it. He says baskets are worn out at home from carrying food. He notes the loss of culture in the modern world, but that through music the “*oral messages*” from the wise ancestors (the elders) can be remembered: “*I am the frequencies... I receive because I am still listening to the old stuff... and I am still listening to the old people*”.

Earlier he reflected on dreams of ancestors calling him and I asked if there were traditional healers in his family, he said yes and his mother was saying he needed to pray to God to get rid of them. I wonder if he is being called to twassa and what this means in this context. It feels that Simon, like many others in this group, is processing an aspect of his identity, he is an ‘emerging artist’ and his identity is emerging too. He

is working out where he belongs in Australia and Africa, in the arts world and in his facilitation work.

Simon said it was “good” to “touch and play” with the clay that is “from the ground it is not... and it’s kind of meditating as well because of the silence and you just thinking beyond where you could make... and didn’t know what the heck I was actually doing... so it’s really meditating....”

Objects: Simon reminded me of a 6 year old boy in this activity. He lies on the floor and just plays quietly with his objects. He plays happily on his own as if he is completely immersed in his own world. In reflection Simon notes he is reminded of the importance of “simple things” in his life:

I guess...the way I think of it, the way life should be very simple... um that exercise was really good I think I should just making my life simple I guess rather than think about too much things. I chose the tortoise, which is like you know, take your time...

Body sculptures: Simon created his sculptures with uncertainty, even people in role felt uncertain, “I don’t know what I feel”. In his reflection the theme of uncertainty emerged again:

my body changes a lot... so when I started I was very uncomfortable... and then the first one shows how we have been doing the program and I feel comfortable with kids , but still not very comfortable... how I would like it to be is both very happy.

Changes/shifts/insights in thoughts, feelings, knowledge, practice, identity of youth worker

Simon was not able to say if there were any shifts for him during Firemaker. Observations suggest there were not. It may be significant that he was not clear about what he was working on or what needed to change or what he wanted. It felt as if the central conflict and tension for Simon was his identity as an African-Australian, trying to work out where he belongs. In the group evaluation Simon drew a map to represent what his future work might look like:

when you talked about the future... there so many different ways I think about the future but I think I want to spend more time probably in Africa, maybe in between, that's why I said in between, because I miss the sun. I definitely see a lot of future in Australia that's why I can't forget about Australia... more time I think I have been here... I have spent most of my teenage life here, so Australia, definitely Melbourne, but I think I am forgetting how to construct sentences in my language so I think it is important to go back... and hear and speak... I can't do it here, it's almost impossible.

Like the others Simon's journey felt very personal at this stage before he is able to clearly identify who he is in relation to the children he works with, or if he wants to work with children. All merged at this stage. I did not have a follow up interview with Simon as he did not respond to my numerous requests for contact. At the time of writing this case study I learnt that he was in Europe and intending on going back to Uganda.

Core Processes

I am not sure about Simon and whether there were any shifts for him. I can only suggest that through dramatic projection he was able to express his inner conflict of what it has meant to move away from Uganda.

Eight: Toni

Background

Toni is female, in her mid-20s and comes from a Tanzanian and Comoros background. She is a freelance actor and musician and performs in a hip hop choir. She is also a lead facilitator in the hip hop educational program run at primary schools. She has worked at this arts organisation for a few years. Apart from her arts commitments she is studying for a degree in public health. She “*classifies*” herself as a

performing artist and working towards becoming a creative humanitarian....

I study public health and health relations and I want to provide health promotion with arts.... Arts allows me to be creative and I feel like public service is where I am good with my hands. I enjoy helping other people out.

Toni enjoys working for this arts organisation because she enjoys

the freedom and in regards to... I am led by people through sharing of different perspectives, like there is no hierarchy there.... I can have input into the project, I can input a lot of myself in there and receive it back as well from others. We are part of the planning process in regards to each workshop.

She describes when “*something unexpected happens*” as challenging

...like we are kinda trained not to be teachers so things like the kids fighting ... of course you break it up but in what way do you discipline them? That's the challenging thing and how do you let them know you are not there to punish in the same the teacher would but you also want to tell them that it is not ok. We try to be friends to them but at same time still hold fact that you

are there to mentor them so there still needs to be that respect... how to hold that balance.

She goes on to explain that

conversation, how far can you take conversation into the difficulty of a particular issue. Like with racial discrimination, we open a conversation and they took it to a level we didn't expect them to take it to, regards talking about people harming selves and suicide, that is something we don't get trained how to talk about, but kids know about it and how do you talk about it when you don't have expert knowledge or anything like that. I know you can give them like guidance or tips as just a person to person but at same time you in there mentoring them so...

Toni speaks about her background and family and the centrality of her nieces and nephews in her life. When she speaks about relating to children throughout the workshops she invariably mentions her nieces and nephews. Family is important to her.

Journal note

I like Toni immediately. Not only is she beautiful but she is warm and open and reflective and interested and talented and doing remarkable work. She is easy to make contact with and returns my call as soon as possible. She is also studying a degree in public health. She is professional and thoughtful about what she does, with clear boundaries it seems. In the pre interview I get the feeling she is highly competent at what she does and a valued member of the team. She says *"I always put my hand up for things"*.

Toni says she hopes the work she does with primary school children *"has the influence and power to contribute to them being educated"* about each other's different backgrounds so that *"everyone has that safe feeling"*.

It gives them a sense of hope I guess that even though they might be going through things that the person next to them is exactly the same and there is someone who they can talk to... they are not alone.

Why she wanted to engage in the Firemaker

Toni hopes that Firemaker will give her the *opportunity to upskill and increase my awareness and knowledge of how I work with the kids and I think to remind me to help me to keep reminding me to be conscious of what I do with them, around them and for them.*

Overview of general experiences of participating in Firemaker

Toni has a strong presence in the group. She attends all workshops, is always on time and participates with energy and enthusiasm. She willingly offers thoughtful reflections and observations on activities. She also questions activities and is open about her experience of them. She is very aware of other group members and asks questions of them but is never judgemental. She is interested in their needs and process and is supportive of them.

Toni enjoyed “*using*” her “*hands and doing all of those stuff that you usually wouldn’t do, as a child...*”. She particularly liked the clay, objects and “*crafty*” activities. Toni enjoyed having the arts activities as ways to express and contain her feelings and thoughts as she explored her personal development. She appreciated being in the moment and enjoyed the process of discovery; she liked “*not knowing what we were actually doing like working towards*”.

Toni also enjoyed the fact that it felt like

down time... just opening up and yeah letting things out and just not having to worry about having to work. Yeah compared to other days like when I do have to go to work. So it's kinda like work but a release of all that work you know that I have been doing.

Toni found Firemaker helped her “*understand the kinds of journey I want to go on and where I am in that journey*”. She found the program to be reflective and evaluative, “*having that deep thought and really just going through everything that we do and just um taking a step , taking it step by step, just really thinking about why you did this, how you did this...* ”.

Toni found the spacing of the month by month workshops helpful in that she was able to “*reflect and evaluate and process the work that we do*”. But she felt four sessions was too “*short*” and would have liked more time to be able to “*flesh out a lot of my practice more*”. Despite this she is able to implement a few of the warm up activities after the first workshop and feeds back that they went well.

She found the second session challenging in that she had to choose an object to represent herself, which felt difficult as she comes from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Focus on self and role as youth worker/experience of focused arts active methods

Toni disclosed in the first workshop her experience of being in prep where she was told you had to wait for break to go to the toilet. She was scared of her teacher and as a result she pooped in her pants. It was a brave disclosure but also one that became a theme for her in exploring her role working with children. She does not want to be too teacherly but she also wants to be “*professional*”. She is the one in the group who speaks to this on a number of occasions.

