

**Transformative Possibilities:
A journey through tertiary restorative justice
education**

by

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Abstract

As the profile of restorative justice in tertiary education grows, this research examines the impact of Canada's most long-standing undergraduate, restorative justice course. This dissertation documents the genesis of Simon Fraser University's restorative justice course (RJC) from the perspective of several course developers. The study utilizes established survey and interview methods from the field of transformative learning to evaluate whether RJC students experienced perspective transformation, what they feel facilitated that transformation, the impact of it, and whether the transformation was enduring. The findings indicate that the majority of respondents experienced perspective transformation from retributive to restorative. For many, this transformation involved more than changing views about crime and justice. Students reported transformations of beliefs, feelings, and relationships that led to changes in behaviour with respect to their vocation, volunteer work, education, and personal lives. These transformations were sustained over time and participants provided feedback on how the RJC could play a role in advancing restorative justice beyond the university setting. This study provides concrete recommendations for how restorative justice education can create personal transformations that can move restorative justice from the margins to the mainstream inside and outside of the criminal justice system.

Keywords: restorative justice; restorative justice education; transformative justice; transformative learning; tertiary education; praxis.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to Dr. Liz Elliott. Thank you for your vision, mentorship, and showing us what it means to “walk the talk.”

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The Parable of the Hummingbird

The hummingbird has become a symbol for restorative justice in parts of British Columbia and beyond. This icon was introduced to many of us in the restorative justice community in 2003 when “The Flight of the Hummingbird” was recited by Haida author Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas at an International Restorative Justice Conference in Vancouver, BC. In this story, a great forest fire raged and all the animals fled and watched from afar as their home burned. Only Dukdukdiya, the little hummingbird, would not abandon the forest. Flying back and forth between a stream and the fire, she dropped water on the flames, bead by bead. When asked what she was doing, without stopping, Dukdukdiya looked down at all of the animals and said, “I am doing what I can.” Although a parable for the environment, restorative justice advocates resonated deeply with this story. This story is shared with restorative justice students. One student felt so moved by the course and the story, she had this image tattooed. It is these experiences that I wanted to understand through conducting this research. She says,

The hummingbird to me is strength, courage, compassion, dedication, and zeal. She is a real go-getter; innovative and creative. She is not confined to a 4-walled-box, conforming to what the rest of the world does. When I heard of the story of the hummingbird, I felt empowered. I recognize that I cannot put out fires alone; but like the hummingbird, I don't want to let this get in the way of my setting an example for how I hope to see the world unfold. I want to build communities, not allow for them to be destroyed by anger, shame, and neglect. I want to heal, not harm. I want to be a hummingbird, and I want to do all that I can.



Chapter 1.

Introduction

1.1. Background and Context

The genesis of this dissertation was a personal journey that began in 2000 when I was studying criminology in university. Both as a student and survivor of violent crime, I was frustrated by the criminal justice system and how it disappoints and sometimes re-traumatizes people who have been harmed, those who have caused harm, and their families. My growing apathy shifted to hope when I experienced personal transformation through a restorative justice course. This research is a direct result of that experience.

I did not know what to think when my restorative justice instructor, the late Dr. Liz Elliott,¹ walked into our class with a man who said he had committed murder. He told us about his years of incarceration and personal transformation. The speaker shared his experience of being released into the community and how he now works to support other former prisoners. His said he was living his life according to the principles of restorative

¹ Elizabeth (Liz) Elliott, M.S.W., Ph.D. (1957-2011) was the founding Co-Director of the Centre for Restorative Justice in the School of Criminology. She was actively involved in prisons and restorative justice since 1981, first as a community-based social worker (1981-1986), then as a lecturer for the Prison Education Program in B.C. federal prisons (1988-1991) and then as a professor of restorative justice and corrections at Simon Fraser University. Liz lectured, presented and published in the areas of restorative justice, prisons and criminological theory. She co-edited *New Directions in Restorative Justice* (2005), wrote several book chapters and journal articles on restorative justice or prison, was a founding editor (1988) of the *Journal of Prisoners on Prisons* (University of Ottawa Press), and was an editorial board member for the journal, *Contemporary Justice Review* (Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group). Her book, *Security with Care*, was published in 2011. She was a board member of the Canadian prisoner aid organization, the John Howard Society of the Fraser Valley (B.C.) and the West Coast Prison Justice Society (Prisoners' Legal Services). She was also a regular member of the restorative justice group FAVOR, which meets weekly in Mission Minimum Institution, a federal prison (Simon Fraser University, 2014).

justice.² Upon hearing this story, I experienced what Howard Zehr (1990) would call a “paradigm shift.” Restorative justice aligned with my personal values and I wanted to be a part of the movement. I was inspired to take action, and I did.

Eight years after becoming a community-based restorative justice practitioner and trainer, I was teaching the same course, in the same university where I had first learned about restorative justice. Mentored by Dr. Liz Elliott, I was now bringing storytellers into my classroom and witnessing students’ profound transformations. It has been an incredible journey from student to teacher and, now, writing this, I am a student once again. My experience teaching the restorative justice course inspired my return to Simon Fraser University (SFU) as a doctoral student. With every student’s elated expression of “this course changed my life,” my inner researcher grew hungry to understand more about the ripple effects of tertiary restorative justice education.³ Liz also influenced my decision to embark on this journey. She believed strongly that research would enhance the credibility of restorative justice and help move these approaches from the margins to the mainstream inside and outside of the criminal justice system.

Many disciplines within post-secondary schools provide opportunities for restorative justice education. Restorative justice courses are offered in criminal justice, criminology, sociology, law, and, Indigenous/First Nations studies departments within tertiary institutions. SFU has the largest criminology department in Canada and is the location of the Centre for Restorative Justice.⁴ Offering diverse courses, the department is home to the longest running undergraduate restorative justice course (RJC) in the country. Since it was first offered in 1999, over 2000 students have completed the course.

² Glen Flett later participated in a victim offender meditation with Margot Van Sluytman, the daughter of the man he killed. To read about this story, link to <http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/im-sorry-im-sorry-im-sorry/> or <http://lincsociety.bc.ca/community-garden/my-vision-of-restorative-justice-by-glen-flett>

³ The term “restorative justice education” is used purposefully to distinguish the experience of learning about restorative justice through a process that intends to align with the values of respect, inclusion, and relationship.

⁴ The Centre for Restorative Justice (CRJ) is a resource and research centre dedicated to promoting the values and principles of restorative justice through education, research, and dialogue with academics, practitioners, and community. In partnership with individuals, community and justice agencies, the CRJ was founded in 2002 by faculty members in the School of Criminology at Simon Fraser University (Simon Fraser University, 2015).

Given the large number of students and my accessibility as an SFU graduate student, this site provided fertile ground to explore the experience of being educated about restorative justice.

This dissertation builds upon the theoretical work of Smith-Cunnie and Parilla (2001) and Gilbert, Schiff, and Cunliffe (2013) who discuss the importance of restorative justice education to criminology and criminal justice students. Gilbert et al. (2013), Britto and Reimund (2013), and Geske (2005) maintain that future criminal justice actors and the public (V. Braithwaite, Huang, & Reinhart, 2013) must support restorative justice in order to advance the movement. However, simply being aware that restorative justice exists is not enough; instead, individual and structural paradigm shifts are necessary (Zehr, 1990). Although restorative justice advocates (Elliott, 2011; Van Ness & Strong, 2015; Zehr, 2015) routinely emphasize the importance of these shifts, few empirical expeditions into this phenomenon have been undertaken.

Research with respect to tertiary restorative justice education has been largely anecdotal, reporting on instructors' (Carson & Bussler, 2013; Kitchen, 2013) or students' experiences after one course offering (Holsinger, 2008; Vigorita, 2002). Related studies have focused on participants in a graduate course (Adamson, 2012, restorative justice workshops in prison (Helfgott, Lovell, Lawrence & Parsonage, 2000; Toews, 2013), or university residence (McDowell, Crocker, Evett, & Cornelison, 2014). This research provides a unique contribution to the field of restorative justice as it draws from the experiences of undergraduate students who completed SFU's RJC over a span of 15 years. This dissertation utilizes well-established research methods from the field of transformative learning to determine whether students reported a perspective shift and how that change affected their beliefs, relationships, and behaviour.

1.2. Significance of the Research

Restorative justice seeks meaningful and collaborative ways to address the unique needs of people and relationships. Restorative justice offers an alternative to punishment, which has been given "sacred status" as an unquestioned and justified response to behaviour in homes, schools, sports, and criminal justice (Elliott, 2011, p. 24). Compared

to the contemporary legal system, restorative justice generally demonstrates higher rates of satisfaction for all parties and lower recidivism (Walgrave, 2008). Restorative processes are increasingly being considered as a response to harm outside of criminal justice matters in schools, workplaces, and everyday life (Johnstone & Van Ness, 2007). Morrison, Thorsborne, and Blood's (2005) review of the emergence of restorative justice in schools in the early 1990s demonstrate how this approach can facilitate social change through developing healthy relationships across the school community. When introduced in schools as an alternative to punitive, prescriptive policies such as zero tolerance, restorative justice results in fewer suspensions, expulsions, and referrals to law enforcement (González, 2012).

While these results are promising, restorative justice can offer much more than responding differently when a harm occurs. Boyes-Watson and Pranis (2012) note that many proponents of restorative justice argue that it is, "above all, an approach which prioritizes a commitment to a set of values independent of its utility for outcomes such as reducing recidivism or incarceration" (p. 266).⁵ Restorative justice has value to society as it provides a moral framework that helps us walk in a less violent way as individuals and communities (Elliott, 2011). When conceptualized as a set of values or framework (Vaandering, 2010), restorative justice is about taking action to promote the overall health and well-being of people. It is both a personal and collective commitment to mutual care, "with a corollary emphasis on relationships and a recognition that healthy individuals do not exist in isolation" (Harris, 2006, p. 120). This conception of restorative justice is grounded in a relational view of the self which "recognizes not only that we live in relationships with others but also that relationship and connection with others is essential to the existence of the self" (Llewellyn & Downie, 2011, 4). This expansive definition has implications for addressing power imbalances (Morrison, 2007), enhancing community participation (Bazemore, 2001), establishing relationship-based environments (Vaandering, 2010, p. 150), and responding to human needs (Sullivan & Tifft, 2005). For many individuals who embrace a restorative justice philosophy, it has become a worldview or paradigm (Zehr, 1990).

⁵ For a critical discussion of this claim see Wood, W. (2015). Why Restorative Justice Will Not Reduce Incarceration, *British Journal of Criminology*, 55, 883-900.

For restorative justice to be realized beyond an ornament hanging from the legal system (Walgrave, 2008) or a “one off” disciplinary opportunity in schools (Morrison, 2007, p. 119), personal, political, and institutional shifts are needed. Morrison (2007) notes that social institutions play a key role in framing our behavioural choices by formally and informally regulating patterns of interaction and behaviour and (98). Schools in particular often expose students to ideas and experiences that can shift their perspective and either inspire or erode hope (Morrison, 2007). These individual experiences can collectively lead to more substantial social change. According to Breunig (2005), schools can both prepare people for future work in the world “that is,” while still offering them a vision of what “could be.” What “could be” is the development of a more socially just world (Breunig, 2005, p. 112). University students, particularly those studying criminology, have the potential to either contribute to the status quo or be part of a change. Bazemore (2001) argues that systemic change to the criminal justice system will only be possible once citizens rethink the roles and responsibilities of state and community and intentionally focus on rebuilding the community’s capacity to deal with justice issues. Restorative justice education provides opportunities for such considerations.

As Vaandering (2010) notes, if restorative justice practices in education are intent on shifting paradigms and changing social structures, then “pedagogy and curricula will impact and be impacted by [their] presence” (p. 161). Restorative justice education is best understood as praxis, which is the action and reflection of people upon their world in order to transform it (Freire, 2000). As such, within the post-secondary realm, restorative justice must be evaluated in light of its ability to inspire critical reflection, engagement, and action. Morrison and Vaandering (2012) argue that restorative justice praxis requires a “long-term commitment and regular assessment of changes in order to confirm that a paradigm shift is actually taking place” (p. 147). The primary purpose of this research is to understand whether perspective transformation occurred for a diverse sample of students who completed an introductory, undergraduate restorative justice course. Relatedly, what factors inside and outside the classroom student’s attributed to their experience are assessed.

A secondary focus of this dissertation is to understand what this long-standing course at SFU has contributed to the field of restorative justice education and the social

movement of restorative justice more broadly. Given the large number of students who have completed the course since 1999, it is important to track the development and impact of this educational endeavour. The number of restorative justice courses offered at the tertiary level is increasing (Tompsonski, 2014) and this work provides recommendations that could assist other educators. This research also contributes to the discipline of transformative learning as it relates to restorative justice.

This dissertation also has personal significance. This undertaking has resulted in deepening transformation for me as a graduate student and an educator. Through hearing participants' stories of restorative justice education, my understanding of my own journey and what it means to be an educator has been enhanced. My evolving story and those of the students are woven together and their essence is presented in this dissertation. Baldwin (2005) highlights the importance of capturing stories: "for in writing we live life twice: once in the experience, and again in recording and reflecting upon our experience" (p. 43). Through this research, some of us live twice, or more.

The purpose of the following vignette is two-fold. Not only does it describe an experience of transformation, which is the phenomenon under study, it provides a level of personal transparency, which contributes to the process of reflexivity I undertook throughout this project. Reflexivity is defined as recognizing, examining, and understanding how a researcher's own background and assumptions can intervene in the research process (Hesse & Leavy, 2011). While my bias as a restorative justice advocate maintained my motivation throughout this research undertaking, it is not immaterial with respect to the integrity of the results. Although care has been taken to be open, critical, and not just "see what I want to see," complete neutrality is neither possible nor desirable. In qualitative research, validity refers the degree to which findings authentically reflect the perceptions and interpretations of the participants' lived experiences (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). I carefully selected clear and ethical research methods to honour participants' voices while also disclosing personal roles and history that could affect the study.

1.3. Author's Vignette

Some moments in life are burned into our memory. They are comprised of images, feelings, and thoughts. For me, a memory that has tremendous meaning in my life is an experience that took place in a university classroom.

Growing up, I was one of those people who always knew I would end up in university. Although nobody in my family had followed this path, my parents encouraged further education—an opportunity that was not available to them, or so they say. I was not opposed to this path, as it seemed a natural, unquestioned step. Towards what end? I did not know. I found high school unchallenging and uninspiring at best and violent and victimizing at worst. This experience made me question whether school was right for me. I didn't want to go. I felt unsafe. I was intimidated, gossiped about, and eventually physically assaulted. The thoughts of post-secondary slipped farther and farther away. I didn't see the future. I was so caught up in the now and the now wasn't very good.

My life took some more challenging turns around the age of thirteen. By the following year, I was no longer living at home and was asked to leave high school. I ended up on the streets of Vancouver where I experienced trauma, isolation, and addiction. I was arrested just before my sixteenth birthday and placed in foster care where I struggled to get my life on track. Through support of a caring youth worker, non-judgemental foster mother, and the unconditional love of my mum and dad, I returned home to live with my parents. I didn't leave again until I was thirty years old. I felt like I needed to make up for lost time. My parents are my best friends today and our relationship means the world to me. In the aftermath of the harm I caused, I accepted responsibility and worked hard to reintegrate back into the family. They accepted me, took responsibility for their part, and we rebuilt our relationship from there. I didn't know it then, but this was my first experience with restorative justice.

As I write this, it is like I am talking about another person. A stranger from another time. I didn't have awareness of who I was back then. I was trying on other people's identities and none of them felt right. Today, I am still learning about who I am but I have the safety to do so. I have transformed, emerged, and learned I need to embrace and love even the darkest parts of myself. I need to be grateful. I am grateful.

I finished high school in an alternative setting where I could work at my own pace. I graduated although my future aspirations were hazy ... maybe I would get my business degree and help carry on our small, family business? Perhaps I would enter into the legal field, I had a strong sense that things in the world were unjust and I did always like a good argument ...

I was the first in my family to attend post-secondary institution. My parents supported me to do so although I worked part-time to contribute to my parent's business and gain practical experience. Although I began college as a Business student, an elective I took in Criminology inspired me to change direction. The courses to which I was exposed were critical and poked holes in the "justice" system that I had taken for granted. I loved questioning this system that everyone had opinions on. I went to battle against a faceless enemy called the criminal justice system.