Toni wants to be “*perceived*” in her work with children and her nieces and nephews as a “*reflection*” of each other: “*they are a reflection of me and I am a reflection of them*”. She notes that she works with the understanding that that she can

learn something from them, and they are probably right more than I am, a lot of the times... I let them know I am wrong... and they are like (laughs) 4 or 5 years old and I am like, oh I screwed it up.... hierarchical thing and again... just because you're a teacher....

She is also aware that there is an inherent power “*imbalance*” when working with children but that the challenge is how to be “*open with that imbalance*” and “*meet them at their level*”.

Toni says the children see her as much younger than she is, which is advantageous because “*it is probably a lot more easier for them to relate to me*”. Not being a teacher also helps in that she is “*relaxed*” and does not have the pressure to be “*authoritative*”. She reflects on her personal experience of going to school where she did not feel like she could “*talk to teachers in the way I would have liked to*”. She sees her role in the schools as one which encourages children to speak about themselves openly, in ways she was not able to.

Clay and box activity: Toni chooses a tall box and puts it on the table and builds her image around it. The clay sticks to the table and looks like algae. The box is in middle and clay creeps up all round it with a tree growing on top. There are lots of little balls around it. The tree at the centre she says represents a “*goal... like life in general*” where everybody is “*going for a goal... either to be successful in life or just to survive but it's all in regards to life or their individual self or whoever they are around...*”.

She places herself on the outer edges saying she is there *“because I can see where I am going but I don’t think I am there yet. I am getting there, so yeah...”*. She says she is just one of the many *“balls”* that represent people moving towards the tree, because *“everybody has potential to grow and be better”*. She also reflects she created her image *“from the four corners because it represents um people coming from different parts of the world as well. So not everybody is coming from the same direction”*.

After the activity Toni reflects

I feel like I haven’t finished and I want to finish it... and with my persistence and things I don’t like not finishing things... and but then when does something ever finish... and thinking that I just let my hands do what they needed to do. I wasn’t thinking about it, I wasn’t thinking about you know doing what I was doing at the beginning, even picking the boxes, I just saw everybody pick boxes and I just stood there and like naaah... box feels like... not very open... so I just picked up whatever I was close to and just started working with it.

Journal note

I notice Toni’s image does not clearly define the roles of who is the child and who is herself as youth worker. Rather her image shows a journey of all people. I am reminded of her family and where she works and wonder if this is a reflection of her context or if it may also be a reflection of her own development and personal journey that is in process. Or both.

In the group evaluation Toni mentions this activity and that she *“didn’t want it to end.... I liked getting my hands dirty and it was really relaxing because it was so quiet and you just focused on yourself and the clay...”*.

Objects: When Toni creates her world out of objects, she is completely engrossed. I am struck by how many objects she takes. The theme of her world is similar to what she created in her clay activity, i.e. that she like all people are on a “*path seeking the truth*”, and that they all get there in different ways. She acknowledges the influence of family, culture and context on the path and again refers to the “*not knowing*” about where she might end up.

When faced with the objects to choose from, Toni was immediately drawn to eggs in a basket which she put at the centre of her world, representing

the fact that everything was centred around something and the eggs were a big representation of the fact that I kinda feel like this truth is basically linked to our birth and beginning, not our history but beginning of when we are brought into this world. That's why there are eggs to represent a child and also yeah birth.

She found it difficult to choose an object to represent herself as “*it was kinda hard for me thinking of my background and knowing a different like, having different families from different places and things like that*”.

As in the clay activity, Toni did not see her role as separate to those she interacts with both professionally and personally, she chose many objects to put in her image:

I kind of put everything on there from cars to the plastic flowers and animals and plastic army men because everything in this world should be acknowledged and not just be like ok because you're not nature I am not going to involve you in my path to seeking the truth. You know it is all part of it.

Body sculptures: Toni's body sculptures highlighted the theme of uncertainty, power and imbalance in the relationship between herself as facilitator and the young person. This was embodied and expressed by those who were in role, for example X as child comments on what he felt and saw:

They are feeling excited all the time but still confused as to who I am or why you are here. And breaking that barrier, just a learning curve, taking yourself up, maybe Toni was feeling a bit shy or doubting herself a little bit and the fact that she knows she has got the skills and she's got the potential and she knows why she's doing her role in schools and so yeah I think everyone has that... when you meet someone for the first time... "ooh I don't really know this person, but I am gonna find a way to know this person".

And Y as the worker:

I felt like as well when I was standing kind of smiling but then a bit unsure... I felt like as Toni I was supposed to be in a role for the kids to look up to but still I was a bit unsure, like I know I am meant to be here, you know I am supposed to be this role standing and... but still a bit unsure. Am I telling you the right thing am I doing the right thing for you to be looking at up to me and seeing me.

Toni also reflected on this theme in the activity and played with different standing and sitting positions between worker and young person, wanting to show equality but also the inherent imbalance that exists in the relationship.

I have to ensure that equal balance between them and me. The reason I put myself up there in the second one, and the child down there, because that's how it is within the workshops, we are standing up and they're sitting down.

And I am a bit reluctant when it's like why am I standing up when I want to be sitting down with them. But I have to stand up because I am presenting to them and I am teaching them these things but yeah... and that literal imbalance that we have, we can't escape, it's always there but we need to accept then how can we still be open with that imbalance.

I wanted to show that kind of meeting them at their level but thought standing up was a lot more powerful because... and the last one we both have performance outcomes and I am on stage, supporting them but doing the same thing

Shifts/changes in role, thoughts, practice

What stands out most for Toni is a new awareness around the acknowledgement of feelings; her own and those of the children she works with. She first comments on this in the second workshop and then again in the group evaluation and the post workshop.

I tried to be conscious about what you said - everybody has feelings... trying to piece together what I am learning here with FM and trying to interpret it with the kids that we work with in regards to why we work with them. I like to work with kids cos they are open - not trying to mould in any way or anything like that. There's a sense of hope in children rather than trying to teach an adult.

Journal note

In her work she is very cautious about her role and what she can and can't do. Feelings it seems have become something to be afraid of. She and her colleagues have been told that if a child discloses something they must "*close the discussion*". She recognises the need for professional boundaries and the limitations of her scope of work, but it seems she has also internalised an idea that even acknowledging or asking, or responding to how someone feels is potentially dangerous. This is a general theme that emerges regarding professionalisation and also working with young people, while it has value it has also created anxiety around negative emotions how to respond appropriately to children and young people. It feels to me like it is getting in the way and creating more stigma, problems and fear around negative emotions. In trying to protect children and young people we have in a way silenced them.

Toni noted that she felt safe in Firemaker and liked that her feelings were acknowledged. It gave her confidence to acknowledge the feelings of the children/young people as well. She also noted feeling more authentic in her relationship with children/young people, including her nieces and nephews.

Toni also experienced a shift in the way she relates to children and young people that "*I've learnt to give them the space to show more initiative, or try to give them that space where I try to encourage them to take the lead in their own work...*". She spoke about trusting and giving ownership to what children create

um I think it was easier to like maybe not so much do it for them but like do it with them, so at the moment now, I will let you do it and get back to you and see how you are going. and instead of doing it with them I ask them questions to flesh out you know some like, allowing them to think about what they are doing, rather than giving them the answer like straight away....

Importantly she noted that this small shift has enabled her nieces and nephews to “*feel a lot more proud of who they are... like ‘oh she’s letting me do this and ah ok I can do it’*”. She noted she has become more mindful and thoughtful about her work.