Unlike most of my peers, I did not buy into arguments that the system was too "soft." As both a former "victim" and "offender," my interactions with the legal system had profound and long-lasting impacts on myself and my family. I knew that more "tough on crime" was not the answer, but throughout studying criminology at the undergraduate level, I was never asked, "What might you have needed from justice?" It was not surprising that this question never came up. I hid my past from my friends and professors; however, it was this history that motivated me. Over time, I realized I didn't know exactly what I was fighting for. If severe punishment could not remedy injustice, what could? I remember feeling hopeless after being challenged by a professor who said, "You don't like the system that is in place? What is your alternative?" I didn't have an answer.

After two years of college, I transferred to Simon Fraser University to complete my Criminology degree. In the Spring of 2000, I enrolled in a course called Restorative Justice because it fit my schedule. The course was taught by Dr. Liz Elliott who had developed the course the year before. I do not remember my first few classes but the scribbles in my textbook, *Changing Lenses* by Howard Zehr (1990), provide clues to what I was thinking while being exposed to restorative justice for the first time. I had highlighted sections such as "accountability includes an opportunity to understand the human consequences of one's acts, to face up to what one has done, and to whom one has done

it” and “offenders must be allowed and encouraged to help decide what will happen to make things right, and then take steps to repair the damage” (Zehr, 1990, p. 42). I underlined a segment about forgiveness and how real forgiveness “allows one to move from victim to survivor” (Zehr, 1990, p. 47). There were other paragraphs by which I had placed stars or exclamation marks, my shorthand for either agreement or surprise. I had consistently graffitied sections that spoke of community as a source of support for victims and offenders, the limits of retribution, and accountability.

Reviewing this artefact years later, I discovered a note I had made in the margins that brings a rueful smile to my lips every time I see it. Next to the sentence, “[reconciliation] involves establishing a positive relationship between victim and offender” (Zehr, 1990, p. 187), I had written, “Too lofty of a goal.”

Examining our past writing is a bit like riding in a faulty time machine. Although woefully incomplete, it can provide clues to our thoughts, feelings, and perspectives during the time it was written. Reading my cynicism about reconciliation reminds me of how suspect I felt about victims and offenders finding justice together, especially given my own feelings of spite towards those who had harmed and exploited me as a teen. Also, I had not accepted the part of me that had caused harm to my family. Those past wounds and feelings of shame and self-loathing were locked away. I lived in fear that my past would be revealed and I would be seen as the monster and damaged person that I too often saw in the mirror.

Although I do not recall reading that text for the first time, nor writing my assignments, I will always remember the day I found hope for my future in criminology and a restored faith in humanity. It was also the day I connected with what “justice” meant to me. This moment occurred when Dr. Elliott, walked into the classroom with a man. He looked to be in his sixties and interacted with our professor with familiarity. He was an engaging speaker, with a humbleness that made him immediately likeable. His name was Glen Flett and he talked about his life during a lengthy federal prison term and his experience upon release. Glen served a prison term for a robbery and a murder. He spoke of his devastation when thinking of his victim, the victim’s daughter and family. He underscored the pains of imprisonment and release and how he had started an

organization with his wife Sherry called Long-Term Inmates Now in the Community (LINC)⁶ to help other long-term offenders reintegrate. Some years after this presentation to our class, Glen participated in a victim-offender mediation with his victim's daughter, Margot Van Sluytman.⁷ Margot has offered him forgiveness.

Writing about this experience now, I feel the same sensations overtake me. I feel the intensity of the pain and suffering that those involved with crime experience, the ripples of harm and loss that never seem to end. In that intensity, I feel a deep sense of connection to all humanity. I realized I was not alone! We have all known suffering and shame and many, like Glen and I, had taken steps to restore our lives. And through all of this, I feel a burning motivation that swells in my guts and fires through my heart and brain. I have come to know this sensation as hope. It is something I felt that day on a level I had never known previously and it remains with me today. It was a realization that if this man – someone who had caused so much harm and had experienced so much oppression in prison and judgement by society – could do something to help another person, it was my obligation to do the same. It was that realization that harm was harm and labels only served to divide. The labels I had given myself and others who had harmed me produced further feelings of isolation and shame. What I really needed was connection. In that moment, the labels fell away and all I felt was connection with the other people in that classroom. The conduit for that feeling of connection with others and myself was Glen's story.

This moment of transformation is difficult to put into words. All I know is that it was a shift that changed me permanently. The feelings of shame and helplessness associated with my own experience and what I know about the justice system were replaced with a deep commitment to healing and acceptance of others (and later in my life, of myself). I was given a vision of justice that didn't exist for me before that moment. It was a vision that held the promise of profoundly human and humane justice. I do not remember a time since that day that I have ever felt the depth of disconnection, shame, fear, hopelessness,

⁶ For more on this organization go to <http://lincsociety.bc.ca/>

⁷ For more on this story go to <http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/im-sorry-im-sorry-im-sorry/>

apathy, or cynicism that I had felt prior to hearing Glen's story. I consider it a gift of infinite value.

The very day of Glen's visit, I pestered Liz for opportunities to contribute to his project. Within weeks I was in a circle of recently paroled men in a basement three blocks from the family home which I left and returned to as a university student. It was the basement of a half-way house that had been there almost as long as my family had lived in the neighbourhood. We never knew it existed but it was the place where I took the first steps to contribute to restorative justice. I found it an incredible opportunity to volunteer with restorative justice in my own backyard. In the months that followed, I attended a workshop called the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) at Mission medium security institution with other community volunteers and federally sentenced men. A year later, I was delivering these workshops alongside men living in prison. That same year, I completed a practicum placement through SFU at a community-based restorative justice program and was hired to train others. I was also working and volunteering every week at a crisis centre and supporting the reintegration of people with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder currently moving through parole. I was fully engaged with helping others and, in turn, helping myself. I had found my purpose and passion and was now connected to a beautiful circle of mentors who were committed to the same values I had.

Liz continued to guide and support me through times when my past haunted me. I spent many weekends at her home connecting with her family and other people in the community of Mission. My fondest memories of Liz were from being with her in the morning. Sipping coffee, I would watch her react with dismay and outrage to the latest political or crime-related news story; papers piled all around her. Often disgruntled she told me I must bring credibility to restorative justice movement by contributing research and teaching. I took her words to heart. I completed my Honours and Master's degrees on restorative justice under her supervision. Liz then insisted I apply for the doctoral program, so I would have the opportunity to work with Dr. Brenda Morrison. I did that too.

In the fall of 2008, my journey of transformation came full circle as I stood in front of 25 restorative justice students as their instructor at SFU. During that first teaching semester and ever since, I invited people on parole into the classroom to share their

stories as Glen had shared with me. The transformations that these students experienced were recounted through their assignments, email correspondence, and personal encounters. I felt such a connection to and familiarity with their stories.

On September 9, 2011, Liz passed away after a courageous battle with cancer. The hundreds of people who attended her celebration of life, memorial lectures, totem pole naming and spirit release ceremonies, and restorative justice events affirm that her legacy lives on. A totem pole carved by men from Mission Minimum Institution, a federal men's prison where Liz spent much of her time, welcomes all visitors to the School of Criminology at SFU. It depicts three images: Liz herself, an eagle to give strength and wisdom for the journey, and a hummingbird to lead the way. The restorative justice movement in British Columbia and beyond is fuelled by passion generated from transformative experiences students had in the course Liz created. This research provides insight into how restorative justice education at SFU has facilitated perspective transformation such as the one I experienced. It is my sincere hope that this work contributes to restorative justice education, honours the experiences of students, and increases the credibility of the movement, as Liz had hoped.

1.4. Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to pursue an understanding of how completing an undergraduate course in restorative justice can contribute to personal perspective transformations that can advance restorative justice in our communities and institutions. Such perspective transformations can be evaluated through established research methods from the field of adult education known as transformative learning. This research explores the following questions:

What perspective transformation, if any, do students report after completing an introductory restorative justice course at SFU?

What influences or facilitating factors were, at least in part, perceived as contributing to these transformations?

How, if at all, did students' perspective transformation affect their beliefs, feelings, relationships, and actions?

To what extent, if at all, were these perspective transformations enduring?

1.5. Overview of Dissertation

Chapter 1 provides the background, context, and significance of the study. It also includes my vignette that provides a personal account of the motivation for the research and my position as researcher. Chapter 2 describes the restorative justice course under study and how it was developed and has evolved. The genesis of the course is explained through presenting the themes arising from a circle held with the course collaborators along with writings from Dr. Liz Elliott, who originally developed it. Chapter 3 contains a literature review of restorative, transformative justice and the discipline of transformative learning. Chapter 4 outlines methodology, including the interpretative approaches, methods, instruments, procedures, ethical considerations, consent, confidentiality, and limits. Chapter 5 presents quantitative and qualitative findings from the survey, while Chapter 6 describes the themes arising from open-ended survey questions and semi-structured interviews. Chapter 7 discusses the findings in reference to the literature and research questions. Chapter 8 re-visits the central question for this research that explores how restorative justice education can advance restorative justice. It also addresses the strengths and limitations of the study. This chapter considers what has been learned from the study as it relates to the course at SFU and restorative justice education more broadly and provides recommendations for future research. Chapter 9 includes presents an overview of the key findings and includes final remarks.

Chapter 2.

Surveying the Landscape: The Development of the Criminology 315 – Restorative Justice

2.1. Introduction

This research examines whether students experienced a personal transformation that they attribute one undergraduate course at SFU called Criminology 315 – Restorative Justice. Although there are three face-to-face restorative justice courses⁸ offered at SFU, Criminology 315 was selected given its introductory nature and the large number of students who have completed it since the first offering in 1999. Prior to presenting the data collected from students who completed the course from 1999 to 2014, it is important to understand the genesis and evolution of this unique course. This chapter utilizes materials written by the course developer, Dr. Liz Elliott, and the results of a circle with the course collaborators to describe the development, goals, and andragogy of the restorative justice course (RJC) selected as a research site for this project.

2.2. The RJC

The RJC is a four-credit class offered through SFU's School of Criminology to both criminology and non-criminology majors.⁹ The School of Criminology was established in 1975 and at the end of Convocation 2014, a total of 6,283 BA degrees with a Major in Criminology had been awarded, as well as 434 MAs, and 76 PhDs (Griffiths & Palys, 2014, p. 27). The RJC requires 45 credits to enrol and is a full 13-week semester long. It is

⁸ The other two restorative justice courses offered at SFU are Criminology 442: Restorative Justice Practice: Advanced Topics and Criminology 417: Safe Schools and Communities: Restorative Pedagogy and Practice.

⁹ From 1999 to 2010 the RJC was only available to Criminology majors. In 2010 it became a breadth course available to non-criminology students. Breadth courses encourage those in other disciplines to explore topics outside their area of concentration.

available in three formats: two in-person and one on-line.¹⁰ The most common offering of the RJC takes the form of a one hour and 50 minute in person lecture followed by about the same amount of time in tutorial.¹¹ The tutorials are facilitated by either the instructor or a tutorial assistant (TA).¹² Since 1999, the class size has ranged from fifty to 175 students.

The RJC is also available in a three-hour, in-person format through SFU's Nights or Weekends (NOW) program. This iteration is limited to thirty-two students with those working 30 hours per week or more given priority enrolment. Tutorials comprise a good portion of the three-hour session and the instructor is responsible for all aspects of the course.

According to SFU's 2016 calendar, the RJC is listed as,

Criminology 315 – Restorative Justice. The course will contrast restorative justice with the dominant adversarial/retributive/punitive model of justice through a critical analysis of these two paradigms of justice. Several key principles, assumptions, and concepts necessary for understanding the foundation and practice of restorative justice will be introduced and explored.

The RJC has had relatively consistent curriculum (both in terms of content and pedagogy) since its inception. From 1999 to 2015, the course has been taught by five different instructors. While instructors have their own lecture style, the evaluation criteria have stayed consistent and TAs and instructors have followed the Tutorial Guide (2009) written by Dr. Liz Elliott. The purpose of these tutorials is explained by the course developer in the following way:

Tutorials consist of smaller classes of students in a course, and traditionally provide a venue through which students may clarify issues or questions that might arise in the lectures and readings. In [the RJC], we will vary this

¹⁰ This research is focused solely on in-person restorative justice education; therefore, the on-line format is not discussed.

¹¹ The RJC originally had one-hour tutorials and based on feedback from students, the time of tutorials was increased. This is an example of how the RJC has evolved over time to be more responsive to the needs of students.

¹² TAs are usually criminology graduate students. Some background in group facilitation and restorative justice is preferred although not required.

format so that students are more actively engaged in experiential learning. The goal is to provide an experience of building community, through discussion of individual and communal values. This is particularly useful in an introduction to restorative justice, which is easily co-opted when a values-based community component is missing. (Elliott, 2009, p. 3)

This experiential learning takes the form of circles and small and large group activities. During tutorial, TAs adopt the role of a workshop facilitator: setting up and introducing the circle, facilitating activities and debriefings, and upholding guidelines. Debriefing components are especially important to the tutorials as these provide an “opportunity to draw out the insights and wisdom of the group in making sense of the structured learning experience, and its applications to the bigger world” (Elliott, 2009, p. 3).

Students are evaluated through their participation in tutorial and written assignments. The assignments invite students to critically reflect upon the course materials and connect their own experiences and ideas to the content. The final assignment takes the form of a letter whereby students are asked to write to someone (living or deceased) who has influenced their understanding of justice. The recipient could be anyone except for the instructor and students have the option to have the letter sent to the intended recipient.

It is customary that the RJC lecture component includes several guest speakers, many of whom have directly experienced a restorative justice and/or criminal justice process. Former or current prisoners, victims, and others impacted by crime share personal stories with the students. The experiential nature of tutorials and inclusion of guest speakers makes the RJC relatively unique compared to other courses offered in the School of Criminology. University wide, 32% of SFU’s courses have an experiential learning components defined as:

the strategic, active engagement of students in opportunities to learn through doing and reflection on those activities, which empower them to apply their theoretical knowledge to practical endeavors in a multitude of settings inside and outside of the classroom. (McRae & Rogers, 2012, p. 8)

In 2012, SFU launched a strategic vision that promotes engagement of students, research, and community. McRae and Rogers (2012) found that instructors and students

had a strong interest in experiential education and recommended more alignment between courses and SFU's vision of "the engaged university." The RJC is an example of such engagement and contributes to the university's growing focus on experiential learning.

In recent years, the RJC has been offered every semester due to its popularity. This chapter captures the birth and evolution of the RJC by sharing key themes arising from a circle held with the course collaborators. Although Liz, the course developer, acknowledged many people contributed to her knowledge of restorative justice, these individuals were identified in her book *Security With Care* (Elliott, 2011) for their direct contributions to the development of the RJC.

2.3. The Circle with Course Developers

In the comfort of a living room warmed by a crackling fire and spectacular view of the Salish Sea, friends and colleagues of the late Liz Elliott spoke from the heart. While Liz is unable to tell the story of the RJC herself, her spirit is alive in the voices of these raconteurs. I consider it an honour to encapsulate what these inspiring people shared. What follows provides an important backdrop to the students' experiences explored later in the thesis.

Attending this gathering on April 5, 2014 were Dr. Brenda Morrison, Jane Miller-Ashton, Melissa Roberts, Cathie Douglas (via Skype) and Larry Moore (via Skype). At her request, Dr. Karlene Faith contributed through an in-person interview conducted the week prior. I personally invited each person to attend this gathering and the participants were informed that their contributions would not be kept confidential. All provided verbal consent to these terms.

By way of introduction, I welcomed everyone and acknowledged that many people who had influenced the development of the RJC were not present, namely the prisoners whom Liz worked alongside for many years. The circle had several rounds when each person was provided uninterrupted time to respond to the following questions. The questions were distributed in advance to allow time for reflection and preparation.

1. Please describe your relationship to restorative/transformative justice and your role in the development of the RJC. When and how did you become involved? What were your specific contributions to the course?
2. What were your hopes for the RJC? For students? For the restorative justice field?
3. Please share one of your most memorable experiences with the RJC, an anecdote involving a student or students.
4. Looking back now, how would you describe the impact of this course?
5. What are your hopes for the course moving forward into the future?

The participants' combined experience in the restorative justice field was well over 100 years. Following the initial round of introductions, it was clear that the restorative justice movement would not be as advanced in British Columbia and beyond without their contributions.

2.4. Dr. Liz Elliott

Liz started her career as a social worker and left that field after becoming “economically, ethically, and personally exhausted” to pursue a Ph.D. at SFU (Elliott, 2011, p. xi). Through her encounters with the justice system as a social worker and her studies in the School of Criminology, she critically engaged with the ideas of penal abolition, corrections, victim offender mediation, restitution, restorative justice and other alternatives to incarceration. While Liz had always been critical of the system, it was through teaching in the Prison Education Program and other prison work that she befriended several Indigenous people to whom she attributes her realization that “the problems were much deeper than a flawed criminal justice system and that our work needed to begin in relationships with each other and the natural world and, most importantly, with ourselves” (Elliott, 2011, p. xii). Liz’s friends were plentiful and loyal, as she was to them. Family was of central importance and Liz and her partner raised two loving, strong, talented children, Chris and Maya. After completing her doctorate, she began working full time at SFU and dedicated countless volunteer hours to restorative justice initiatives in the community and in prison.

In addition to being influenced by Indigenous friends, elders, prisoners, and her academic pursuits, Liz was deeply affected by several teachers.¹³ One of her long-time mentors and dear friends was Dr. Karlene Faith. Liz was originally a student of Karlene's who describes herself as "a very effective campaigner" partly responsible for getting Liz hired as an Instructor at SFU in 1996. One of the first female faculty in the School of Criminology, Karlene pronounces herself a feminist, socialist, and "respectable radical" who uses her social power to help make social and economic changes in inclusive ways.

Liz, herself, was a respectable radical. She utilized her connections with the university and academia to further community-based restorative justice. She would invite her students to the prison and bring prisoners to the classroom. She initiated conferences and forums to bring the restorative justice and university communities together. Walking between these two worlds appeared seamless for Liz. This multi-partiality is likely due to the mentorship of people like Karlene who refused to label anyone anything other than a person.

Liz's endeavour to build a restorative justice course began in 1997. While many university instructors write their courses in isolation, the RJC was collaborative from its inception. Liz took a restorative approach by working collectively with key relations: people in prison, restorative justice practitioners, friends, and family members. She also drew heavily from her research, experiential learning, and work with prisoners in the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP).¹⁴ Her Master's research on cooperative games combined with AVP provided a basis for the RJC's experiential tutorials. Liz's connections and belief in the power of storytelling resulted in guest speakers sharing their stories in the classroom.

¹³ While this dissertation focuses on those who directly collaborated with the RJC, Liz acknowledges many teachers who influenced her understanding of justice including Art Solomon, Bob Gaucher, and Graham Stewart (Elliott, 2011).

¹⁴ The prison-born Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) is a national and international volunteer network that uses experience-based workshops to develop people's natural abilities to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence. The workshops introduce methods for reaching consensus and compromise, transforming conflicts rather than simply reacting to them, and learning communication skills that can de-escalate potentially violent and dangerous confrontations. Workshops are facilitated by teams of trained prisoners and community members (Novek, 2011, p. 335). AVP has been operating in both men's and women's prisons in the Fraser Valley of British Columbia since 1995.

Throughout the RJC, students engage in many new experiences: sitting in circle, hearing from victims and people who had served prison time, partaking in activities to practice communication and build consensus. The instructor and the TA then invite students to reflect critically, through writing, discussion, and thinking, about what that experience meant. Students are encouraged to think about how what they are learning relates to their own lives and situations beyond the university. Liz's approach to the RJC was one of praxis, involving both reflection and action. She notes "[t]he adage we learn from experience is not exactly true – we learn by reflecting on experience" (Elliott, 2011, p. 104). The RJC provides students with ample opportunities for participation, action, and reflection. The andragogy¹⁵ and content are reflections of Liz's experiences, teachings, and relationships. The course embodies who she was and what she stood for and is a legacy of her commitment to restorative justice.

2.5. Restorative or Transformative?

Drs. Faith and Elliott co-authored a version of the RJC for the Centre for Online and Distance Education given the success of the face-to-face class. According to Karlene, in the early days of course writing, there was some controversy over the name. Liz had wanted to call the course "Restorative Justice" and Karlene had favoured "Transformative Justice." She states:

I can't stress enough how using the word "transformative" was very important to me... I would have used the word "revolutionary," which is really just to turn things over to turn things around... But to restore back to what? What are you exactly restoring? So I had a very hard time with that and Liz and I talked about that a lot. And, of course, she won! (K. Faith, personal communication, April, 3, 2014)

The debate articulating the tension between transformative and restorative justice continues to this day. One of the key Canadian contributors to this dispute and friend to Liz was the late Dr. Ruth Morris. Morris (2000) argued that "transformative" and

¹⁵ Andragogy is synonymous with adult education. This term replaces "pedagogy" when referring to adult learners and can be attributed to Malcolm Knowles who popularized the concept and related assumptions. See Knowles, M. (1978). Andragogy: Adult learning theory in perspective. *Community College Review*, 59-20.

“restorative” justice have erroneously been regarded as interchangeable and states that although restorative justice challenges the retributive justice system, it does not go far enough to critique socio-political and economic issues related to the responses to criminalized behaviour. For Morris (2000), shifts beyond the criminal justice system were necessary for transformative justice: from communities with bigger fences, more police, and locking ourselves in to the creation of more caring, inclusive, and just communities (p. 21).

Liz “won” the debate over the course name but it would be incorrect to assume the transformative conception of restorative justice was not incorporated into her vision for the RJC. She explains:

[a]t the heart of this [Ruth Morris’] concern is the lack of emphasis on social justice within the restorative justice discourse. However, it is clear that, while there are many examples of such disregard, practitioners grounded in the values of principles of restorative justice will inevitably be sensitive to social justice concerns. When restorative justice practices are motivated by a community-building focus rather than a case-processing formal criminal justice mandate, opportunities for encountering and addressing inequalities and social justice issues become clear. (Elliott, 2011, p. 191)

Karlene noted that “[Liz] was very conscious that the expression was restorative justice” (K. Faith, personal communication, April 3, 2014). She explains Liz wanted to use the most widely accepted term within the growing restorative justice field at the time. However, when reading Liz’s course description, there is little doubt of her support of the transformative conception of restorative justice.

This course is an introduction to the restorative/transformative justice paradigm. It begins with an overview of modern criminal justice systems, with a focus on the centrality of punishment in responses to crime. The idea of “justice” is problematized in the comparison between restorative and retributive justice concepts. Concepts such as crime and punishment are juxtaposed to ideas of harms and healing. Particular attention is paid to the importance of values and relationships in restorative justice practices. The needs of those who harm and have been harmed are considered *in the context of community capacity and social justice*. (Elliott, 2011, p. 1)

Tutorials and writing assignments invite students to reflect upon the social context of justice issues. As the Tutorial Guide states,

Experiential activities are excellent ways to engage the participants, but the purpose of the engagement is to invite them to reflect on the scholarly material of the course as it relates to their experiences inside and outside of the classroom. Occasional reminders about the broader sweep of RJ values and how they relate to democratic citizenship, ethical criminal justice practice, school cultures, and community development are also helpful. (Elliott, 2009, p. 4)

Liz's ability to bridge easily between the practical and academic realm was the result of the relationships she built with people inside and outside the criminal justice system. As Karlene indicates,

Well, she was interesting because she encompassed so much within her own being so I'm thinking about things like how she could get along with anybody and everybody. I am much more leery of people in the criminal justice system than she would have been. She was much more optimistic about being able to do consciousness raising with them and she has been tremendously successful in working in that way so she had reason to be confident. (K. Faith, personal communication, April 3, 2014)

Relationships are central to restorative justice (Zehr, 1990) and Liz's connections gained through her active involvement in the field of restorative justice shaped the development and delivery of the RJC.

2.6. RJC & Relationships

A relationship that bridged two worlds and influenced the course was between Liz and Jane Miller-Ashton. A 33-year veteran Correctional Service of Canada employee, Jane pioneered the Restorative Justice Unit responsible for restorative justice, dispute resolution, and victims' services within federal corrections. Jane was seconded to teach corrections, restorative justice, and victimology at SFU between 2004 and 2007. Jane's father, Frank Miller, Canada's first probation officer, had introduced her to many critical ideas around justice and injustice. These early lessons sparked Jane's passion to make life better for prisoners, particularly women and Indigenous peoples. Jane recalled a

particularly interesting connection between her and Liz with respect to Claire Culhane,¹⁶ a tireless prison abolitionist and someone Liz revered. Although Jane spent her career working in institutions that Liz and Clare critiqued diligently, the value both Liz and Jane placed on relationships and prison reform, made them allies. Jane says:

I mention it because Claire Culhane was so much like Liz and when I was growing up I have a memory of Claire chaining herself to Parliament Hill on television and my siblings and I were all watching it. I remember one of us, probably was me, said, "What can she accomplish by that?" I was very young. And three weeks later Claire Culhane was at our dinner table. My father brought her there. I can't talk too much about it or I'll start to cry, but my father was an incredible human being and he was the most inclusive person I knew and he continually was developing relationships through his entire life. (J. Miller-Ashton, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

Jane stated that although her relationship with Liz was reciprocal and they learned a lot from one another, there was sometimes tension as is often the case between government and non-government people. However, by working together at SFU, the challenges they worked through built a friendship. Liz (2011) writes that through her conversations with Jane, her own thinking was shaped in different ways (p. xv). When asked how she contributed to RJC, Jane declared:

I think the function I provided for Liz, which probably helped shape the course, was around inclusion. That inclusion means inclusion. Inclusion doesn't mean forgetting certain components or people that you haven't worked with or haven't been part of your core experiences. (J. Miller-Ashton, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

These reflections speak to the inclusion of a wide range of guest speakers included as a core component of the RJC. While Liz had included speakers from the course's inception, Jane saw her contribution as encouraging the addition of more varied

¹⁶ Claire Culhane (September 2, 1918 - April 28, 1996) was one of Canada's most celebrated prisoners' rights activists and penal abolitionists. From 1976 until her death in 1996, she corresponded with over 1,000 prisoners to provide support and assist them with grievances (Rowley, 2005). Culhane wrote three books on the politics of prison, which included her own experience of being ousted from prison—*Barred from Prison* (1979), *Still Barred from Prison* (1985), and *No Longer Barred from Prison* (1991). She also hosted a cable TV show, delivered public lectures, and protested on Parliament Hill and at prison gates across Canada (Rowley, 2005, p. 45).

perspectives than Liz initially drew upon. For RJC to be relevant and align with the core restorative justice value of inclusion, Jane's continuous query of "Who is missing?" is critically important. She notes:

I had become totally unafraid of asking who else needs to be there, even if they would make my life really tough. Not because I disagreed with them, but because they would clash with somebody else in the room, and as a facilitator I had to deal with that. But I had become unafraid by the time I got to SFU and I think the challenge function I provided to Liz was to say, "you need to become unafraid." You need to be unafraid that those victims are in the room. You need to be unafraid of those women's groups, those really radical women's groups, and also those government players. You have to make sure they're all there. (J. Miller-Ashton, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

The relationship between Liz and Jane highlights the collaborative and evolving nature of the RJC. Liz was constantly engaging others from her community and outside to make the course as meaningful as possible for students.

2.7. RJC & Community

The RJC was developed through relationships and community collaboration. These principles are strongly evidenced by the contributions of Larry Moore and Cathie Douglas. Larry's connection with restorative justice began in 1996 with a personal experience of being harmed by crime. Following this incident, Larry sought a community-based response and became a founding member of the Kaslo Restorative Justice Committee. This journey led him to present at an international restorative justice conference in 2000 hosted by SFU and to organize and host a 14-day Peace Training retreat with "members of NCPC [National Crime Prevention Centre],¹⁷ Attorney General's Office, lawyers, probation officers, police officers, teachers" and other restorative justice advocates in 2001 (L. Moore, personal communication, April 5, 2014). This meeting was

¹⁷ Developed in 1998, the National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC) is part of Public Safety Canada and accountable to the Minister of Public Safety. Its mission is "to provide national leadership on effective and cost-efficient ways to both prevent and reduce crime by addressing known-risk factors in high risk populations and places" (Government of Canada, 2015). The Centre provides funding to support targeted interventions and to build and share practical knowledge with respect to crime prevention.

the beginning of an enduring relationship with both government and two other participants at the retreat, Cathie Douglas, now Larry's life partner, and Liz Elliott. Larry and Cathie started attending AVP and moved into the basement of Liz's home in 2002. They worked diligently with others on several restorative justice initiatives inside and outside of prisons including AVP, FAVOR, Mission Restorative Justice, the Centre for Restorative Justice at SFU, and on the development of the RJC.

Larry and Cathie formed Heartspeak Productions and partnered with SFU to write a funding proposal to the National Crime Prevention Centre and the Community Programs Division of the Attorney General to produce an educational film about the values and principles of restorative justice. This proposal was accepted and the film, *A Healing River*, was "developed in a collaborative way which included prisoners, students and all those people in [14-day retreat] circle" (L. Moore, personal communication, April 5, 2014). This project also included an employment training component where two federal prisoners, Deltonia Cook and Warren Glowatski, assisted the film makers with cataloguing the raw footage of the various speakers, circles, and interviews. As Larry noted,

That was all part of the process of the loop. Including the people who will use the product in the development and design of the end product. It's all part of the andragogy¹⁸/pedagogy of what makes RJC work. And so that's the developmental process that we worked through with Liz and the prisoners. (L. Moore, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

Cathie added:

We created *A Healing River* which we tried to do as collaboratively as possible, using lots of circle processes, lots of feedback loops. You know, present the clips and then sit in circle and talk about it with victims, offenders, prisoners, students, volunteers, FAVOR group.¹⁹ (C. Douglas, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

¹⁹ FAVOR (Ferndale Advocates for Victim Offender Reconciliation) group takes place at Mission Minimum Institution and is comprised of weekly circle discussions with prisoners and community members about restorative justice and related topics. Liz was a dedicated member of this group from 2003 until her passing in 2011.

A Healing River was required viewing for RJC students who were enrolled between 2004 and 2014. In addition, 500 copies of the DVD and accompanying dialogue guide were made and distributed by the Attorney General to community-based programs. SFU's Centre for Restorative Justice sent out the remaining copies to a variety of organizations around the country. As a result, the impact of this film went beyond the university and was well received by the restorative justice community as both an educative and training tool. As one long-term restorative justice advocate stated in a film review,

The film is a treat for the eyes, the ears, and the heart. I hope *A Healing River* reaches a wide audience. It can give newcomers an introduction to restorative justice and why it matters, but also has enough layers for groups who want to explore the concept more deeply whether in restorative justice training workshops, prison-based study groups, or university courses. The film can help (re)ground practitioners in the underlying purpose of their work, and it challenges all of us to be mindful of how much we have to learn (Sharpe, n.d).

Given the success of this film and her commitment to this medium, in 2005 Liz partnered again with Heartspeak Productions and applied for funding to produce a series of films on restorative justice. The themes for the films followed the RJC topics so they would be useful for future students. Liz believed that these films were very important for both the community and her students. According to Larry and Cathie, Liz thought that students would be best served by hearing directly from experts in the field. Liz's goal was also to efficiently introduce information. As it would take more time and effort for the students to read the information, she assigned the videos as homework so class time could be spent in activities and discussion (L. Moore, personal communication, April 5, 2014).

The intended audience for the next series of films, *Tributary Streams*, extended beyond SFU to include police officers, correctional officers, and anyone who encountered vicarious or personal trauma. Liz's dedication to moving restorative justice education out of the university into communities is evident in the funding proposal. She wrote:

The main objective of the "Tributary Streams" project is to provide information and knowledge on issues of trauma, shame, reconciliation, and reintegration in order to enhance the community's capacity to address crime and victimization....

... Each of these four foci – trauma, shame, reconciliation, and reintegration — are of significant relevance to any community in which harms occur. Directing attention to, and exploring, these factors will enhance the capacity of diverse communities to recognize deeper dimensions and our responses to them. In understanding the effects of trauma and shame, communities will become more aware of the psychological/emotional risk factors that precede crime/harm. An exploration of reconciliation and reintegration will assist communities to expand protective factors useful to interrupt the cycle of trauma, shame, crime and victimization. (Centre for Restorative Justice, 2005)

Despite strong support from the restorative justice community and SFU, NCPC turned down the proposal after a change in government and drastic funding cuts at the federal level. However, fuelled by their passion, Larry and Cathie created the film series anyway. *Tributary Streams of a Healing River: An In-Depth Study of Restorative Justice* was the result of tremendous personal sacrifice and endless support and encouragement from Liz. The process of creating this collection was similar to *A Healing River*, showing raw footage to community and prisoner's groups and then editing. Cathie recalls, "We gave the material to Liz and she would go back east [in Canada] with it and she and her mom would watch it and give us more feedback." Liz's mother and father Albina Elliott and Wallace Elliott, to whom she dedicated *Security With Care* (2011), were enormously important in Liz's life. She called them her "first teachers." Liz's mother, in particular, provided feedback to Liz that helped shape the content of the RJC.