On a personal level Toni found reflecting on where she was in her life journey valuable, because she was then able to think about where she would like to be in the future. The clay and objects helped her do this:

the first two sessions I got to really understand the kind of journey I want to go on and where I am in that journey. And the second one is the third one, reflects on what level I want to be with people, participants that I work with or whoever I interact with and so I put it there... and I chose the candle with it lit because I wanted it lit.

Reflections on core processes

As with many participants in this group, dramatic projection assisted Toni in providing her with some distance in order to look back and reflect on what she is doing/how she is working with children/young people. These processes further gave her a chance to explore where she was in her life journey as well as to gain perspective about where she would like to go. The projection and distancing gave her thinking space about her work, the children and her life.

Nine: Dave

Background

Dave is mid-20s and has a Samoan background. He describes himself as “*an emerging rapper/music producer/actor*” and he runs a number of drama programs for school children in the afternoons through a youth arts theatre group. He also does shift work in a factory, which is the main source of income. Dave is a member of the hip hop choir that the rest of the participants are part of, and this is how he comes to hear of Firemaker, however he is not part of the educational hip hop team that work in primary schools to raise awareness around racism.

Dave, like the others, has no formal tertiary arts or facilitation training, but a “*soul*” for the work he says, and he was exposed to music in his family from a very early age. He has been involved in drama since he was in year 8, through school productions. Making a time to meet Dave before the workshops was difficult given his multiple commitments and in the end we conducted the pre interview via email.

In this interview he said he “*sometimes has dilemmas with trying to connect with participants... common ground can be very difficult to find*”. He especially finds it “*most difficult when a participant just does not want to participate at all*”. The children and young people he works with are through drama groups after school and come from “*Arabic, Egyptian, African and Korean*”, all “*multi-cultural*” backgrounds.

He believes his work “*gives them freedom. Free to explore the inner self. Express yourself. Togetherness and learning how to deal with an elder*”. He says the “*high energy I bring gives them confidence to step up. Not exactly acting like a figurehead but more as a structured friend.*”

Why he wanted to engage with Firemaker

Dave says that he is an

emerging artist and every day is a stepping stone. I still got a crap load to learn. I have never really explored how to work with participants, I just got put in. so I actually would just like to know THE way of doing it.

General experiences of participation in Firemaker

Dave attends all the workshops and the post interview. He is a big man with puppy-like energy and a big laugh, and he laughs a lot. He is warm and friendly and incredibly energetic and playful. He has the ability to energise a group immediately and does so on a number of occasions during Firemaker, demonstrating skill in facilitating groups. He is gentle and gives honest feedback to members of the group but it is done with humour.

Journal note

At the beginning of workshop when asked to tell the group something about himself they might not know, Dave tells them he once nearly killed his brother. I think he is as surprised as the group, because he is such a playful and gentle person. He does not seem to like conflict and I think finds it difficult to assert himself and claim his rightful place, and this an ongoing theme for him throughout Firemaker. I wonder if Dave is afraid of his anger and so needs to make it “nicer”. He comes across as committed and loyal and is one of the only participants to express disappointment with those who did not complete the Firemaker program, or come to all the sessions.

Dave is a skilled and confident performer. He engages quickly and easily in the arts activities. He finds the drama activities easier to engage with as it is the medium he is most used to. Despite having experienced many of the warm up activities in Firemaker, he noted that he learnt new games which he had implemented. He also notes that the Firemaker manual was useful and he was pleased to have it to refer to.

Dave's stand out moment was the first workshop where "*there was a self-conscious thing realising how I did things. It was very interesting to gather knowledge about how my bosses did things, but it was more about finding out more about me I guess... and um yeah the reason why I am on top of that thing is because I am observant of others*". Firemaker gave him the opportunity to "*analyse and think*" about his work in a way he had not done before. Up until Firemaker he maintained he just did his work without much thought, Firemaker helped him understand more about group work and how to consciously implement activities for a purpose. Firemaker helped Dave reflect on his role as facilitator, as well as that of the co facilitators he works with.

Dave experienced Firemaker as an opportunity to talk about his experiences and difficulties at work. He had underestimated the benefits of this. While the other participants work together in groups and co plan workshops, Dave is essentially a lone facilitator, or works with a controlling "boss" who is his co facilitator and with whom there is no planning or debriefing. As a facilitator, he valued the opportunity to share work experiences with his peers in the Firemaker. He also asked many questions about facilitation.

Dave found the third session tiring, he felt it dragged and he was tired saying he did lots of "*daydreaming*". He had worked a morning shift from 3-7 am and yet he still offered to warm the group up with a new activity. This also gave the other participants the chance to see him acting, doing what he does best, which was not always a side of him they were familiar with. Dave did not like that not everybody came to all the sessions, and two people dropped out. He found this "*disrespectful*" to the group.

Focus on self and role as youth worker/experience of focused arts active methods

Dave sees himself as an "*elder*" and that his

high energy I bring gives them confidence to step up. Not exactly acting like a figurehead but more as a structured friend.... I tried to find a monkey to represent me jumping everywhere. I am a jumpy person, as opposed to jumping from project to project with busyness.

Similarly to other participants in this group, Dave was aware of the power imbalance working with children. This is a theme (power differentiation between young person and him, and him and his director) that emerges over and over again, not surprising given he is an “*emerging artist*”. He also felt this working with his director as performer and co facilitator, where he felt this man held onto his power and did not give Dave the chance to lead facilitation of a drama group. He often felt undermined and controlled, and was not sure how to approach him or express his underlying anger towards him for taking control all the time. Dave was afraid of being “*disrespectful*” especially to someone older than him, and commented that in Samoan culture “*you just would not do this*”. Dave often used the teacher/student metaphor in exploring the tensions in his relationship with young people and his director.

In an activity during the group evaluation, Dave drew what he imagined his future might look like in his work. He drew a crown:

it's sort of supposed to be handing over the crown, handing down the crown, or putting down the crown.... I don't know but um... the reason I suggest this crown... the joker, I guess I am the joker type, um not to take him seriously, not too seriously... um cos a royal crown, as soon as you see someone on the throne it's like “your majesty” and all that stuff... those are kids... and I guess I see everyone can wear the crown.

Journal note

In the final workshop Dave comments after I ask the group if it feels at times I have been like their teacher: “*yeah*” (and I note they are all sitting in a straight-ish line with me in front. Every other time they had created a circle.)

Clay and box activity: Dave chooses a large box and makes big clay images to put inside it. He places himself in the image as a young man/boy with a ladder on the ground and stepping stones leading up to a bigger clay man. The image has a childlike quality to it with large oversized images that keep falling over.

I ask him if the children might see him as the big man, he says yes “*possibly*” but it has more to do with him as the younger man on “*stepping stones*” to become someone more experienced. Reflecting later he says he did not know what to make nor gave it much thought, but when questioned he began to make sense of it. At first he wanted to make pillars but they kept falling down. I asked how he felt when this happened, he said like a failure. Dave was not happy with his final image and said

I still want to do something else... I still want to touch it and (laughs) um yeah then all those questions... you actually don't know what you did until people ask you. And then you have to make meaning out of it... the more you talk about it the more you get to know.

With regards to his work he reflected that through this activity he ‘*just got reminded... that like the people I teach I am still in their position.... it was really good to see we all had that theme you know... we all showed it in different ways*’. He further commented on the similarities in the participants’ images, ‘*the constant build up to ... yeah like growing, yeah everyone needed to grow and reach, determined to reach their goal*’.