As the course was continually reflexive, *Tributary Streams* was required viewing for RJC students between 2007 and 2014. While these DVDs and Liz's book (now required reading for the RJC) provided substantial content, the process or andragogy is equally important. Perhaps Liz's greatest achievement was the RJC's unique structure of lecture, guests telling stories, and tutorials comprising of circles and experiential learning activities. Larry captured the aim of this approach best when he stated,

I hope that [the RJC] develops new ways to be even more meaningful and to inspire the voices of the students so they have something to write in their journals. That their creativity will come from the pedagogy of the course: all the videos, all the concepts, the conceptual framework of it all... and that it has meaning to their actual lives... That's kind of the job of the experiential exercises. The job of the tutorials is to inspire students to spark their imagination... so they can think about something and then they will come up with something. If they don't have that emotional effect, they don't have their attention on anything so it needs

to be practical within [their] own lives so I hope that that aspect of the course stays alive... If the folks can be involved with the co-creation of their own learning experience, that's what I hope for the course, that it continues to be that. (L. Moore, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

Larry's reflection highlights the mutual influence that exists between the RJC and the community.

2.8. The RJC Evolves

The RJC has evolved since Liz's initial offering in 1999. Committed to reflexivity, she and other course developers gathered feedback from students and TAs to make the experience more meaningful. The RJC had a transformative impact on Melissa Roberts. Melissa was Liz's RJC undergraduate student and teaching assistant for the course from 2006 to 2010. Reflecting on her experience as a RJC student, she said:

I know what the impact of sitting in a restorative justice circle in the classroom had on my life. It allowed me to open up and be more authentic in my relationships and allowed me to deal with conflict in a different way. I have better relationships with all of the people I love in my life because of that course. So I want that for my students. I want them to feel that they're the best version of themselves. So you're leaving school with something that's meaningful because I know that some people say that an academic education isn't where it's at anymore and so how, as educators, can we change that? (M. Roberts, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

A dedicated assistant to both Liz and Dr. Brenda Morrison, Melissa stepped in to teach the RJC when Liz became ill in 2009 and 2010. She also provided support to Brenda during her transition to faculty member in the School of Criminology. Reflecting on her experience during this time, Melissa says:

For me, it's not so much about what you teach it is how you teach and the experience you give the students... How do we make this education applicable to the students' lives? And that course [RJC] is really the only time that I felt that the students are so engaged and so active and that's really what spoke to me and so to continue that development has been very important. So I didn't necessarily develop the course, but I was there all the way along. (M. Roberts, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

Both Liz and Brenda met regularly with teaching assistants like Melissa to hear what was working for students and what needed to be changed. Instructors also were provided with SFU's standardized student evaluations and incorporated the feedback for the next offering. This is the collective, organic, and reflexive way the course developed.

Since Liz's death in 2011, the RJC has been taught primarily by Dr. Brenda Morrison. Like Liz, Brenda is committed to collaboration and being responsive to the changing needs of students and the field of restorative justice. Brenda introduced several modifications to the RJC, demonstrating responsiveness to the hundreds of students she has taught since 2006. Her extensive experience and research with respect to social and emotional learning, school violence, and restorative justice in schools "helped to flesh out other interesting areas of scholarly pursuit in the RJ domain both within the school [of Criminology] and internationally" (Elliott, 2011, p. xv). Brenda's rich history with experiential education made RJC a wonderful fit for her. She recalls:

the way that Liz developed [the RJC] was a dream come true for me. That I could use research and teaching and particularly with [the RJC] the pedagogy fit practice like nothing else. The power of that synergy was amazing. (B. Morrison, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

It is not surprising that Liz and Brenda had such a profound connection. They not only shared a passion for restorative justice but Brenda's experience as an Outward Bound instructor aligned with Liz's Master's work on non-competitive games. Brenda noted:

I started my work [in this field] as an Outward Bound instructor in terms of experiential education, transformation, and personal development in an outdoor setting. That really sent me on this path... and so it was in that work that I did with groups where we had a common experience in this journey we were on, but we always sat around the fire, the campfire. I was thinking about that as I lit the fire [for our gathering] this morning... (B. Morrison, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

Brenda's contribution to restorative justice at SFU and beyond continues to be profound. When Liz passed, Brenda was left, in the midst of both personal and collective grief, to continue Liz's legacy. When SFU was gifted a totem pole in Liz's honour, Brenda ensured that this stunning memento was received, named, and respected in a good way.

She has organized ceremonies with respect to the pole that have meant a great deal to those who loved Liz (see Morrison, B. on ceremonies, forthcoming).

Brenda is now is the sole Director for the Centre for Restorative Justice. She teaches several undergraduate and graduate restorative justice courses, including the RJC. Brenda supervises many graduate students and is active in community work and research. She has brought in new ideas and content that shapes the experience of most RJC students today. Although there have been changes, Brenda explains:

What has not changed in all my years, and what I think is the core of the [RJC], is the relational pedagogy and the experiential learning aspect of the course. That has not changed. Particularly in how we run the tutorials. Those core exercises that are informed by experiential learning and the practice of restorative justice played out in places like AVP... This is not changed. (B. Morrison, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

While staying grounded in the values of inclusion and relationship, the RJC is a truly responsive course, evolving in response to the feedback as Liz had originally intended. As Brenda articulates,

I feel very privileged to carry on the legacy of [the RJC] and what I like about it is that it has such a solid core that it can still develop and be responsive to the continually changing needs of the students and faculty. (B. Morrison, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

Brenda notes that although Liz welcomed her to make any changes to the course for many years, she stayed true to Liz's outline and did a lot of listening and reflecting. It was only in the last few years, she "started adding [her] own bits." One of these first "bits" is one of the most unique components of the RJC, besides the tutorial format.

Some years ago, Brenda implemented a final "quiz" that takes the form of a letter written by students at the end of the RJC. The recipient is to be someone who they feel has influenced their understanding of crime, safety, and justice. These letters could be written to other students, authors, politicians, family members, guest speakers or anyone (with the exception of the instructor) and, according to Brenda, are "building on that relational pedagogy and the idea of giving back and acknowledging and gratitude" (B.

Morrison, personal communication, April 5, 2014) as they are mailed to the person the letter is addressed to (with the student's permission). For Brenda, an important component of letter writing is "when I give the letters to the people [they are written to] it develops a web of relationships.... they also become a feedback loop for me and I can see who made the impact [on the students]" (B. Morrison, personal communication, April 5, 2014).

A more recent change (September, 2013) Brenda initiated was in response to changes in the quality of students' journal assignments when Liz's book became required reading for the course. Brenda noted:

We wanted students to read and synthesize and integrate [the material in their journal assignments] and Liz did that for them in every chapter! So the quality of the journals went down because they didn't have to do the work. Liz did the work. (B. Morrison, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

In response to this shift and drawing from rapidly growing restorative justice literature, Brenda changed the questions and the format of the assignments. Instead of writing journals, students were asked to write two critical essays, using Liz's book as an "example of good critical writing because she integrates storytelling and the literature and you hear her voice" (B. Morrison, personal communication, April 5, 2014). An example of one of the new questions posed for students is from Jared Diamond (2014) who asks, "What can state-based societies learn from traditional societies?" As Brenda notes,

This [question] allowed us to bring in and strengthen the first Nations component [of RJC]... What we can learn from traditional societies. I think a lot of what happens is when we came into a state-based, institutional justice system is that we forgot the relational pedagogy we used to have when we lived in small communities. (B. Morrison, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

Brenda's involvement with the RJC has allowed students opportunities to connect with wider social justice issues. A salient example was when Brenda taught the RJC in Fall 2013. During this time, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) came to Vancouver. Brenda explained,

I adapted the [RJC] quite heavily then, but still based it on this relational pedagogy. I didn't touch the tutorials but we had lots of opportunities to engage in this relational pedagogy. So there were events at the University and then the week down at the TRC so the students got very much involved in that and I think that's the energy, that's the energy that drove a lot of the course... And particularly connected with First Nations students, First Nations students really appreciated that. So actually because of this focus on the TRC and a week of academic amnesty in recognition of the TRC events that was granted, [SFU] allowed me for the first time to have a special intake of First Nations students. (B. Morrison, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

The evolution of the RJC has not strayed from Liz's vision to promote participatory, transformative, restorative justice education. Engaging students with social justice initiatives like the TRC while maintaining the experiential, relational foundation of the RJC shows deep respect to Liz's legacy.

Brenda's hope is to make the RJC even more relevant "not only in terms of students' everyday lives and what they can bring in terms of these relational skills, but to pressing social justice issues" (B. Morrison, personal communication, April 5, 2014). Jane Miller-Ashton hopes the lessons learned from the RJC can be used to encourage restorative justice approaches, philosophy, and pedagogy to permeate all courses. Brenda concurs:

So there is the idea of how do you create a sense of belonging in these huge institutional frameworks where they are treated as 'anonymized' individuals. And creating that sense of belonging is what I think [the RJC] does well. Creating a sense of community in what can be an antagonistic institutional space. (B. Morrison, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

Finally, Cathie Douglas' reflection provides a meaningful closing to this chapter:

I have high hopes specifically for [the RJC]. I remember before Liz died she kept talking about that it's always a paradigm shift, it's a framework. And I find that still when you talk to people about restorative justice, they still put it in a tiny little box so they can put it on the shelf and not think about it. So my hopes have always been to think outside of that box. Let's open it up. Let's talk about all the values and principles and all the applications and all the different programs. So I hope that it continues, that it's successful, and that the students really find their way whether they go into corrections or policing or restorative justice or whatever it is... that they take all this great information and take it with

them wherever they go, and whatever they do. I think that happens and I think that will continue to happen. (C. Douglas, personal communication, April 5, 2014)

2.9. Summary

It is clear that Dr. Liz Elliott brought a wealth of experience, passion, and knowledge to develop the RJC. She also embodied a deep commitment to developing the course in reflexive, inclusive, and collaborative ways through her relationships with students, other instructors, teaching assistants, and those in the restorative justice field. This chapter captures the wisdom of some of the key course developers and provides the context from which the RJC emerged. Through Liz's writing and the perspectives of those most involved in course development, the genesis and goals of the RJC are better understood. This background sets a framework for examining students' experiences with the RJC. In the following chapter I position my research within the literature related to restorative justice education and transformative learning.

Chapter 3.

Literature Review

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, restorative justice and transformative learning are defined, and theoretical and practical intersections are presented. The importance of values, the conception of restorative justice as a paradigm, and applications of restorative justice within education are also discussed. There are many conceptions of both restorative justice and transformative learning. One typology of restorative justice has been conceived as an encounter between those impacted by harm, reparation to those who have been harmed, or “as a way of transforming the way we see ourselves and relate to others in everyday life” (Johnstone & Van Ness, 2007, p. 15). Restorative justice has gained tremendous momentum as an alternative or addition to contemporary criminal justice and also as an ethical worldview, a corporate vision, and as a practical strategy for national justice policy reform and practice (Stauffer, 2013). Given the international proliferation of programs, policies, and research based on restorative justice, Umbriet, Vos, Coates, & Lightfoot (2005) maintain that “restorative justice has become a social movement that impacts the way we understand and respond to crime and conflict in diverse communities throughout the world” (p.254).

Transformative learning theory and associated practices offer innovative, critical approaches to adult education. This movement is largely inspired by dissatisfaction with more traditional forms of education, motivation that mirrors the popularity of restorative justice as an alternative to the legal system that fails to meet the needs of many who encounter it. Transformative learning theory arose from two directions: Paulo Freire’s vision of education aimed at individual, interpersonal, and social transformation to respond to entrenched forms of oppression and Jack Mezirow’s empirical and theoretical work demonstrating how cognitive perspective shifts expand consciousness (Dix, 2015). For Mezirow (2003), transformative learning is that which transforms “fixed assumptions and expectations to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and

emotionally able to change” (p. 58). According to these conceptions, learning is not informational but “challenges prior ways of thinking, feeling, or acting and reveals itself in thought, commitment, and action” (Dix, 2015, p. 2).

According to Toews (2013), “restorative justice and transformative education share similar goals, processes, and values” (p. 12) including participation, transformation, accountability, interconnectedness, trust, transparency, and humility. Adamson (2012) identified other intersections such as affect and social learning, direct engagement and participation, and critical reflection. These commonalities substantiate the use of transformative learning methods to understand the experience of undergraduate students who participate in restorative justice education.

Restorative justice has flourished in many schools around the world since the 1990s (Morrison et al., 2005). According to Morrison (2007), restorative justice has likely always been practiced in some schools where respectful relationships are valued and behaviour is held to a high standard (121). Often taking the form of alternatives to zero tolerance and punitive policies, favourable empirical evidence related to restorative justice in elementary and secondary schools is mounting (Drewery, 2016).

There are also a growing number of tertiary institutions that are exploring the role restorative justice might play on campus. According to Karp (2013), in 2012, 22 institutions of higher learning in North American have incorporated restorative justice initiatives.²⁰ Restorative justice principles of inclusive decision-making, active accountability, repairing harm, and rebuilding trust are essential to responding to student misconduct in a meaningful way and can also be effective in responding to incidents of bias or offensive conduct. A case highlighting the use of restorative justice in universities made international news in 2014 when student harassment allegations within Dalhousie University’s Faculty of Dentistry in Nova Scotia were addressed through a restorative justice process (Llewellyn, Macisaac, & Mackay, 2015). In British Columbia, the University of Victoria has utilized restorative justice processes to deal with non-academic student

²⁰ King’s University College, Dalhousie University, Thompson Rivers University, University of Victoria and University of Alberta are Canadian universities currently offering restorative justice alternatives to non-academic student misconduct.

misconduct since 2011. The University refers incidents including threats of a violence, vandalism, and sexual assault to a community-based, restorative justice organization (Samson, 2015).

While implementing restorative justice processes at the tertiary level has demonstrated promising results (Dahl, Meagher, & Velde, 2014; Karp & Sacks, 2014), there is sparse literature with respect to the importance of restorative justice education more generally. Geske (2005), Gilbert et al. (2013), as well as Britto and Reimund (2013) maintain that educating future criminal justice actors about restorative justice is essential. Relatedly, Halder (2014) notes that for restorative justice to maintain momentum, “[t]he most essential contemporary need is in training police officers, lawyers, law students, and volunteers on restorative justice philosophy and procedures” (p. 402). Several experienced educators have provided recommendations about how best to offer restorative justice at the tertiary level (Adamson & Bailie, 2012; Carson & Bussler, 2013; Geske, 2005; Gilbert et al., 2013; Kitchen, 2013; Zellerer, 2003).

Kitchen (2013) notes that restorative justice courses are now more established in criminal justice or justice studies as an “elective or even required course at the undergraduate or graduate level” (p. 28). However, Vigorita (2002), Holsigner (2008), and Adamson (2012) are the only researchers who have empirically evaluated the impact of such courses on students. These studies suggest many transformative aspects to students’ experiences and this dissertation builds on these findings. Utilizing a transformative learning framework, this project fills a gap in the literature by examining whether undergraduate students report experiencing perspective transformation as a result of completing an undergraduate restorative justice course.

3.2. Defining Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is considered a normative theory – a set of propositions about the way the world ought to be (J. Braithwaite, 2003). The term *restorative justice* is often attributed to Alfred Eglash (Richards, 2007) though he draws on writings from Schrey, Walz, and Whitehouse (1955) who said:

This aligning of justice and love is something which it is the peculiar task of Christian believers to promote, and in doing so they need to see beyond the secular conception of justice in its threefold form of distributive, commutative, and retributive justice. Distributive justice can never take us beyond the norm of reparation; commutative justice can provide only due compensation; retributive justice has no means of repairing damage save by punishment and expiation. Justice has also a restorative element. Restorative justice alone can do what law as such can never do: it can heal the fundamental wound from which all mankind suffers and which turns the best human justice constantly into injustice, the wound of sin. Restorative justice, as it is revealed in the Bible, alone has positive power for overcoming sin. (as cited in Richards, 2007, p. 116)

Maruna's (2014) review of Eglash's full body of work reveals Eglash's advocacy for a "sophisticated, restorative vision for separating blame from past harms from responsibility for 'making good' in the future" (p. 14). Maruna argues that Eglash's original reflections about restorative justice are worthy of keeping in mind today, particularly his acknowledgement of the social, economic and structural disadvantages many "offenders" face. Maruna (2014) suggests that Eglash's vision of restorative justice involves the notion of the "wounded healer" (p. 16) whereby all those in a restorative justice process are invited to be vulnerable. Doing so is more likely to produce an experience of justice for victims as restorative justice provides the opportunity for individual transformations that ultimately support the transformation of others (Maruna, 2014).