Objects: Dave enjoyed playing with the objects and connecting to the “nature” part of himself, reminding him “*that I am a nature person, I do love nature, I like the outside and um yeah I like animals*”. He liked that he could choose what “toys” to include and have the power to place them where he wanted to, unlike in his work life where he felt manipulated by his “boss”. In so doing the theme of equality emerged again:

I think something really significant about toys is that you know they are toys, they are not real I know but um it's like... I had a shark and then there was a small whale. I like big animals, small and... it made the whole thing global. I guess that sense of equality as well, like about toys. You choose whose boss and that yeah... I was the starfish and the starfish was bigger than the human soldiers so yeah I think I just had a lot of fun.

Body sculptures: Dave chooses a participant also from a Samoan background to represent him in the body sculptures. His first sculpture (of what the relationship looks like now) depicts Dave in a very energetic physical position that could potentially harm himself.

X as youth worker: “*I feel energetic like this but I feel I don't want to hurt myself*”.

Y as the young person says “*I feel in a good space*”.

The body sculpture depicting the relationship 4months ago is full of uncertainty:

X as youth worker: “*I feel not sure if what I am doing is correct*”

and Y as young person: “*I feel a bit disappointed.*”

Dave's final sculpture is one of equality and mutual benefit. In reflection X comments on what it felt like being Dave and feeling uncertain and unsure but moving

to a place of accepting that *“at the end it was I just need to keep doing what I am doing and then I will get that resolved”*.

Dave compares his work to improvising and having to be spontaneous in the here and now and that he *“will never get used to it, as in there is always something new”*.

But that he is developing a new perspective and thinking about his work: *“These sculptures made it clear for me, like that second one was ugly... it’s all learning stages and you have to go through those in order to get through them.”*

Significantly a participant witnessing the sculptures comments that Dave is on his own having *“to deal with it on his own”* whereas the rest of the group work in a team facilitating and troubleshooting together. The witnessing participant saw this as a *“scary situation”*, which was affirmation for Dave that his uncertainty was understood. Dave then asked me how I feel as a facilitator by myself, evidence that he was thinking about his role and this is part of his development. Of the whole process he commented that he found it helpful to see *“other people representing you and also seeing yourself representing others”*.

Changes/shifts/insights in thoughts, feelings, knowledge, practice, identity of youth worker

Dave found post Firemaker he had been *“observing”* and *analysing a lot... what games work and not and how they affect our rehearsals. I did that handshake one and it put us in a cheery mood... um struggling to remember last time but I have been analysing more watching how my director does and others, it’s all very different.*

Not only had Dave's analysis involved what games to use, he also found he had become more analytical of his "*journey as a performer... the more I analyse others um I analyse myself*". He noted Firemaker has helped him understand "*what happens by watching dynamics you bring into workshops... watching how others facilitate*". He speaks about working on a performance with other professional artists who did not do a warm up at the start of a rehearsal and he felt they were "*not connected*" and there was something missing. Firemaker had created an awareness in Dave's practice of how arts activities can be used advantageously in group work. The manual helped with this too. He noted he had not run any more drama groups with young people yet, so could not comment on that. He found he learnt a lot through talking and listening and consequently recognised the value in this for his own development:

I actually enjoy talking, like at high school the most I learnt was in health classes because all we did was discuss and talk. You learn the most just by listening to others. I realise I think most of my stuff I learnt is from the talking and yeah it is very beneficial to me.

Core Processes

Dave began Firemaker very embodied in the role of a young person and feeling frustrated that he was not taken seriously by his director boss, an older white male. Through distancing and dramatic projection he became aware that he was still in the position of the child. This he saw as both valuable and frustrating. Using objects through dramatic projection enabled him to play with these different power roles

Distancing helped him gain perspective on his role and allowed him to think consciously about power imbalances and how he wanted to be. These core processes left him in a space of analysing and observing how others facilitate, as well as analysing

how he facilitates. He reported being more mindful and effective in his group work skills.

Ten: Angela

Background

Angela is in her mid-20s and comes from a Pacific Island background. She is full time employed as a career consultant and sings part time in the hip hop choir that the rest of the group are part of. She comes from a big family and speaks about her nieces and nephews during the workshops. Family is important to her like many in this group and she values inclusivity.

Angela is currently not working directly with children but does run recreational activities at Sunday school at the church she belongs too. What she enjoys about this work is that

most of the time with church families you get families who come from overseas and refugees and you get families who have domestic violence or lower class end... when children come together no matter what happens in life, they are still happy and can share that... the more children you have in one space the more happier they are, and they don't feel so alone. That's what I like.

She finds children “*unpredictable and their behaviours can shift, can have mood swings*”, which can be challenging for her, because “*you don't know what's behind that... which is challenging for you so you need to not judge or react on what they have shown*”. However she feels she is “*quite laid back*” so is able to build rapport with children quite easily. She says the work she and the other participants do with the choir has a positive effect on audiences and brings people together to “*connect*” and this is what she loves about the choir:

whenever adults or kids see (the choir) as a group together they see us as “I want to be like them”... good role models. I’ve heard from across the board it’s a good thing that’s why we want to do more projects because it’s like we save lives... not as if they are going to physically die but maybe turn their eyes to what they used to know and what they can now take....

Why she wanted to engage with Firemaker

Setting up a time to meet Angela was not a straightforward process. I left her many messages and she took a while to get back to me. I wondered if there was ambivalence. But we finally made a time and she arrived. When I ask her about her possible ambivalence (we talk about her ambivalence at beginning... not getting back to me taking long time to respond...) she said:

now that you have explained it (FM) to me... for me my full time job is something I am doing at the moment, it’s a go with the flow process.... I don’t know where I wanna be.... I know I want to be helping people, adults or kids ... this training, it will definitely help me develop in that sense.

General experiences of participation in Firemaker

Angela has a strong, calm, contained presence in the group, almost regal. She is very laid back, laughs a lot and as she says of herself she is a “go with the flow” kind of person, which does not necessarily mean she is not present. She sits and observes. She doesn’t easily reflect in the group, and is often the last to reflect on an activity, but when she speaks it is with clarity and integrity. At times she struggles to get the symbolic meaning and remains quite concrete but then she suddenly gets it. She reminds us of

that in the last session “*I remember trying to make the fire (they all laugh)... and then after that realising ok now I know what is going to happen*”.

Journal note

I am surprised often by Angela. Despite wondering about her possible ambivalence and if she will attend all the sessions, she surprises me as she attends all sessions, is always on time and very professional. Throughout the Firemaker Angela is often quiet and seems to drift off. She laughs a lot too and I wonder at times if the Firemaker has relevance for her. But then she surprises me again when she reflects deeply and wisely. She brings a cake to the last session as a way of celebrating our work and the group, it is a significant gesture of what the process has meant to her. And I realise I have misunderstood her at times. In the very first workshop she is the one who notices how the clay activity brings silence and how she enjoyed this because they usually work with lots of noise. She seems to quietly hold the wisdom of the group. Also she is the only one in the closing activity of the Firemaker process who insists I take part in the final activity of writing something for everybody. She wants me to be included too.

Angela enjoyed “*doing*” the activities and having fun. She enjoyed having someone else facilitating activities for her to merely be a “*participant*” in. She felt the drama games were accessible and while she had not had an opportunity to use them she commented that others in the group had.

Angela did not like that “*people who had committed*” to Firemaker arrived late: “*that’s something that will always be noticed in anything that I am in because I like to be there on time and start things on time.*” She was not able to communicate this in the group but mentioned it in the post interview. She also noted that as a group outside of Firemaker in the choir rehearsals “*it’s actually been the biggest problem for us, starting on time and then our time is wasted*”. Angela also felt the timing of the sessions, could have been different. She felt they were “*quite intense and quite short*” and wondered if weekly sessions over a longer period might have been more beneficial.