Although there is a strong connection between restorative justice and biblical justice, Hadley (2001) notes that core restorative justice principles can be found in other faith traditions. Reconciliation, restoration, and healing are elements of Indigenous traditions as well as Buddhist and Islamic teachings. In Canada, Indigenous worldviews and justice practices have shaped restorative justice in significant ways (Elliott, 2011). Some Indigenous societies, for example, have preserved and shared the peacemaking circle process that is used in community, prison, and school settings (Pranis, Stuart, & Wedge, 2003). This circle process is often identified as a key element in restorative justice education (Gilbert et al., 2013; Kitchen, 2013).

Van Ness and Strong (2010) identify other initiatives that predate and contribute to restorative justice theory. These include: informal justice (promoting participatory responses to harm and conflict), restitution (vindicating victims through offenders

reparation of harms), victims' rights and assistance (increasing services, supports, and access to information for victims), penal abolition (curtailing or eliminating the use of prison), and social justice through peacemaking and attending to inequalities (p. 12-19). Restorative justice is considered a subfield of critical criminology, which examines the social location of crime in terms of history, culture, and political norms. Critical criminology rejects retributive based justice systems and challenges domination and control of any sort (Nocella, 2011, p. 2).

Although restorative justice was not originally conceptualized through a particular practice, it is now acknowledged that restorative philosophy and practices are inextricably linked. As such, restorative justice is best understood as praxis whereby theory and reflective practice inform one another as the field grows. Not only did practices such as victim-offender mediation allow for theory to be expounded, but some justice models that existed prior to the term "restorative justice," such as family group conferencing in New Zealand, were later re-named restorative practices (Richards, 2007). Pranis (2007) describes restorative justice as a field flowing "back and forth between practice that informs philosophy and philosophy that informs practice" (p. 59). Restorative justice practices are principally evident in relation to criminal justice in Canada, although they are increasingly present in schools, workplaces, and governance structures. J. Braithwaite (2003) considers restorative justice a social movement that targets the reduction of all injustices.

Restorative justice is both a contested concept (Johnstone & Van Ness, 2007) and an amorphous one. Daly (2016) notes that the various ways restorative justice is defined and utilized "can be explained, in part, by their 'voyage' with it as advocates, researchers, government officials, members of community and faith-based organizations, among many others" (p. 10). While the lack of a uniform definition may create confusion, Harris (2004) has faith that conflicting definitions could lead to "more clarity about what we believe and why" (p. 119). Gavrielides (2008) and Wood and Suzuki (2016) identify several concerns about the increasing plasticity and conceptual debates surrounding the term restorative justice. Gavrielides (2008) notes that restorative justice is "often stretched to fit elements that are not restorative in nature or is narrowed down to a notion that cannot take in all the essential features that characterize" (p. 173) the philosophy. Wood & Suzuki (2008)

identify a number of so-called restorative justice initiatives, including prison programs that promote prisoner empathy and remorse, redress and acknowledgment offered to victims of harassment, and community work service. These programs may have restorative goals, but lack the inclusion of all stakeholders typically identified as offender, victim, and community (Zehr, 2015). The increasing hybridity of restorative justice over the last forty years has the potential for making the term meaningless (Wood & Suzuki, 2016, p. 151).

To map the various definitions of restorative justice, Johnstone and Van Ness (2007) propose three conceptions: encounter, reparative, and transformative. Depicting restorative justice as a process like mediation where affected parties come together to discuss a crime constitutes an *encounter* conception. *Reparative* conceptions of restorative justice involve seeking non-punitive responses to fulfill reparation to people and relationships after a crime has occurred. Reparation may take the form of an encounter, but this is not necessary or possible in all cases. *Transformative* conceptions of restorative justice are grounded in the notion that restorative justice is a way of living whereby the well-being and needs of all are considered individually and structurally (Sullivan & Tifft, 2005, p. 187). Justice involves meeting needs, treating all beings as equal and worthy, and seeking transformation of relationships between people and our environment (Johnstone & Van Ness, 2007).

Johnstone and Van Ness (2007) posit that these three conceptions have overlaps and tensions. All embrace encounter, reparation, and transformation, but the difference among them is where the emphasis is placed. Sawatsky (2009) has noted that the encounter and reparative conceptions of restorative justice are *tertiary* in nature in that they describe a response to something, such as a crime, that has already happened. Comparably, transformative conceptions are *primary* and preventative in nature as the focus is on creating more equitable and peaceful conditions for all of society. The conceptions have enough common ground to include all definitions' supporters as members of the same social movement (Johnstone & Van Ness, 2007, p. 17) who align with values that inspire alternative approaches to social harm.

Wood (2015) argues that the lack of a standard definition need not prevent the examination of claims made about the micro-, meso-, and macro-level goals associated

with restorative justice. Micro-level goals involve individual benefits to victims and offenders such as reparation of harm and accountability, meso-level goals include the level of community involvement in justice and the collective efficacy in reducing crime and improving social life, and macro-level goals are aims such as reducing incarceration, de-professionalizing some justice practices, and reducing shaming and degrading practices (Wood, 2015). These aims fall squarely within the realm of criminal justice which Daly (2016) argues is just the place for the term “restorative justice” to be.

Daly (2016) considers restorative justice to be a justice mechanism – a response, process, activity, measure, or practice” (p. 16). Justice mechanisms can be considered on a continuum from innovative to conventional. Innovative mechanisms “do not rely solely on the standard tool kit of criminal procedure or justice practices, or those wedded to legal processes alone” (Daly, 2016, p. 18). Innovative mechanisms are more participatory, inclusive, and informal compared to conventional mechanisms which involve standard approaches to criminal prosecution, trial, sentencing, and post-sentence. Daly (2016) insists that concretely defining restorative justice as an innovative justice mechanism employed following a crime, conflict, or bounded community conflict will allow for more compelling empirical and theoretical evaluation. This specific designation is necessary for understanding the limits and strengths of both conventional and innovative mechanisms. This narrowed definition departs significantly from transformative conceptions of restorative justice that hold up the values inherent to this philosophy as a path towards social change or defining justice more broadly.

3.3. Restorative Justice Values

Restorative justice is based on values and principles often contrasted with some of the retributive or punitive aims entrenched in criminal justice, some parenting approaches, educational systems, and other institutional structures. While it is important to acknowledge that the conventional justice system has goals in addition (and often conflicting) to retribution such as rehabilitation and incapacitation (Daly, 2016), imposing harm towards an “offender” by a third party remains central, and largely unquestioned, to the response. Despite dubious claims that punishment is effective in changing behaviour (Elliott, 2011), when a rule or law has been broken the assumption that punishment is the

“right” thing to do remains the status quo. While efforts such as rehabilitation and reparation can be included in response to harm doing, retribution usually accompanies sanctions in both covert and overt ways. Elliott (2011) argues that punishment has been given “sacred status” in society whereby its efficacy as a tool is presumed. Despite little evidence of this presupposition, punishment is often associated with teaching accountability, promoting responsibility, and compensating victims (Elliott, 2011).

The critique of punishment is not only present in the field of restorative justice. According to Materni (2013), the question of whether punishment achieves justice has long occupied the minds of moral philosophers, political theorists, and legal scholars. The degree to which criminal punishment has deterrent value and serves to reduce crime remains a lively debate in both political and empirical arenas. For example, neurocriminology examines how neurobiological abnormalities or insults relatively early in life (head trauma, tumors, etc.) predispose some individuals to a life of crime and violence (Glenn & Raine, 2014). Such research raises critical questions around the utility and morality of imposing punishment for those with diminished capacity and responsibility.

These values of accountability, responsibility, and reparation are present in both conventional and restorative justice. However, rather than assigning blame and relying on third-parties to mete out punishments, restorative justice dictates that in “any social situation, the present needs of all involved must be taken into account” (Sullivan & Tifft, 2005, p. 42). Restorative justice values ground both the philosophy and practices associated with attending to harm and seeking to address needs. This approach aims to meaningfully address harm while addressing underlying and overarching factors to reduce the likelihood of future offending.

Pranis et al. (2003) identified core values that appear to be universally human: respect, honesty, trust, humility, sharing, inclusivity, empathy, courage, forgiveness, and love (p. 33). These values are often considered the basis for restorative justice. Drawing from John Braithwaite (2003), Van Ness and Strong (2010) state that restorative justice values can be normative (those that indicate the way the world ought to be), operational (those that guide restorative justice programs and process), and/or emergent (possible outcomes from a successful restorative justice process) (p. 48). Normative values include

emergent values and also describe the community and relationships that align with restorative justice. These values are active responsibility (making amends for behaviour that causes harm), peaceful social life (responding to crime in ways that build harmony, security and community well-being), respect (treating all people with dignity and worth), and solidarity (the experience of support and connectedness). Operational values include amends, reintegration, inclusion, encounter, and collaboration (Van Ness & Strong, 2010, p. 48).

Elliott (2011) condenses restorative justice values to care, respect, and honesty, with *care* being central (p. 119). Espousing the principle of interconnectedness, caring for others reflects the inherently relational nature of human beings and the responsibilities we have to each other. For Zehr (2002), *respect* for all is at the core of restorative justice. According to Johnstone and Van Ness (2007), “[r]espect means not only treating all parties as persons with dignity and worth, but also as people with wisdom and other valuable contributions to offer” (p. 19). The values of care and respect highlight the importance of the emotional and the social bonds that connect human beings and, thus, guide behaviour. Rather than focusing on rules and external sanctioning to affect behaviour, restorative justice emphasizes emotional engagement “to build positive affect (empathy, interest, and excitement) and discharge negative affect (anger, humiliation, fear, and disgust)” (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012, p. 3). Attending to the social, emotional, and spiritual parts of the human experience is essential to promoting healthy and safe individuals and communities. Pranis et al. (2003) characterize this a shift in thinking from justice as getting even, to justice as getting well (p. 14).

The shift from a retributive to restorative justice has also been characterized through Zehr’s (1990) analogy of “changing lenses.” Howard Zehr is a criminologist and avid photographer affectionately known in the field as the “grandfather of restorative justice,”²¹ In the 25th anniversary edition of his pivotal book, *Changing Lenses*, Zehr (2015) mentions his amazement at how current most of his original publication is. Zehr’s (1990/2015) enduring argument is that the retributive justice construct requires a new

²¹ At the 2014 National Restorative Justice Conference in Banff, Alberta, Canada, Zehr spoke about how he considered himself more of a collector than an inventor when it comes to positing a theory of restorative justice (November 17, 2014).

“lens” given the wide spread dysfunction and crisis in the current criminal justice system. This re-thinking is required in relation to the legal system as well as institutions where punishment and retribution prevail as attempts to regulate social behaviour. Zehr (1990) advocates a paradigm shift to inform and shape what is done within criminal justice and in “areas where we have more control such as our families, churches, and daily lives” (p. 227). The restorative justice paradigm is inclusive, has a problem-solving focus, and involves accountability, dialogue, and reparation, in the pursuit of healing and righting relationships (Zehr, 1990, p. 211-214).

3.4. The Restorative Justice Paradigm

Paradigms are important because they shape our approach to the physical, social, psychological, and philosophical world (Zehr, 1990, p. 86). Zehr states that revolutions start with paradigmatic shifts that enhance what we “know” to be true about the world. In understanding just how significant changing lenses are, Zehr (2015) invites readers to enter into the actual experience of crime and justice deeply because only with this firm footing “can we begin to understand what to do, why we do it and, hopefully, what we might do differently” (p. 21). Van Ness & Strong (2015) concur that paradigms limit what we perceive, therefore, it is essential to explore alternative patterns of thinking. They note that although “we may not adopt these alternatives, but the benefit to having encountered them is that we realize that we have choices” (p. 5).

Paradigm theory was originally coined in 1962 by Thomas Kuhn who used the notion of paradigm shift to describe major intellectual revolutions in science such as the theory of evolution. His work has been of tremendous influence with scientists, philosophers, historians, and sociologists. According to Kuhn (1996), paradigms gain their status because they are more successful than their competitors in solving questions that the scientific community consider acute (p. 3). Godfrey-Smith (2003) notes that Kuhn’s paradigm concept can be understood in a *broad* sense as “a view of the world and a way of doing science” and in a *narrow* sense as “one particular scientific achievement that becomes an inspiration to others by suggesting a new way to investigate the world” (p. 77). According to Kuhn (1996), a paradigm shift occurs “when an existing paradigm has lost the ability to guide the scientist and where there is no new paradigm to sort out the

crisis.” Problems with the existing paradigm become so great that *ad hoc* solutions do not work. The scientist starts losing faith in this paradigm and considers alternatives. The old paradigm will, however, not be rejected until another paradigm appears (p. 77-78). He claims that the problem-solving power of the new paradigm starts the revolution (Kuhn 1996, p. 153). Once a new paradigm is discovered, there will often be a transition period where problems are examined within the old and the new paradigm (Kuhn, 1996, p. 85).

Kuhn’s conception of paradigm shift is predicated on the notion that the new paradigms or ways of viewing the world will replace old, flawed paradigms. He argues that paradigms are *incommensurable* meaning that new and old paradigms become rivals or separate, closed systems. According to London (2006), the features of both paradigms “cannot be merged, balanced, or reconciled, except through the creation of yet another radically different and more comprehensive paradigm” (p. 401). It is Kuhn’s notion of *incommensurability* that prompted London’s (2006) warning about applying the term paradigm shift to restorative justice. He argues that conceptualizing restorative justice as a paradigm is an “all or nothing” proposition that creates a dichotomy between restorative and other justice approaches. This “fosters the rejection of ideas as being contradictory instead of fostering the evaluation of ideas as being potentially complementary” (London, 2006, p. 402).

While Zehr (1990) does suggest that criminal justice is in a state of crisis that requires revolutionary thinking rather than tinkering with the existing system, he concedes that “perhaps we should not dream of dismantling the retributive system but develop a parallel system with choices about which to use” (p. 216). Citing Kuhn’s definition of paradigm, Zehr admits that restorative justice is not yet a full-fledged paradigm and that along with individual, intellectual shifts, there are political and institutional interests and processes that affect whether shifts occur and what form they take (p. 222). Van Ness and Strong (2010) note that it is these individual transformative perspectives that will lead to the transformation of structures. However, the transformation of structures and institutions is a difficult task and London (2006) argues that promoting restorative justice as an ideology that would entirely replace the current system does little to advance the movement. He maintains that the voluntary nature of restorative justice and the need for public safety through some degree of coercion and incapacitation demonstrates the need

for the conventional system, which disqualifies restorative justice as a new criminal justice 'paradigm' in the Kuhnian sense. Instead, restorative justice is a 'new paradigm' in a rhetorical sense—a way to move an idea (London, 2006, p. 414).

Given Zehr's own admission that restorative justice is not a full-fledged paradigm and the risks of abandoning some of the safeguards that exists for accused, victims, and the community within the current system, the most useful way to understand restorative justice is an approach that seeks personal and structural transformation, rather than replacement. Transformative conceptions of restorative justice include the most spacious definitions compared to outcome-based reparative conceptions or encounter conceptions that describe specific processes such as mediation or outcomes like restitution to victims. Elliott (2011) argues that a more expansive definition of restorative justice allows for the exploration of the myriad of relationships of participants as sources of both "harm and healing, outside the strict parameters of the criminal justice context" (p. 78). Redekop (2008) contends that although the restorative justice paradigm emerged within the criminal justice context, it is grounded in a "fundamental movement toward genuinely democratic relationships among people in various aspects of life" (p. 48). This worldview can be extended to other social institutions where punishment exists. Lofton (2004) suggests that while restorative justice provides a hopeful compass pointing the "way out of the dismal swamp of our current criminal justice system" (p. 398), the focus must be on building a healthy social system rather than labelling people victims and offenders emerging out of unequal social arrangements.

A transformative or holistic vision of restorative justice is not contained within the criminal justice context but encompasses a larger terrain of social life (Elliott, 2011, p. 78). Vaandering (2014) sees restorative justice in its most comprehensive form as relational, transformative democratic peacebuilding which attempts to transform communities and schools toward recognizing that people are not objects to be manipulated, but rather organic, interconnected, worthy human beings (p. 513). While a restorative response may occur after a harm has occurred, restorative justice can and should serve as a catalyst to transform our approach to social choices (Miller & Schacter, 2000, p. 410). Llewellyn, Archibald, Clairmont, and Crocker (2013) state that to "a considerable degree, restorative justice is a rebellious act of creative imagination which has animated community activists

and justice professionals around the world to seek better ways of doing justice” (p. 284). As such, community, government, and professionals all play a critical role in promoting and participating in restorative justice. A transformative vision for restorative justice involves a shift away from focusing on individuals to the relationships between humans of equal value. Harris (2004) endorses an expansive, transformative vision of restorative justice whereby the relationships and community structures and conditions must be attended to.