In general Angela felt the sessions were “*really important*” at the time, as the group had been through a “*hectic month*” and Firemaker gave her space and time to “*wind down and just reflect*”.

Focus on self and role as youth worker/experience of focused arts active methods

In the pre interview Angela commented that she thought the children she works with saw her as “*in the family... the favourite aunty... the one who doesn't really care or the one who is about fun... that would be my place*”.

Clay and box activity: Angela chooses a big box and creates an image deep inside it. There are similarities between her and Dave's image. They have both chosen similar boxes and their images are big and almost childlike. She creates a wall to represent herself with a circle to represent the process of development that is “*never ending*”. She puts herself “*in the light*”, representing what she “*knows*” and where she feels “*comfortable*”. She recognises the unknown on the other side of the wall and creates a hammer that is her “*knowledge, resources or knowledge from others*” that will help “*break down*” the barriers so that she can “*teach*” those she works with “*more*”. Like the majority of this group she does not represent those she works with in her image, but focuses on her personal growth and development.

Reflecting on the activity afterwards, Angela noted that it felt

focused because it was silent... and whenever we facilitate or whenever we are in our activity there is no silence, it's quite loud so that in itself was good, it was different and then I was very focused on my own.

When she looked around at what others had created she was surprised it was “*WOW, we've done something... especially in the time frame cos normally our timing*

things we tend to go over, so it was quite good we managed to complete something which we can do... we just choose not to". She also liked that *"everything was linked in one way or another"* and enjoyed being asked questions about her image as it made her think deeper.

Objects: Angela's trust in the flow of life is reflected again in her object world. She created *"the circle of life"* with sea creatures connecting her to her father with whom she did a lot of ocean water activities with as a child. She chose a shell to represent herself without consciously knowing why but felt it represented her *"really well"*. She enjoyed playing with the objects and reconnecting to activities she did in her childhood through them, recognising the need for *"balance"*. While Angela is at a stage of life where she is discovering her many roles both personally and professionally, she noted *"there's purposes to creatures, and they're creating order because if there's no order in what their role is, things will just crash and then we will become extinct"*.

Body Sculptures: As Angela was currently not directly working with children, she used her relationship with her nieces and nephews to think about this activity. In the first sculpture (now) she created an entangled sculpture between worker and child. There was not much difference in the 2nd sculpture that represented 'then', except it was more playful and happy. Her third sculpture had both worker and child lying on their stomachs, legs up and facing each other. In the third sculpture X as worker said *"I feel strange"*.

In her reflection she noted

the first one was me acknowledging and noticing the child as playing around.... and trying to get to their level but not there yet. The second one is I am also busy with something else while they just do whatever they do... third

one I wanted it to be at their level... just both be connected somehow... and what she said, strange, I would feel strange being like that, but it's what they would connect well in.

Angela's sculptures articulated the awkwardness and discomfort that comes with this work, and for many adults trying to find a connection through play with children. And possibly more for Angela on a personal note not feeling very comfortable playing at the level of the child, she prefers to observe where she feels comfortable.

Changes/shifts/insights in thoughts, feelings, knowledge, practice, identity of youth worker

While Angela found Firemaker "*useful*" she did not have the chance to implement activities, so was not able to comment on any shifts in her practice with young people.

In terms of her practice as an arts practitioner, Angela felt she could "*appreciate meetings a lot more and reflections and evaluation*". She acknowledges that she does not like "*people talking for long periods of time as my focus is not going to be there for the whole time*". But Firemaker showed her "*that after you do things you need debriefing and that debriefing is really important*". She says she has always known reflection is important but not how much.

When co-facilitating Angela says she has "*taken on board*" planning around activities, like warm ups and timing of activities. The most significant 'thing' about Firemaker that had shifted her thinking about working with groups is how important it is to acknowledge how participant's feel at the start of a group:

the fact that the people who partake in the sessions you need to be sort of aware of where they come from on that day or what they have done or their situation, what they are going through. Because that plays a big part in how you can communicate with them, and also cater for that...

Like others in this group, having her feelings acknowledged at the start of each workshop was affirming and felt good.

You don't realise why someone acts the way they act until you hear their full story. which then makes sense as to why they are like that... so a different way of approaching it, different way of communicating it and just to be more... generally I am a patient person but there are some cases where it can get me a little bit snappy and I think why do you have to be like that, and then I remember wait a minute, there's a reason why they are like that and that keeps me calm (laughs).

Core Processes

Like with Simon I am not sure if I can comment on core processes for Angela, other than distancing as a way of thinking about how she structures her work, when she works with children.

Eleven: Jasper

Background

Jasper is in his 20s and was born in the Phillipines. He was adopted into an Anglo Australian family, and his journey/struggle with his identity is a central theme in his life at this point. Jasper is a self-taught hip hop artist, he writes songs, sings, plays the guitar and acts. Like the majority of the participants in this group, he is a member of the hip hop choir and facilitates in the primary school educational program. He also facilitates children's holiday programs and does a number of musical gigs.

I am an experimental artist... experimenting in different art forms: painting, spray painting, singing, rapping, different instruments, more like a hobby but using my skill to encourage and let other people know that they can learn it if they really want to and all they got to do is ask. Main role financially wise doing workshops.

Jasper feels

satisfaction helping other people than myself... I think there are a lot of people I teach or make acquaintance with who are not so well off... and then to hear them share their talent or let go with their talent and have fun is probably what I enjoy.

He finds his work comes with “*emotional challenges*” that can be difficult, for example when working in a school and seeing a child crying and the teachers not responding. He identifies with the child and seeing this makes him angry: “*we teaching the kids but who's teaching the teachers?*” He feels the system is unjust and that many of the teachers use racist and stereotyped language – “*I am not sure we teaching the*

right people here, maybe we should start off with the teachers first and then teach the kids". At times when faced with these situations he feels he has *"to keep my cool cos I'm in school environment... I have to hold my tongue... change the way I say it. Still straight up but nice"*. Another challenge for Jasper is managing large groups of children and finding ways *"or games to distract disruptive children"*. Despite the challenges, he feels the awareness of racism his work raises in primary school children is a *"slow process"* but *"the impact is gonna stay with them"*.

Working with children gives Jasper *"energy"* but he sometimes feels *"too overwhelmed"* and *"breaks down"*. He acknowledges *"he is still learning to say no"* and sometimes finds it difficult to take care of himself and put boundaries in place between work and home.

Journal note

At the end of the pre workshop interview I ask Jasper if there are any questions I did not ask that he feels I should have asked. He responds by saying he would have liked me to ask about his personal life and where he comes from because *"a lot of my personal life is related to my work"*. I am aware of how much Jaspers' identity is core to his work and how he is at a stage in his life where he is trying to work through issues related to identity, place and belonging. He is passionate about social justice and I think identifies strongly with the children he works with.

Why he wanted to engage with Firemaker

Jasper likes *"working with other people"* and is interested in the Firemaker for *"reflection... I think I need to do more think about myself in the work. It will good for me to analyse where I am at and how to better myself more"*.

General experiences of participation in Firemaker

Jasper attended both interviews and three out of the four workshops. He forgot about the second workshop and did not attend. In the workshops he has a gentle energy, is still and takes his time to answer and speak. In the group he watches; he doesn't easily contribute but when he reflects on an activity he usually speaks for longer than the other group members.

Journal note

I can imagine that the children like Jasper. He has a youthful, funky, cool energy about him. He is softly spoken and I sometimes strain to hear what he is saying in the workshops. When I transcribe, it is the same; he drops the ends of words and sentences at times. At times he feels sleepy. He has to leave early in the first workshop, he seems tired. I do not know why he often seems far away and I wonder often what he is thinking.