3.5. Restorative Justice as Transformative Justice

If the world is to transform, we need everyone to transform and everyone to be voluntarily involved in critical dialogue together.

- Nocella, 2011, 4.

Restorative justice is more than responding to harm or crime in a different way. It is a way of interacting with each other and paying attention to needs arising from structural and systemic injustices. While authors like Daly (2016) have articulated the risks associated with a more expansive definition, the potential for restorative justice values and processes to enhance relationships, address needs, and promote accountability and community outside of a criminal justice context are too compelling to ignore. As Wood and Suzuki (2016) state “criminal justice policies are generally poor vehicles for social transformation” (p. 159); therefore, the application of restorative justice principles outside of this arena is critical. J. Braithwaite (2003) envisions the potential for restorative justice to radically transform the legal system, our family lives, conduct in the workplace, and the way we practice politics. These goals – considered macro level by Wood (2015) – are transformative in nature. J. Braithwaite (2003) argues that restorative justice does justice differently by struggling against injustices such as poverty in the most restorative way manageable. Hopkins (2012) believes that “by using restorative justice the principles and practices inherent in the restorative justice philosophy we have a set of tools for ensuring greater social justice in every aspect of our lives” (p. 122). Harris (2004) captures this connection to social justice in her definition of restorative justice which reads:

[t]ransformative, restorative justice focuses on a given point in time and on the specific people who are involved with one another at that time, as well as directing attention to both the preconditions and antecedents of that particular moment, which generally implicate factors and forces that go beyond the individuals most directly affected. (p. 139)

Harris (2006) notes that restorative justice is about taking “action to promote the overall health and well-being of those involved, conditions which have physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual dimensions” (p. 120). As such restorative justice has individual, social, economic, and political aims. Van Ness and Strong (2010) outline three shifts required to advance restorative justice. These transformations begin with the personal and extend to social institutions and relationships. *Transformation of perspectives* occurs when one recognizes that there are limitations to a particular pattern of thinking and that this view has inadequate explanatory power. Once this limit is recognized, one is faced with the need for an alternative approach such as restorative justice. The shift towards restorative justice parallels Lederach’s (2003) definition of conflict transformation whereby one

envisions and responds to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real life problems in human relationships. (p. 14)

Innovative justice approaches that move beyond retribution require shifts in personal perspectives. These individual transformations take creativity, risk-taking, openness to reordering our thoughts, and a pursuit of learning about other places, times, or traditions to find new ways of looking at old problems and a willingness to reflect on alternate approaches that have been taken for granted (Van Ness & Strong, 2010, p. 174-175). These shifts can begin with or result in more holistic changes to who we are as people, our values, mindset, behaviour, and character (Van Ness & Strong, 2010, p. 180). In moving towards a more restorative approaches, Van Ness & Strong (2010) note the importance of turning the new lens inward to examine our daily lives and how we treat others (p. 180). This shift is a *transformation of relationships* with ourselves and with one another.

Van Ness and Strong (2010) argue that individual perspective transformation leads to the recognition that some *structures* also need transformation (p. 177). In the justice system, structures like the police and courts privilege some citizens over others, sideline the concerns of victims, and often create further harm to people and relationships. This legacy demands a remediation or even transformation of these structures (Van Ness & Strong, 2010, p. 178). Van Ness and Strong (2010) and Elliott (2011) contend that attending to both the individual and their relationships with social structures is necessary. Harris (2004) writes:

[W]hile it is reasonable for individuals or organizations to focus their attention on healing the immediate harms caused by a specific crime, concentrating on that arena of action does not free the actor from an obligation to recognize the impact of relevant phenomena in the other arena. (p. 121)

The transformation of individuals, relationships, and structures are essential to advancing restorative justice. However, despite assertions that restorative justice has potential beyond individual transformation to promote social change, the movement has been critiqued as its practice and scholarship do not usually confront the social-structural violence, injustice, and privilege (Gil, 2006, p. 499). Wood and Suzuki (2016) note that while the restorative justice literature identifies problems such as social marginalization and mass incarceration, critical questions about the intersection of race, gender, and social class and restorative justice are rarely addressed. Restorative justice, therefore, has become another reaction to law-breaking that operates within the confines of the criminal justice system. Incidents may be resolved, but restorative justice does not go far enough to transform the socio-economic inequalities that precipitate and perpetuate harm (Morris, 2000).

In Canada and elsewhere, restorative justice often operates in addition to the criminal justice system rather than as an alternative. Walgrave (2012) considers this a situation where restorative justice is an ornament of a system that essentially remains unchanged. Restorative justice is also frequently used in cases where there is no identifiable victim, when victims choose not to participate, or when harms are negligible (Wood & Suzuki, 2016). The disproportionate use of restorative justice in minor youth matters and as an addition to the legal system rather than an alternative, marginalizes

restorative justice and risks cooptation of the values. In addition, as restorative justice approaches are often focused on micro-level goals, such as benefits to victims and offenders (Wood, 2015), larger issues of systemic and community change are ignored.

The difficulties and complexities of working towards systemic change are not unique to restorative justice. Peacemaking criminology, which underlies transformative justice, has been critiqued because it relies on anecdotal evidence and lacks concrete recommendations on how this theory might be used to address issues of inequities, injustices, oppression, and domination (Pepinsky, 2013). Within a peacemaking framework, “every crime is an opportunity for social transformation” (Wozniak, 2000, p. 280). Similarly, transformative justice endeavours to change the larger social structure as well as the personal structures of those affected by harm (Wozniak, Braswell, Vogel, & Blevins, 2008). Nocella (2011) articulates the central principles of transformative justice as the rejection of violence, punishment, institutionalization, and imprisonment in favour of mediation, negotiation, and community circles to transform conflicts. Transformative justice is similar to conflict transformation as it brings socio-political and economic change to the dialogue about a specific interpersonal conflict or harm.

According to Sullivan and Tifft (2006) and Harris (2006), the link between transformative and restorative justice could be understood in several ways. On one hand, restorative justice can and should create opportunities for structural changes through personal transformations of those who participate in restorative justice processes. McCold and Wachtel (2002) articulate this as “restorative outcomes [that] have a transformative dimension: transforming victims into survivors, conflict into cooperation, shame into pride, and individuals into community” (p. 117). Restorative justice supports and includes victims, offenders, and communities to address needs, which reduce the alienating and often traumatizing impacts of punishment, the stigma of labelling, and real or perceived marginalization. These approaches can provide a sense of empowerment and promote overall health and well-being that can contribute to the reduction of structural injustice.

Alternatively, restorative justice can be seen as that which lies between the traditional justice system and transformative justice (Harris, 2006, p. 561). While they complement one another, transformative justice is regarded as a perspective that actively

attends to structural violence and injustice. In this view, transformative justice goes “beyond the micro level of specific disputes to the macro level where the values can be applied to any problem or conflict” (Harris, 2006, p. 562).

Finally, it could be that there is no difference between the two as restorative justice should include the goals of transformative justice (Sullivan & Tifft, 2006, p. 497). Zehr (2011) agrees, urging the practice of restorative justice to be as transformative as possible. For example, Morris (2000) describes this approach, which involves first understanding that crime is a symptom of deeper ills. Justice responses, therefore, involve all those directly affected to work towards creative, collaborative, community-based solutions. Although, the social transformations that can result may not be as evident as the personal and interpersonal shifts, a transformative conception of restorative justice would hold these structural and systemic aspects at the fore.

With the cautions of an overly expansive (Daly, 2016) or plastic (Wood & Suzuki, 2016) definition of restorative justice in mind, the transformative, restorative definition postulated by Harris (2006) is utilized in this dissertation. This conception acknowledges and aims for the transformation of preconditions, antecedents, and structural forces of harm through restorative justice. Although this definition has been supported by well-respected restorative justice scholars, empirical research has been deficient. The following section provides an overview of research attempts to evaluate the transformative aspects of restorative justice.

3.6. Research & Restorative Justice

Empirical investigations of restorative justice tend to evaluate processes and outcomes in the aftermath of crime. The focus is on micro-level practice and goals involving individual benefits to victims and offenders such as reparation of harm and accountability (Wood, 2015). For example, Rossner (2011) notes that most studies use retrospective data to evaluate the effectiveness of conferencing and victim-offender mediation models in terms of recidivism, participant satisfaction, levels of reintegration, and reparation. Llewellyn et al. (2013) concur, observing that “most of the existing [restorative justice] research uses measures of success more reflective of the goals of the

mainstream justice system than of a different way of doing justice” such as recidivism, re-contact with the justice system, or other indicators of whether an offender has changed his or her behaviour. Other studies seek to ascertain the “restorativeness” of a process based on outcome measures like forgiveness, reconciliation, repair, remorse, and reintegrative shaming (p. 306).

Wood (2015) notes that meso- and macro-level research regarding the ability for restorative justice to increase collective efficacy of justice and substantively reduce incarceration has yet to be undertaken in a substantial way. Therefore, the theoretical claims that abound promoting restorative justice as a way to reduce incarceration and social participation are largely unfounded. Wood (2015) points to how incarceration in Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and the United Kingdom (England and Wales) has *increased* over the last 30 years despite restorative justice being “commonly practiced and more widely implemented” in these countries (p. 884). Llewellyn et al. (2013) note that few evaluations look at community dimensions of restorative justice such as “community involvement or changes in the community such as community empowerment” (p. 307).

Reducing incarceration of minorities and other marginalized people is another way to ascertain whether macro-level or transformative justice goals are being achieved through restorative justice. In Canada, restorative justice is an important part of a strategy to counteract Indigenous overrepresentation in the criminal justice system. In 1996, the federal government attempted to use law reform to address the high incidence of Indigenous people in prison (Monchalin, 2016). Section 718.2(e) of the *Criminal Code* was evoked as a sentencing qualification that stated, “All available sanctions other than imprisonment that are reasonable in the circumstances should be considered for all offenders, with particular attention to the circumstances of Aboriginal Offenders.” In 1999 the Supreme Court of Canada interpreted this section in *R. v. Gladue* stating, “Aboriginal offenders must always be sentenced in a manner which gives greatest weight to the principles of restorative justice, and less weight to goals such as deterrence, denunciation, and separation.” Despite these provisions, the judge in the 2012 Supreme Court decision *R. v. Ipeelee* implied that these principles were not being applied consistently. Evidence supporting this critique appeared in a 2016 report by Canada’s Correctional Investigator

noting the “shocking” statistic that 25.4% of the federally incarcerated population are of aboriginal descent (CBC News, 2016). Despite sentencing principles, court decisions, and the existence of restorative and Indigenous justice initiatives such as First Nations Court, the number of Indigenous people in prison continues to increase (Monchalin, 2016).

Another related example involves youth in conflict with the law. In 2003, the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) “mandated diversion for all first-time and non-serious offenders” (Corrado, Kuehn & Margaritescu, 2014, p. 42) and specifically directed judges to consider the colonial history and special needs of Indigenous young offenders and recommend alternatives to prison such as restorative justice. Over ten years later, while there is consensus that the YCJA has resulted in dramatic reductions in court referrals and custody as well as a drastic increase in the use of diversionary measures, Aboriginal youth remain disproportionately over-represented with respect to remand and custodial sentences (Corrado et al., 2014). Morrison (2013) notes that “despite state-based legislative foundations, restorative justice remains at the margins of Canada’s justice system” (p. 203). These examples demonstrate that legal reform and the increasing prevalence of restorative justice in Canada have not translated into the reduction of systemic injustice. Wood and Suzuki (2016) warn that if restorative justice ignores the social stratification of justice in its own practices and fails to look for ways to confront these issues, it may be unwittingly reproducing unjust social relations.

Attempts to achieve and evaluate the meso, macro, and transformative goals of restorative justice are fraught with complexities. Wood (2015) identifies two practical issues that prevent grander claims of restorative justice from being realized. He notes that in most countries restorative justice is not used in cases when incarceration would likely be a result, nor is it used as a true alternative to prison. In British Columbia, for example, despite legislation such as the YCJA,²² government reports,²³ and proliferation

²² “Restorative Justice is the Law” by Heartspeak Productions provides a thorough discussion of how restorative justice approaches adhere to the Principles of Sentencing https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OGgm_U96D8.

²³ The Government of British Columbia (2015) produced a report called “Getting Serious about Crime Reduction,” which supported a previous recommendation made to the Minister of Justice whereby the “government develop a province-wide plan for diversion, including restorative justice, along with education, quality assurance and control, performance measures, reporting and evaluation” (p. 12).

of community-based programs, restorative justice largely operates on the margins. Most restorative justice processes involving adults relate to property matters or minor assaults (Tompsonski, 2014). For youth matters, restorative justice interventions are most often utilized with less serious incidents or first-time offenders who tend “not to reoffend, regardless of the intervention used” (Wood & Suzuki, 2016, p. 161). Wood and Suzuki (2016) refer to this phenomenon as restorative justice at the “shallow end” of the justice system (p. 171). Strang, Sherman, Mayo-Wilson, Woods, and Ariel (2013) note that banishing restorative justice “to low-seriousness crimes is a wasted opportunity” (p. 48) as there is mounting evidence to suggest restorative justice works to reduce post-traumatic responses and promote healing in cases of serious and violent crime (Gustafson, 2005).

Restorative justice must be brought from the margins to the mainstream to realize macro-level or transformative goals. Barriers to the more widespread use of restorative justice have been identified as a lack of adequate social ties, awareness, moral maturity, and empathic concern of potential participants, and professional support from the established criminal justice system (Daly, 2006). Dzur (2003) claims that for there to be “more talking and less incarcerating in [American] criminal justice, restorative justice forums must have distinct effects on public attitudes” and that the “success of restorative justice be judged, at least in part, by the political and not merely by judicial effects of specific programs” (p. 281-282). In 2012, the Ministry of Justice in England and Wales indicated that one of the greatest challenges to restorative justice in these countries was low public awareness of restorative justice, especially among victims (Shapland, 2014, p. 116). Therefore, meaningful and engaged restorative justice education of criminal justice actors as well as citizens is required.

A promising place for restorative justice education is within schools. Restorative justice in schools “can involve the whole school, including universal training of staff and students in restorative justice principles, or can be used as an add-on approach to respond to an incident or ongoing conflict” (Fronius, Persson, Guckenburger, Hurley, & Petrosino, 2016, p. 1). According to Morrison, Blood, and Thorsborne (2005), “one of the critical issues for successful implementation and sustainability of a restorative philosophy [in schools] is the realization that this means organizational and cultural change” (p. 338). A

comprehensive literature review conducted on schools in the United States indicated that for restorative justice to be effective, it should be embedded within the school culture or ethos (Fronius et al., 2016).

The research undertaken with respect to primary and secondary schools has largely been related to micro-goals such as the reduction of exclusionary discipline and harmful behaviour (Fronius et al. 2016; Vaandering, 2014). However, emerging studies have demonstrated that utilizing restorative justice in both proactive and responsive ways has the potential to reduce suspensions and expulsions while improving overall school climate, sense of connectedness to school, improved problem solving and social-emotional development of students (Fronius et al. 2016; Vaandering, 2014).

Although there has been a proliferation of restorative justice education at the tertiary level (Kitchen, 2013; Tomporowski, 2014), the few empirical investigations of restorative justice in these settings have focused on the results of implementing alternative methods to deal with student misconduct. The research results, although promising, generally focus on micro-level goals related to individual participants, rather than transformative, meso- or macro-level aims. For instance, Dahl et al. (2014) examined the motivations and benefits to the perpetrators of student misconduct who participated in a restorative justice process. This study found that all participants reported some benefit from the process, including attitude change, increased understanding of the harm, satisfaction with the process, and a greater sense of community.

Karp and Sacks (2014) studied the individual learning outcomes following participation in a restorative justice process. These aspects included increased reports of accountability, voice, interpersonal competency, fairness, and closure. Compared with more traditional responses to student misconduct, participants in restorative justice processes reported greater learning outcomes for these measures. Karp and Sacks (2014) also found that participants reported feeling more connected to their institution following a restorative justice process. This finding could be considered more of a meso-level goal as participating in restorative practices “may help connect students with their community and in a larger school these positive connections are more likely to be missing” (Karp & Sacks, 2014, p. 169).