Jasper does not arrive for the second workshop. I text him before the workshop as I do everyone. He does not respond and does not send a message with anyone else. I text him afterwards to check if he is ok. I do not hear from him and wonder if he has decided to not continue. When I text reminding the group of the 3rd workshop (one month later) he responds and says he completely forgot and feels terrible. I wonder if you can completely forget, and what that may be about. Perhaps he was too tired or felt ambivalent about Firemaker. He had warned me in the pre interview he can sometimes feel "*overwhelmed*" so I am left wondering what might be happening for him. He recognises that his absence has affected the group and in the last session is able to acknowledge that he forgot and that this happens when he gets "*too relaxed, I dawdle, I was delayed....*"

Jasper, like others, enjoyed the activities that he could implement immediately, like some of the warm ups and the group agreement. He particularly liked the role play and "*acting out what we were feeling*" because it was a way to "*acknowledge and know where you are*" that goes beyond the usual "*formality*" of responding through words. He liked "*showing*" others how he felt, as they could get a deeper understanding of what he was really feeling in that moment.

Jasper's stand out moment was that the group "*felt comfortable to come together and to share whatever we were feeling or what was on our mind, even though we were tired, not feeling 100%*". He liked "*reflecting*" and "*working with other people*" as he was able to focus on and "*look forward to other stuff*". By participating in Firemaker he felt reassured that his work is what he "*really wants to be doing*".

Jasper goes onto say that being in the group with colleagues was valuable as "*looking at other people's work as well was, allowed me to step back quickly in that moment as if I am looking at myself again... what would I do in this situation?*".

In the post interview Jasper notes he would have liked

maybe more activities to learn about other people...and how maybe problem solving like if there was a matter that came up in their lives, how did they solve it...work and personal...how do people cope with hearing stories or how that may affect you and be able to not take that back home, as a like over emotional kind of thing, it's good to talk.

Focus on self and role as youth worker/experience of focused arts active methods

Jasper describes himself as a "*big kid*", who can "*relate*" to children and "*get on their level but the same time bringing them up to another level*". He comments that he has been advised "*not to get too close to the kids*" which he finds paradoxical as he says "*you have to get close for them to actually trust you*". Jasper sees his relationship with the children as open in which "*he talks about what I want to say*" and then the children can ask him questions and if it is an "*inappropriate question you will know cos I won't answer it*".

Clay and box activity: Jasper works slowly and makes lots of bits out of the clay with an egg carton as his box. The bits include balls and long coils which he joins up. When he explains his image it is complex (like the image) and not easy to follow. He says he knew what he was doing with his hands as he had recently done a similar reflective activity like this. His image has to do with his growth and development, starting “*from two families*” and “*growing stronger by learning more*” about his “*roots*”.

I am always yearning back to my roots like why do I want to help people and why am I doing what I am doing? Like as an artist to try and define yourself... cos I think it's probably more I want to help other people cos I received so much help without me really knowing... and knowing that I can help people that they would do the same thing as me, cos if I have helped someone in need they could follow the same pattern or trend...

Jasper, like others in this group, seems to be strongly identified with the children he works with. He is still working out what his role with children entails:

I am thinking because I am always learning something new, so that could be a new instrument or new lyrics or teaching new kids....in a new environment and I am adapting and creating my energy towards something small to create a bigger thing. Yeah it's kinda like a cycle...

Objects: Jasper is absent for this session.

Body Sculptures: Jasper's body sculptures appear to embody very similar positions, of child and worker giving each other a high five. The high fives get bigger as the sculptures progress from the child's perspective from “*happy*” to “*excited*” to “*joyful*”, representing Jaspers' growth in his self-confidence.

...if you don't believe in yourself... and get people to participate... it's more of learning more about myself how to give people more fun... because the kids are distracted, I get distracted easily and how to keep the balance of fun, exciting without saying "don't do this"... let's go to the left and right and give a high five, find out what's not working for the kids and myself.

Changes/shifts/insights in thoughts, feelings, knowledge, practice, identity of youth worker

Jasper felt that Firemaker added to an increased general “*awareness*” in his work. He described this as firstly becoming more aware of individual participants in his workshops and what they might be feeling, as well as an awareness of his facilitation skills and ability. He has become more aware of when to use certain warm ups, energisers and ice breakers with intention in a group and says the group agreement has made managing large groups easier. The most significant aspect of Firemaker that has influenced Jaspers’ practice is “*creating that sense of safe space....*”

Although he felt that while “*winging it*” he always did “*the right thing, and just follow that gut feeling and roll with it*”, Firemaker created a new awareness of his practice and his ability to “*evaluate myself*”. He describes this awareness as “*another eye opener*” in which he could see the challenges of “*juggling projects*”.

Jasper says that Firemaker has influenced his “*patience and my listening skills... just to... just looking, sometimes when someone's speaking I drift off myself... just to have that to make connection and my tone of voice*”. He describes a case where a girl in year 7 looked really disengaged and rather than force her to perform he “*really listened to how she was talking and how she was feeling I felt... before I would have tried to hurry them on*”.

It made a difference to *“um to just take a step back... to get an overview”*.

He has become more aware of group dynamics and the understanding that before they can *“teach”* the children, they need to allow themselves the

chance to be more bonding within that group, instead of “right guys here are some lyrics perform them”, trying to create that communication within people within a class... because a lot of them just stick to their groups so trying to separate people, not separate but get them to work with other people they may not usually work with... and so they don’t feel afraid to talk to another person in their class they don’t really talk to.

This has resulted in them cutting back on some of the content of the sessions and allowing time for *“bonding”* to take place first. Jasper speaks about these changes as *“just little things we’re picking up on”*, but that Firemaker gave them *“the opportunity to test it out. So yeah putting Firemaker into practice is kinda fun actually to see... it’s more little projects and to implement and add a little twist or whatever”*.

Core Processes

Dramatic projection and distancing.

Jasper seems to have become more conscious and mindful of where he is in his work, and where he wants to be, realising the value in this, so as to avoid feeling overwhelmed.

I am in a position where it’s like... you know how you ask for something or you think about something for so long and you are actually doing it. I’m in this realisation that... um even though stuff still goes hectic at times, I’m in

*that right position where I want to be. Taking more conscious of um how I
am gonna feel... knowing where I stand and saying no.*

Appendix M

Email to Participants Inviting them to Read their Firemaker Story

Email sent to all 11 participants on 15 June 2015

Dear X

As I mentioned to you I am now writing up my thesis and as we were constructing a story together I would like to make sure I have captured your experience of it. So here it is for you to read and let me know if you think I have captured them accurately enough... and if I have got anything wrong.

I would be hugely grateful if you could have a read and send through comments to me by next Monday if possible please.

warmest wishes and thanks again

Kirsten

Appendix N

Participants' Responses to Emailed Case Summaries

Group One Responses

Three of the five participants responded. At the time of the emails, two participants had moved overseas, and the email was forwarded to them.

Thu 25/06/2015, 1:18 PM

Hi Kirsten,

Sorry in the delay in getting back to you. I had a read over it and it was great. Feels like a lifetime ago – a lot was going on when we were doing the program. I would love to read more of your thesis when you have finished if I am able to?

Best of luck with completing it!

Speak to you soon,

Amy

Tue 16/06/2015, 2:00 PM

Hi Kirsten

Awesome case study! I am more than happy for you to use this within your PHD. Thank you again for the opportunity to be a part of the fire maker program!

regards

Mark

Tue 16/06/2015, 2:06 PM

Hi Kirsten,

I have just had a good read and found it such a great process for reconnecting to those feelings and learnings! yes, I am happy with the way you captured my experience.