Meso-level goals are those which increase community involvement in restorative practices and increase the collective efficacy of communities to improve the quality of social life. Macro-level goals involve increasing community participation and de-professionalizing justice (Wood, 2015). A study by McDowell et al. (2014) reported results aligned with such goals. Following a series of restorative justice workshops offered to students living in university residence, McDowell et al. (2014) found that slightly less than half of students who completed the workshops reported sharing or utilizing restorative justice concepts with roommates and a third did so with family members. With respect to micro-level goals, students who attended the workshops were more likely to attempt to see the perspectives of their family and professors and be willing to listen to another's perspective during conflict, compared to those who did not have exposure to restorative justice education. Further, approximately one half of students reported they were more equipped to think about how to approach conflict situations following the restorative justice workshop.

Similar to the empirical investigation of restorative justice in the criminal justice realm and primary and secondary schools, research within tertiary education has largely been focused on the impact of participating in a restorative justice process. It is clear that for many participants, this encounter is personally and relationally meaningful (Bender & Armour, 2007; Karp & Sacks, 2014; Moore, 2003; Rossner, 2011). Van Ness and Strong (2010) suggest that personal transformations can eventually lead to transformation of structures. Conversely, by changing structures in universities to promote more restorative ways of resolving harm, opportunities for personal transformation are more readily available. Restorative justice education is another way to approach structural change within in the post-secondary environment. Beyond workshops for students in residences (McDowell et al., 2014), restorative justice can be experienced through a semester-long course offering. The following section examines such initiatives.

3.7. Restorative Justice & Tertiary Education

Post-secondary institutions are increasingly offering courses on restorative justice (Tompsonski, 2014). Smith-Cunnien and Parilla (2001) believe a strong case can be made for including restorative justice as standard content in criminal justice curriculum.

The growing influence restorative justice has on criminal justice policy and practice requires that “students need to be made knowledgeable about it” (Smith-Cunnie & Parilla, 2001, p. 390). Restorative justice content can be found within various disciplines, including law (Geske, 2005), criminology/criminal justice (Elliott, 2011; Kitchen, 2013), social work (van Wormer, 2006), nursing (M. Hutchison, 2009), education (Carson & Bussler, 2013), conflict and peace studies, Indigenous/First Nations/Aboriginal studies, sociology, and community justice (Correctional Service of Canada, 2001).²⁴

Tertiary restorative justice education is important for citizens and future criminal justice actors (Vigorita, 2002). Walgrave, Aertsen, Parmentier, Vanfraechem, and Zinsstag (2013) argue restorative justice has an important place in criminology “that may help to develop a serious countervailing power to the unrestrained, thoughtless, selfish, and problematic increase in punitiveness” (p. 160). The goal is not necessarily to agree on particular social, ethical, and ideological positions, but for students to be clear on the position they take. As Van Ness & Strong (2015) state, knowledge of alternative patterns of thinking about justice allow for more informed choices to be made about how to respond when crime or harm occurs. Smith-Cunnie and Parilla (2001) concur that while it is important students gain knowledge of restorative justice, they must also remain critical.

Restorative justice education can provide students a re-visioning of justice beyond the dominant, retributive paradigm. As restorative justice encourages movement away from professionalized justice approaches, citizen engagement is critical. V. Braithwaite et al. (2013) argue that the use of restorative justice practices will only advance if the community supports such shifts in responsibility. Exposing students to restorative justice can help them make informed decisions about whether they will actively contribute to this growing movement.

Gilbert et al. (2013) suggest that when restorative justice is taught in a way that reflects the values, “it is likely to create future criminal justice leaders and practitioners inclined to promote innovative approaches to justice questions” (p. 47). Geske (2005)

²⁴ As this resource has not been updated since 2001, further investigation was done to ensure all the restorative justice courses listed in this guide were currently being offered within these disciplines.

states that the most important benefit in teaching restorative justice in law schools is that the “students develop the vision, the skills, and the passion to positively transform our justice system” (p. 334). Britto and Reimund (2013) argue that instructors within law and criminology

have a responsibility to prepare students to be members of the workforce of the future, which will include a heightened focus on victims, recognition that offenders are human beings, a need for conflict negotiation skills, an understanding of the community context of crimes, and the development of their own self-efficacy. (p. 166).

Tompsonski (2014) identifies another potential benefit of post-secondary restorative justice education as the production of participatory research involving academics, community-based restorative programmes, government ministries and justice agencies. Such collaborative research is essential in order to track the challenges and opportunities of restorative justice and promote innovation.

Despite the growing emphasis on the importance of restorative justice at the post-secondary level, there are very few studies that have examined the impact of such content or pedagogy (Kitchen, 2013). Kitchen (2013) and Carson and Bussler (2013) provide personal reflections and anecdotes as educators and Helfgott, et al. (2000), Vigorita (2002), Holsinger (2008), Adamson (2012), and Toews (2013) have documented the experiences of students engaging in restorative justice education. While not all of these studies took place following a semester-long course in a university, they all reported findings related to students’ experiences following a unique approach to teaching restorative justice content through related andragogy. *Restorative justice education* is defined as teaching restorative justice in a way that upholds its values and practices, such as the circle, dialogue, and collaborative decision-making. Also referred to as restorative justice andragogy, the approach is “inclusive, participatory, reflective, flexible, and respectful” (Gilbert et al., 2013, p. 49).

Those who experienced restorative justice education reported similar impacts to those experienced by victim-offender mediation participants (Toews, 2013). Micro-level outcomes such as healing, a positive outlook, transformation of perspective (Adamson, 2012), and increased empathy and understanding of crime are common (Helfgott et al.,

2000). In addition, some students experienced personal and relational transformations that can create conditions for “more just societies while preventing violence” (Toews, 2013, p. 10). For example, following a series of prison based seminars that brought together victims, offenders, and community members in a safe space to discuss restorative justice and share personal narratives about crime, Helfgott et al. (2000) found that 63% of participants shifted from retributive to restorative perceptions of how justice could be achieved. Students reported greater interest in and support for participation in justice and reintegration, increased empathy, and enhanced personal responsibility. Following the course, they also described an enhanced ability to see the humanity in others, especially those in the criminal justice system.

Vigorita’s (2002) study on a restorative justice course offered to both university students and juvenile offenders found that the former group became less punitive, less trusting of the criminal justice system, more open minded, more focused on their career plan, and accepting of juvenile offenders. These students reported having substantially changed their perceptions towards “offenders.” Through the relationships built in the classroom, university students saw the youth in conflict with the law as peers or equals. Labels and stereotyping of “us” and “them” were broken down through the experience of restorative justice education. A similar study conducted by Holsinger (2008) with college students and court-involved youth resulted in findings that mirror Vigorita’s (2002). Post-secondary students reported a change in attitudes toward “juvenile delinquents” through breaking down stereotypes and recognizing they “had more in common with the youth than they previously thought” (Holsinger, 2008, p. 331). The students also reported that their perspectives had shifted as they saw the court-involved youth as capable of change and achieving success in their lives. Students described becoming less punitive and having high levels of support for restorative justice as a response to harm. Following the restorative justice course, these students also had more clear direction for their future careers. One student captures this finding with the reflection, “this class has made me rethink what I want to do, these kids need help” (Holsinger, 2008, p. 332). Overall, when students were able to learn about restorative justice alongside those involved in the criminal justice system, they became less punitive, more open-minded, compassionate, and understanding.

Adamson's (2012) examination of the impacts of studying restorative justice at a graduate level found that students reported personal growth, which they defined as becoming better listeners, changing how they view the world, learning new skills, creating more meaningful relationships, and implementing new thinking into family situations. Students also frequently reported taking the restorative ideas and skills they had learned through the course and bringing them to their personal and professional lives.

Toews (2013) reported comparable results following restorative justice workshops offered in prison whereby participants were more willing to disclose personal stories and had "found their voice" (p. 14). Students also reported increased personal growth and change, more self-esteem, and the desire to engage in positive relationships and give back to the community. Toews (2013) found that students often experienced personal transformation that changed how they related to others.

While these studies examined micro-level goals, the results are important as they demonstrate transformation is possible without participating in a restorative justice encounter. Not everyone will be able to experience a restorative justice process as a victim, offender, facilitator, observer, professional, volunteer, or supporter. Crime does not happen to everyone and when it does, restorative justice is not always available. There must be many opportunities to learn about restorative justice theory and practice, and post-secondary education is affording increasing occasions to do so. As Zhang (2013) notes:

...the college setting is a prime opportunity to engage young adults when they may be more receptive to inner transformative experiences. Away from familiar environments of their families, college should be a time where students question, test, and refine the values they have grown up with. (p. 287)

However, a restorative justice course is one of many experiences that undergraduates studying criminology might have. While the literature suggests these courses can influence student's perceptions and attitudes, research on experiential education within criminology programs such as internships, service learning, research (George, Lim, Lucas, & Meadows, 2015), and prison visits (Calaway, Calais, & Lightner, 2016) demonstrate evidence of similar impacts such as increased compassion and

reduced punitiveness. These findings suggest that it is the experience, rather than the content of a course, that can facilitate changes in perspective. Toews (2013) argues that transformative learning theory can help understand how such perspectives shifts occur and what the impacts are. Given the proliferation of restorative justice courses within post-secondary education (Kitchen, 2013; Tomporowski, 2014), a more robust examination of student's experiences is overdue.

This study examines whether there is evidence of enduring perspective shifts for undergraduate students who participate in restorative justice education. A deeper understanding of the approach to and impact of restorative justice education can help educators enhance the experience for students and themselves. Drawing from recommendations from Llewellyn et al. (2013), this research also explores whether learning about restorative justice affects "social relationships, community-building, and skills that can generate enhanced positive social attitudes and behaviours" (p. 308). An appreciation of how cognitive shifts can affect student's relationships and actions is central to moving restorative justice from the margins to the mainstream as these graduates enter criminal justice professions and other fields.

The intersections between restorative justice and transformative learning have been articulated by Adamson (2012) as social and emotional engagement, empowerment and direct participation, critical reflection, and focus on relationship. The transformative learning field provides well-established methods for studying perspective shifts in adult learners (Taylor, 2007) and are used in this dissertation, as similar techniques do not exist in the restorative justice literature.

Transformative learning theory rejects traditional forms of instructor-centered, rote teaching in pursuit of collaborative and experiential approaches where both teacher and student have redefined roles. Outcomes of such endeavours include students' perspective shift and subsequent social action. Transformative learning is considered a form of critical pedagogy in which learning aims at much more than filling students with information to confirm what currently exists in the world. This theory and its associated practices offer innovative, critical approaches to education. Such approaches are inspired by the dissatisfaction with traditional forms of education, motivation that mirrors investment

in restorative justice as an alternative to the contemporary justice system. The following section provides an overview of transformative learning theory and how it connects with a transformative conception of restorative justice.

3.8. Towards Transformative Learning: The purpose of education

The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows.

~Sydney J. Harris²⁵

Examining how restorative justice education may affect students' perspectives raises broader queries about the purpose of education. While most Canadians will have had an experience of public schooling, many never consider the rationale for such education. Since the creation of provincial universities in 1850, the purpose of these institutions has been debated in light of church, state, and more recently, corporate interests. The foundation of the first provincial initiatives in higher education was one of liberal arts. The pursuit of education was to achieve a humanistic vision of *civitas*, people united in a community. However, a shift occurred to a more a practical focus with the agricultural and mechanical advancements of the industrial revolution. According to Kyle (2005), publicly funded universities were primarily set up to provide students skills to stimulate local economies.

Since the burgeoning of this approach, which serves to perpetuate the capitalist system, the question of whether post-secondary education has abandoned its roots educating the 'whole' person towards the betterment of all citizens must be raised. O'Sullivan (1999) argues that educational institutions in a society serve the conservative

²⁵ Sydney J. Harris (1917 – 1986) was an American journalist for the *Chicago Daily News* and later the *Chicago Sun-Times*. In his column, "Strictly Personal," Harris used his background in philosophy and research to write about the contemporary world, human behaviour, religion, hypocrisy, and artistic endeavours. The column ran for 40 years in many newspapers throughout the United States and Canada. Retrieved from http://mms.newberry.org/xml/xml_files/Harris.xml, 2011.

function of maintaining the status quo and are allies to the current vision of a global marketplace (p. 33). Almost one hundred years ago, Dewey (1916) wrote,

Even today, in our industrial life, apart from certain values of industriousness and thrift, the intellectual and emotional reaction of the forms of human association under which the world's work is carried on receives little attention as compared with physical output. (7)

The distinction made between the function of post-secondary school as *education* versus *training* for participation in the capitalist structure has been made by Kyle (2005) and Giroux (2007), particularly in light of the impact on social justice.

Education is not training; at its best, learning is connected to a culture of curiosity and questioning, the imperatives of social responsibility, and at the same time recognizing that political agency does not reduce the citizen to a mere consumer. (Giroux, 2007, p. 35-36)

The Government of Canada (2011) described both liberal and practical purposes of post-secondary education:

University programs cultivate skills and knowledge that are important for the future career success of students, as well as to Canada's ability to succeed in the global economy. Participation in a university education also provides students with opportunities for social interaction and a solid basis for future civic participation.

However, despite the record numbers of young Canadians attending institutions of higher education, goals of social engagement may be trumped by the pursuit of financial success. Kyle (2005, p. 130) delineates assumptions underlying "free market rhetoric," which allow post-secondary institutions to continue to focus on practical education as:

selfishness and greed are valuable;
humans are rational;
humans are autonomous individuals with free will;
money determines value; and
best interests are served when the market is unhampered.

Those who subscribe to this view see universities as businesses and important instruments in the perpetuation of capitalist structure. Mills (2008) argues that those involved in reproducing the social order often do so unknowingly and unintentionally. She

explains some pedagogies that are more likely to transform perspectives. These approaches are only likely to challenge the status quo when “there is no longer acceptance of the rules of the game and the goals proposed by the dominant class” (p. 87). Tertiary education is not only a venue for knowledge production and transfer, but also “a means for building greater human beings who embody multiple forms of wisdom” (Lin & Oxford, 2013, p. xi). In many ways, the face of post-secondary education is changing to engage more students in different ways with increased access to Massive Open Online Courses (free online university courses known as MOOCs) (Finlayson, 2015), experiential learning (McRae & Rogers, 2012), and contemplative practices (Lin & Oxford, 2013) .

Educational approaches that invite students to challenge the status quo, particularly with respect to emancipation of participants, are considered critical pedagogy. Giroux (2007) describes this movement as attempts to “emphasize critical reflexivity, bridge the gap between learning and everyday life, make visible the connections between power and knowledge and provide the conditions for extending democratic rights, values, and identities” (p. 28). The role of critical educators is to define higher education as a tool for the realization of democratic life. University seminars can be opportunities for discourse that develop the capacity to reflect critically on the lenses we use to filter, engage, and interpret the world (Belenky & Stanton, 2000, p. 71). Post-secondary learning encourages critical thinking by inviting students to challenge assumptions which “are the taken-for-granted beliefs about the world and our place within it that seem so obvious to us as not to need stating explicitly” (Brookfield, 1995, p. 2).

Critical pedagogy draws from early educational theorists such as John Dewey and aligns with the original liberal arts focus of post-secondary institutions in Canada. Rather than providing business with trained workers, post-secondary education aims at civic responsibility, protection of civil liberties, and community service in the pursuit of social justice through minimizing inequalities affecting those traditionally marginalized by agents of social control. The purpose of post-secondary education, then, says Harvey (2000) is

to transform students by enhancing their knowledge, skills, attitudes and abilities while simultaneously empowering them as lifelong critical, reflective learners as transformed (enhanced and empowered) graduates play a key role as transformative agents in society. (p. 1)

This empowered leadership allows for alternative concepts such as restorative justice to thrive.

3.9. Towards Transformative Learning: Critical Pedagogy

Education is not filling a pail but the lighting of a fire.

~Anonymous

There is no singular way to define critical pedagogy; however, according to Monchinski (2010) there is common ground. Firstly, all critical pedagogies are educational praxis, which Freire (2000) defines as reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it (p. 51). Theory informs action and the reflection on the results of that action informs theory. This critically reflective cycle means that critical pedagogies are “ever-evolving” between theory and practice, therefore, challenging to define. Secondly, critical pedagogies are descriptive in that they critically analyze the world and the lives of those who live in the world as “the world and human beings do not exist apart from each other, they exist in constant interaction” (Freire, 2000, p. 50). The status quo is neither accepted as inevitable or unchangeable (Monchinski, 2010, p. 14). These pedagogies seek to answer overarching questions about the current state of political and social arrangements and institutions and who is affected by these structures. Finally, Monchinski (2010) points out that critical pedagogy is normative as it places demands on citizens to work to change the way the world currently is. Critical pedagogies ask both teachers and students to question where facts come from, how knowledge is generated and who that knowledge benefits or whose worldview is incorporated (Monchinski, 2010, p. 25). Critical pedagogies offer counter-ideologies about how education might be carried out in ways that can transform existing social structures.