Liz

Group Two Responses

Four of the Six participants responded.

Tue 30/06/2015, 11:25 AM

Hey Kirsten.

It was so good to see you at X. I saw your face and it was soooo familiar (it took me 2 seconds to realise who you were haha). I think it was cause I never met your son. It was an honour meeting your little minion.

I just read the thesis and I have to say.....i have learnt more about myself in the last 10 minutes then I have in the last 5 years. I believe you accurately captured the big points as well as the small points that I thought would go unnoticed. I now realise I make no sense when I speak haha

Not sure if this matters but there were a few minor typos in places (just to give you a heads up).

I enjoyed reading this alot. Referring back to the project, I now know alot more about myself and it just reminds me that learning never stops.

Thank you so much Kirsten for your time and effort towards this and accepting me to be a participant in Firemaker.

Dave

Tue 30/06/2015, 3:42 PM

Hi Kirsten,

Just had a read through of the notes for your thesis, quite interesting to re-reflect on my own journey and also my journey within firemaker. It was quite good actually.

There was nothing major that I was concerned about or that needs to be changed a part from the course I'm studying being Public Health and Health Promotion instead of 'health relations'.

All in all, it's fine. I'm happy with the 'story', being Toni and looking forward to having a read of the final draft if allowed.

Hope your well.

Regards,

Toni

Fri 3/07/2015, 12:38 PM

Afternoon Kirsten!

Thankyou for your words. Thankyou for the details in that document. It definitely reminded me of the activities we went through in FM and I got glimpses of great memories during that workshop. What I love the most about this is that its coming from a different perspective. Its not me talking about myself or seeing things in my light but from yours. So that was really awesome to read from another set of eyes!

Thankyou for the Journal notes too. Its significant to me to read that because sometimes I wonder about my personality. Should I be more open, speak more, more firm, be less patient.. those types of thoughts. But this really encourages me and helps me be the person I am today and continue to grow in that way.

I appreciate the time you took with me, and the time you took to wait as well!

I wouldn't change any of what you wrote and thankyou for the opportunity to be part of this.

Blessings,

Angela

Mon 15/06/2015, 12:39 PM

Hi Kirsten,

Was such a lovely surprise to see you on Friday night!

I have had a read of the write up. Looks pretty good and as accurate as I can remember!

I just changed my heritage so its more accurate at the start and have attached it at in this email.

Kind regards,

Michelle

Artistic Practitioner

Appendix O

Table of Participant Attendance

Participants' attendance at the workshops

	Group 1 Pre interview	Wkshp 1 clay and box	Wkshp 2 objects	Wkshp 3 body sculptures	Wkshp 4 group evaluation	Post interview
Anthony	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Liz	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Amy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Emma	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mark	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	Group 2 Pre interview	Wkshp 1 clay and box	Wkshp 2 objects	Wkshp 3 body sculptures	Wkshp 4 group evaluation	Post interview
Toni	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Simon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×
Jasper	✓	✓	×	✓	✓	✓
Michelle	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dave	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Angela	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Appendix P

Analysis Table of Arts-focused, Active Methods

Participants	Active Arts Method	Experience	Core dramatherapy processes	Understanding of role
<i>Clay and box</i>				
Group 1	Images showed YW and organisation and young people: suggest work role defined	Uncertainty, not knowing, idea emerges, not having restrictions, like noticing what hands were doing, actions consistent with feelings	play, embodiment	
Anthony		Unconscious feelings emerge Powerful to put meaning into clay, then time to explain.	play, embodiment, dramatic projection	Awareness of negative feelings around child Awareness of honouring/respecting what child makes
Mark	Stand out moment	Uncertain not having step by step direction. Moving from place of not knowing to seeing what emerged.	play, embodiment	Take time to understand what the child needs
Liz		Noticed what hands were doing: consistent with feelings. Connects anxious feelings in group with child's feelings on first meeting	play, embodiment, empathy	Takes time to know child/process feelings Heightened awareness around child's feelings
Emma		Valued having no restrictions, felt creative, liked not thinking	play, embodiment	
Amy		Felt uncertain and vulnerable in front of colleagues	play, embodiment, witnessing	

Participants	Active Arts Method	Experience	Core dramatherapy processes	Understanding of role
	<i>Clay and box</i>			
Group 2	Only one image is clear depiction of work. Others depict journey/ moving to a place of growth e.g. tree	Focused and quiet, not knowing, liked getting hands dirty, common theme of journey, enjoyed having restrictions/ self judgement	Play, embodiment, dramatic projection, distancing, witnessing	No clear definition of role, child and worker role merged. Role emerging
Michelle		Fun, relaxing and focused liked not thinking , some self-judgement around image not being interesting enough	Play, embodiment, dramatic projection, distancing	Clear work role, awareness of self-judgement and not feeling good enough, emotional safety is important
Simon		The clay reminded him of his childhood in Africa, liked not knowing what he was doing	Play, embodiment, dramatic projection, distancing	Difficult to define role, self and child merged
Toni	Stand out moment	Enjoys quiet and focus, liked getting hands dirty, felt like image was not finished	Play, embodiment, dramatic projection, distancing, witnessing	Aware of where at on journey, recognises role as one of learning
Dave	Stand out moment	Through questions during reflection, became conscious of his role	Play, embodiment, dramatic projection, distancing, witnessing	Difficult to define role, sees self as in same position of the child. Recognises power dynamics
Angela	Stand out moment	Enjoys quiet and focus, enjoys having restrictions	Play, embodiment, dramatic projection, distancing, witnessing	Aware of knowledge and skills yet to learn.
Jasper		Knew what he wanted to do, liked doing, creating and physically seeing it, felt acknowledged and affirmed in seeing the bigger picture	Embodiment, dramatic projection, distancing	Awareness of dynamic nature of work role, felt acknowledged.

Participants	Active ArtsMethod	Experience	Core dramatherapy processes	Understanding of role
	<i>Objects</i>			
Group 1	Images showed participants 'worlds' personal and professional	Pictorial rep; moving things having time to explain, make meaning, link to work	Dramatic projection, distancing	Shifted focus to self-reflection; personal expression of own story felt significant, time to honour child's story and let them make meaning/less prescriptive and more flexible
Anthony		Enjoyed moving things, things having time to explain, make meaning link to work	Play, dramatic projection,	Less prescriptive, more flexible, more patient with child
Mark		Liked pictorial representation, chose soldier to rep self vs enemy (child)	Play, dramatic projection	
Liz	Stand out moment	Turning point when realised tool could be used for her own personal wellbeing	Play, dramatic projection,	Awareness of importance of time to process, and youth workers needing space to express and reflect
Emma	Stand out moment	Shifted focus to self-reflection; like use of symbols to express rather than words	Play, dramatic projection, distancing	Personal expression of own story felt significant, empathy for child who can't express and whose story not understood
Amy	Stand out moment	Felt it was ok to use for her personal wellbeing	Play, dramatic projection, distancing	

Participants	Active Arts Method	Experience	Core dramatherapy processes	Understanding of role
	<i>Objects</i>			
Group 2	Lots of objects culture context confusion	Enjoyed playing with objects and playing with their meaning	Play, dramatic projection, distancing	Clearer about what journey looks like and where they are going.
Michelle		Self-reflection on maternal safe place	Play, dramatic projection, distancing	
Simon		Enjoys simplicity of activity and no words	Play, dramatic projection	
Toni	Stand out moment	Difficult to choose one object to rep self	Play, dramatic projection, distancing	Awareness of life journey multiple influences in her life and where she was on that
Dave		Felt like child, felt empowered being able to manipulate objects	Play, dramatic projection, distancing	Recognises power dynamics at work and feelings of helplessness and anger, awareness of need to try out different roles at work
Angela		Liked connecting to her family roots and the ocean	Play, dramatic projection	
Jasper	Absent from session			

Participants	Active Arts Method	Experience	Core dramatherapy processes	Understanding of role
	<i>Body sculptures</i>			
Group 1	Clear distinctions in role and positioning and levels	Shoes of young person, vulnerable/transparent/	Embodiment, witnessing, distancing	Reminded of what young person feels like/not about what I want
Anthony	Stand out	Felt validated to see self in work, valuable learning to see others style of work and give feedback	Embodiment, witnessing	Validation of role
Mark		His sculptures have powerful effect on group, felt misunderstood	Embodiment, witnessing	Difficult to see his role as precarious
Liz		Feelings of loss not working directly with children, enjoyed stepping into shoes of child, learnt from watching others	Embodiment, witnessing	Awareness of how precarious youth worker role can be
Emma		Powerful process watching others, feeling for both vulnerable young person and yw	Embodiment, witnessing, empathy	Awareness of how in rush to help, YW anxiety get in way of thinking about the young person
Amy		Felt vulnerable playing young person, watching herself felt affirming	Embodiment Witnessing	Awareness of vulnerability of young person , roel as YW felt affirmed

Participants	Active Arts Method	Experience	Core dramatherapy processes	Understanding of role
	<i>Body sculptures</i>			
Group 2	Worker and child on same level, uncertainty		Embodiment, witnessing, distancing	Defining identity, teacher/not teacher/ who is a child/v playful not one thing/learn from each other
Michelle		Tired, at first didn't see any change between then and now, but then said something had changed, she started enjoying her work and she felt more comfortable with children now, she liked being sculpted by others	Witnessing distancing	Awareness she has much to learn from the child, importance of enjoyment for her and child, emphasises safety and makes links to own life as to why safety important
Simon		Notices through witnessing his body changes a lot, he felt awkward and uncertain	Witnessing, distancing	Role feels uncertain and uncomfortable
Toni		Trying to find right balance in positions, uncertainty around role and power	Witnessing, distancing	Who am I in relationship to child? Not teacher, not friend, awareness of need of balance
Dave		Felt uncertainty about what he was trying to show, liked seeing others represent him	Witnessing, distancing	More aware of power dynamics in relationship with boss and child, awareness of importance of asserting himself
Angela		Felt she was trying to get worker at same level of child, but lots of entanglement	Witnessing, distancing	Awareness of still trying out ways of being with the child
Jasper		High energy, high fives in sculptures, enjoys watching the fun	Witnessing, distancing	Learning about self how to give children more fun without saying 'don't.

Appendix Q

Participants' Responses in Role

Group 1

WORKER	Now	Then	Future
Anthony (chose Liz)	I feel comfortable, like I am back in? And detention... a little frustration in that I would like this young person to be looking at me and engaging with me and they're off in the distance. I also feel excited there's a tool in front of me and something we can engage with together so it's not just me trying to talk at him or to him	I am feeling very anxious about the piano... and I am working with this child and he is doing this. Still struggling to engage not feeling as much as I felt before and more anxious now than before [01:22:41]	This is nice we are sharing something new and more shared. We both have our own space but there is space here to talk... For me that moment is about like being at peace with the relationship in a way so there is no move to block anything... doesn't mean it's all rosy, it doesn't have to be rosy, if you can share a chair that's a really good sign... it's certainly not a piano lesson, the piano is there but it is a tool... it represents [01:26:16]
Mark (chose Anthony)	Mhmm (laughs)... I am feeling like in this particular position that I have latched on, strong latching but haven't done any of the heavy lifting yet...its neutral but safe there's a connection	I am the target but I need a miracle here...anticipation and hope engagement	I feel heroic...this is starting to work. Something is coming back from the hand to connect... feeling more confident from the 2 hand hold... like something is happening, still anticipatory rather than working alongside by side but more hopeful
Emma (chose Liz)	I feel like I am trying... it's kind of hard to sit here, not sure what I am looking at but really want YP to see it... you MUST See it	Frustrated... I am just here!! I want your attention	She can see it yay... happy but little bit of 'noo she's going'
Amy (chose Emma)	I am just smiling	Feel very not at ease, tension	Connected...good work

CHILD	Now	Then	Future
Anthony (chose Mark)	Day dreaming trying to escape from the situation... not day dreaming about something positive, think I am trying to figure out the last batman movie I saw....	Feel... like I am trying to avoid the situation don't feel like I definitely don't want to hang out with you but I kind of feel like I am bored yeah....	Mhmm...more like okay I can hang with you
Mark (chose Amy)	I feel like my bum's really cold... also feel like I am about to be saved. I don't know what is going to happen. RES: Bit unsure? A: Yeah...not sure don't know if it's definite I am going to go back up or down again cos I am still on the ground.	Apprehensive, intrigued (hand what's on offer) and still hesitant cold bum still stuck to here... feel like I could be doing so much more than sitting on the ground and having cold bum... but guarded as well and I'm not giving anything yet	Going up , secure Res how do you feel looking up to him all the time A: admiration, like a role model also a bit intimidating if it was a really bit high that would really intimidate me... counteracted by comfort you get from the touch.
Emma (chose Amy)	I am trying I am squinting, it's almost there but if I squeeze my eyes it might come. I feel like because her hands are on my shoulders [00:55:16] and she is pointing to where I am supposed to be looking like I have got that direction but I just need to find out... I have to just spot it	I am trying I am squinting, it's almost there but if I squeeze my eyes it might come. I feel like because J hands are on my shoulders [00:55:16] and she is pointing to where I am supposed to be looking like I have got that direction but I just need to find out... I have to just spot it	Excited I am going there to that thing you are pointing at
Amy (chose Mark)	I feel like I am not in a ?[01:08:12]... facing head on and not sitting side by side... like we are looking at the same thing.. I feel very I can choose to be in this conversation or not...and relaxed	Like I really don't want be here, couldn't care less	I feel like I am engaged I am actually doing something so it's intentional and connected

Group 2

WORKER	Now	Then	Future	
Toni (chose Michelle)	Excited and helpful	I don't know what to do but I know I should be here	I feel like I am doing something in partnership	
Michelle (chose Toni)	I feel it's working out	I am unsure	Excited	
Simon (chose Dave)	I feel ready to explore	...slightly disturbed	I feel connected and proud	
Jasper (chose Simon)	High five I feel very happy to see him	I feel excited	I feel proud	
Dave (chose Angela)	I feel in a good space	Not sure if what I am doing is correct	I feel together	
Angela (chose Toni)	I feel entangled	...together	...strange	Makes sculpture 2 slight more happy but physically same
CHILD	Now	Then	Future	
Toni (chose Jasper)	I am part of something	This is a new person I feel I don't know this person	I feel like I am about to do a dance	
Michelle (chose Angela)	I feel happy	I feel happy	Joyful	
Simon (chose Angela)	I feel not sure	I feel watched	I feel the same	
Jasper (chose Dave)	I feel happy to see him and be a kid again	I feel excited to be here	I feel joyful	Changes sculpture 2 slightly by putting Dave a bit lower.
Dave (chose Jasper)	I feel energetic like this but I feel don't want to hurt myself	I feel disappointed	Happy and joyful	
Angela (chose Dave)	I feel desperate	Very very happy	playful	