To understand critical pedagogy, one must appreciate John Dewey’s profound influence on educational theory. In essence, Dewey (1916) believed that education could activate a learner’s humanitarian impulses thus raising consciousness and inspiring action. Learning is based on a series of experiences and knowledge is constantly

constructed and reconstructed by the individual's interactions with the social world (Dewey, 1916). As Freire (2000) notes,

For apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other. (p. 72)

This reflective practice can be fostered or hindered through one's participation in school or other informal forms of acquiring information. Due to the centrality of experience in learning and the importance of understanding what predicates, thus influences, these experiences, Dewey's theory encourages teachers to truly know their students and understand the differences between the students' past experiences and their own.

Dewey criticized traditional models of education that did not place value the uniqueness of individuals. Appreciating how both human differences and past experiences may affect future learning is key to providing educational opportunities towards more fulfilled individuals and societies. According to Dewey (1916), citizens do not become a society by living in close proximity to one another. Rather, community is created through purposeful communication where group members are "cognizant of the common end" and interested in working together. Dewey observed that many human relationships are not social in the sense that they lack shared interest and communication about purpose. He described these relationships as "on a machine-like plane" (3) with people using one another to serve their own needs, without awareness or acknowledgment of the emotional and intellectual needs of the other. It can be argued that despite the nearly one-hundred-year-old history of Dewey's observation, the same can be said today.

Dewey's appreciation of the uniqueness of individuals and belief in educating both the individual and society, along with his critique of traditional education, form a good portion of the work done in critical pedagogy. Transformative learning theory is perhaps the most widely discussed and researched in the arena of critical pedagogy and adult education (Dirkx, 1998).

3.10. Transformative Learning Theory

Foundational work on transformative learning began in 1978 by Mezirow; however, this theory has been critiqued and expanded by his subsequent writing and others such as Freire (2000), Cranton (2006), Dirkx (2006), Taylor (2008), and Cranton & Taylor (2012). Founded as a theory of adult education, transformative learning asserts that education should lead to empowerment. Compared to traditional theories where education trains students to adapt to the needs and demands of society, transformative learning aims at much more than obtaining information to confirm the status quo. The purpose of education is towards personal and social transformation through critical self-reflection, discourse, and action. Mezirow (1997) maintains that educators can facilitate transformative learning through helping learners become aware and critical of their own and others' assumptions, use their imagination to look at problems from alternative perspectives, and participate actively in discourse to validate what and how something is understood (p. 10). In this way, learning is a social process with dialogue being essential to making meaning of the world.

A transformative learning experience can be and is by definition, profound. Transformation is initiated by an experience of something unexpected that does not fit in with one's anticipations of how things should be (Cranton, 2006, p. 19). This trigger is called a "disorienting dilemma," which can be a single event or, more commonly, the result of a longer, cumulative process (Mezirow, 1997). These experiences may occur as a result of learning in a classroom or through an acute personal crisis like the death of a loved one or living through a natural disaster (Taylor, 2007). Transformative learning occurs when learners critically examine their habitual, culturally constructed expectations then revise them and act upon this new view (Cranton, 2006, p. 19). Anderson and Anderson (2001) define transformation as "the radical shift from one state of being to another, so significant it requires a shift of culture, behavior, and mindset" (p. 39).

Transformation is not synonymous with change; while transformation is change, it is very particular type of change (Poutiatine, 2009, p. 135). Change, compared to transformation, is limited in scope, usually reversible, does not challenge assumptions, and is often an experience of feeling "in control" (Quinn, 2004, as cited in Poutiatine, 2009,

p. 134). While change is on-going and usually re-affirms a particular view of reality, a transformative experience often results in a sense of “everything in my life is different now” (Poutiatine, 2009, p. 196). Taking in fresh information, means letting go of steadfastly held assumptions about the way the world works and can produce feelings of fear and discomfort (Mezirow, 1997). Compared to change, transformation is voluntary in the sense that learners can choose whether to engage with the new information or experience that challenges their existing frames of reference. Transformative learning is not a continuous process as there may be many times in life that one does *not* experience transformation, but rather the much more common experience of change (Cranton, 2006).

The precise nature of the transformative process has been debated in the field. Dirkx’s (1998) four lenses are helpful in understanding the different conceptions. The first lens, transformation as conscious-raising, is most commonly associated with the work of Paulo Freire. Freire began writing in the 1960s, passionately encouraging people to pursue education in order to be active participants in the democratic process to work against the domination, aggression, and violence that they experienced. In his home country of Brazil, Freire clearly saw the oppressed and their oppressors and advocated that those subjugated discover their reality of oppression through hopeful enquiry.

Freire believed human beings actively construct social realities and, therefore, have the potential to transform the status quo. To be human was to be empathic, loving, communicative, and humble (Freire, 2000, p. 171). In order to become more fully human, the oppressed must, rather than turning into an oppressor, work to restore the humanity of both themselves and those who have oppressed them. This liberation requires the rejection of violence and other tools of dehumanization and involves dialogue, reflection, and community. For Freire, it was not enough to uncover these forms of oppression action was needed by those who were oppressed.

The second stream popularized by Mezirow, Dirkx (1998) calls transformation as critical reflection. Learning is the “process of using a prior interpretation to construe new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one’s experience as a guide to future action” (Mezirow, 2012, p. 74). Transformation, according to Mezirow (1997), is largely a rational process by which an individual gains a more inclusive perception of the world following a

disorienting dilemma: experience(s) that do not fit in one's current, unquestioned understanding or frame of reference. Frames of reference are "structures of assumptions and expectations that frame an individual's tacit points of view and influence their thinking, beliefs, and actions" (Taylor, 2007, p. 5). These structures are based on the psychocultural (cognitive, conative and emotional) factors that an individual is born into and develop over time within a particular context. Factors that influence frames of reference include:

fixed interpersonal relationships, political orientations, cultural bias, ideologies, schemata, stereotyped attitudes and practices, occupational habits of mind, religious doctrine, moral-ethical norms, psychological preferences and schema, paradigms in science and mathematics, frames in linguistics and social sciences, and aesthetic values and standards. (Mezirow, 2003, p. 59)

Frames of reference comprise two dimensions: habits of mind and a point of view. Habits of mind are routine ways of thinking, feeling, and acting that are influenced by assumptions (Mezirow, 1997, p. 5-6). Habits of mind comprise overlapping and interrelated realms, including the epistemic (ways we learn), sociolinguistic (social norms, cultural expectations, the use of language), psychological (self-concept, needs, inhibitions), moral-ethical (conscience and morality), philosophical (transcendental worldview, philosophy), and aesthetic (values, tastes about beauty). These habits are uncritically absorbed from our family, community, and culture (Cranton, 2006, p. 24-26). They constitute points of view, which are "the constellation of belief, value judgment, attitude, and feeling that shapes a particular interpretation" (Mezirow, 1997, p. 5-6). Through these dimensions we make and re-make meaning. Although often thought of as a rational process, meaning making "stresses more unconscious, imaginative, and extrarational processes" (Dirkx, 2012, p. 116).

Transformative learning is that which transforms problematic frames of reference or sets of fixed assumptions and expectations to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change (Mezirow, 2003, p. 58). These transformative experiences can produce permanent perspective shifts that create

new actions and behaviour on the part of the learner²⁶. According to Mezirow's (1991) original model, the transformative experience can involve the following stages:

1. a disorienting dilemma
2. self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame
3. a critical reflection epistemic, socio-cultural or psychic assumptions
4. recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change
5. exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
6. planning on a course of action
7. acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
8. provisional trying of new roles
9. building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
10. reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective. (p. 168-169)

These stages are not necessarily linear and perspectives can transform as the result of a single (epochal) or several events (incremental) (Cranton, 2006). Mezirow's theory of transformative learning has been critiqued and then revised to attend to the role context and multiple intelligences play in learning. This critique sparked the development of the third stream of transformative learning known as transformation as development, which examines how adults construct new meaning structures as they age, and how the socio-cultural context of their education impacts this process. This lens is based less on rationality (as Mezirow stresses) and more on holistic and intuitive processes. Clark and

²⁶ Gunnlaugson (2007) challenges the assertion that all transformative experiences are permanent. He draws from Ken Wilber's work on integral framework of consciousness to suggest that transformative learning experiences may involve either shifts in states of consciousness (which are temporary) or structures or stages of consciousness (which are permanent). This distinction could be helpful in discerning what subtle shifts of being occur within individuals and groups and how they could develop into something permanent (Gunnlaugson, 2007, p. 146-147). Compared to states of consciousness, which come and go, achieving milestones in growth and development are permanent advancements in our stages of consciousness. For example, when children have reached a stage in linguistic development, they have permanent access to language (Wilber, 2000).

Wilson (1991) argue that it is not simply the individual's cognition, but the environment that brings meaning to a perspective. It is important to maintain this link between the person's perspective and the social, political, gendered, context from which it arises. According to Gunnlaugson (2007), it is important to be mindful of other ways of knowing that go beyond rationality and conventional reason. Learners should be able to understand both the opportunities and limits of conventional reason and value other forms of meaning making including that which lies in the emotive and spiritual realms. Willis (2012) notes that the experience of learning is not restricted to a change in intellectual perspective, but can be an overall experience. He describes this experience as a change in being, "a deep sense of enrichment of becoming somehow better and brighter, more potent and alive" (p. 212). Kasl and Yorks (2002) argue that transformative learning is primarily based on intuition, creativity, and emotion. Mezirow (2012) has acknowledged the importance of multiple intelligences, as well as affect and emotion, but continues to hold rationality as the most important concept in the transformational process.

The fourth stream Dirkx (2016) coined transformation as individuation, whereby the expressive and emotional-spiritual dimension of learning is the focus. Drawing from the field of depth psychology, transformative learning is considered "soul work" and linked to spiritual exploration and development. According to Dirkx (2012), "the primary focus of soul work is the establishment and elaboration of a conscious relationship with one's unconscious" (p. 120). While some conceptions of transformation focus on the individual relationship with the self as the source of transformation, others have enhanced the concept of transformation to include social and even planetary dimensions (O'Sullivan, 1999). Willis (2012) describes existential transformative learning as that which includes embodied sensation, "imaginal", conceptual analysis and critique and reflective action.

The main variance between these versions of transformative learning has to do with the goal of the transformation (personal or social) and the domain where the transformation is focused (rational, emotional, relational, spiritual). Mezirow (2012) recognizes the importance of social context, but focuses on the cognitive process of critical reflection and dialogue as a source of transformation. Freire (2000) highlights the role of social inequities and views transformation as liberation from oppression. Kasl and Yorks (2002) and Dirkx, Mezirow, and Cranton (2006) emphasize the inclusion of other ways of

knowing such as imagination, emotion, and affect. In discussing this debate, Cranton (2006) rightly notes, “perhaps [the goal of individual or social reform] need not be an either-or issue... both individual and social perspectives are important, and obviously both exist, one within the other. We become individuals in a society” (p. 11). In terms of the domain of transformation, transformation can be conceptualized as occurring in multiple, interdependent domains. Mezirow and Dirkx have agreed that these different conceptions of the theory are complimentary rather than contradictory (Dirkx, et al., 2006). These different perspectives can co-exist and

it may be that for one person in one context, transformative learning is a rational endeavor; for that same person in another context it could be emotional and intuitive; in some contexts, social change may need to precede individual change, and in another context, individual transformation drives social transformation. (Cranton & Taylor, 2012, p. 3)

As a more unified theory, rather than a dualistic one, there is more opportunity to speak of transformative learning while maintaining the diversity of approaches essential to the complex field of adult education (Cranton & Taylor, 2012).

3.11. Transformative Learning: Praxis, Critical Reflection, & Dialogue

Behavioural change is an important component of the transformative experience. For Mezirow (2012), transformation is completed once action has been taken on the new perspective. Freire (2000) articulated the connection between learning and action coining the concept of *conscientizacao*, which meant the invitation to self-learning and self-transformation at the most spiritual and psychological levels. He believed people had the capacity to be either Objects (those who are known and acted upon by outside forces) or Subjects (those who know and act for themselves). To act as a Subject is what Freire believed was one’s ontological vocation – to act upon and transform the world and, in doing so, move toward new possibilities of fuller and richer life both individually and collectively (Shaull, 2000, p. 32). The pursuit of liberation through transformation requires praxis itself on an individual level – the authentic commitment to constant self-re-examination throughout one’s own reflection and action (Freire, 2000, p. 60). Transformation can be painful work; work of the heart and soul that moves the learner

towards wholeness of the self and a more expansive view of the world and one's connections with it.

Critical reflection and dialogue are two elements that contribute to transformation and highlight the importance of praxis. Critical reflection is defined by Taylor (2007) as “the conscious and explicit reassessment of the consequence and origin of our meaning structures” (p. 6). Mezirow (2003) notes critical reflection means focusing on the unexamined assumptions and expectations. Essentially, this reflection occurs when someone gets the sense that their belief or assumption is problematic and then reassesses this view in light of other factors. Experience alone is not enough for transformation; critical reflection about the experience is key and this occurs in spoken dialogue with others (Merriam, 2004). These conversations provide opportunities for learners to reflect on their actions and uncover insights from the meaning, experiences, and opinions expressed by others (Gunnlaugson, 2007, p. 138).

Critical reflection is inherently connected to dialogue. Cranton (2006) notes that conversation is essential to learning about and considering alternative points of view along with their validity. Most transformative learning literature emphasizes the role of relationships as the container and space for which learning through dialogue can occur (Schapiro, Wasserman & Gallegos, 2012). Relationships are formed in groups that possess the qualities vital to meaningful dialogue which include commitment, curiosity, openness, “emotional engagement through storytelling,” and opportunities for “reflection and mutual sense making” (Schapiro et al., 2012, p. 358). Once these relationships of support and safety are in place, Scott (2003) says that “[d]ialogical learning processes can serve to liberate thinking and action as individuals then are free to try out new behavior” (p. 265). This dialogue can lead to both personal change and that which inspires transformation of relationships and our world.

Within the framework of transformative learning, dialogue has an enhanced definition beyond daily conversation. Dialogue is that which is purposeful, engaged and the participants demonstrate specific skills including “having an open mind, learning to listen empathetically, “bracketing” premature judgment, and seeking common ground” (Mezirow, 2003, p. 60). Belenky and Stanton (2000) identify qualities of effective

discourse as the presence of well-informed participants, the absence of coercion, active listening, equal opportunity for participation, and the undertaking of a critical stance toward established cultural norms or viewpoints (p. 71). Freire (2000) highlighted the importance of maintaining curiosity and openness while engaging in dialogue as the purpose is to engage with alternative perspectives on a topic, rather than a pursuit of an 'end' or ultimate truth. This approach reflects the assumption of the constructed nature of knowledge, rather than it being something 'out there' to obtain. For Freire (2000), dialogue itself is praxis, naming the world in order to change it and as such working within the cycle of reflection and action. Mezirow (2003), Gunnlaugson, and Moore (2009), and Schapiro et al. (2012) have identified the university classroom as a potential space for this type of dialogue to be present. Empirical studies of transformative learning have been conducted within these adult learning environments.

3.12. Research & Transformative Learning

Research on transformative learning attempts to explain how perspective shifts occur and the impact on students and teachers. King (2009) notes that transformative learning theory is now one of the most widely studied in the area of adult education. Taylor's (2007) meta-analysis of 40 studies showed that much of the research came from institutions of higher learning and involved an investigation of the essential components of transformative learning theory such as critical reflection and the characteristics of relationships in the classroom (p. 176). Taylor also confirmed that the processes Mezirow thought to be essential in transformative learning, including critical discourse, were indeed vital to a transformative experience.

Transformative learning research is important to the field of adult education as it offers an alternative perspective. Cranton (2006) notes that the majority of research in education focuses on individual intelligence and aptitude, not how a person learns in and from relationships with others (p. 41). She suggests that this focus results from Western society's reliance on behaviourism and the value placed on individualism and, therefore, autonomous, independent learning. Cranton (2006) surmises that the introduction of theories of multiple and emotional intelligence, along with feminist research about gender

differences in learning, have both contributed to the growing recognition that for many, learning is a relational, not individual endeavour.

The review of the empirical evidence from the field of transformative learning theory elucidates many possible research opportunities. Taylor (1997) suggests that future research seeks to study precisely how transformative learning is fostered in the classroom with particular focus on “the intricate nature of relationships, particularly its connection with critical reflection and the practice of fostering transformative learning” (p. 53). Cranton (2006) notes that while it is difficult to find transformative learning research that does not include Mezirow’s work on perspective shift as its foundation, some studies (Carter, 2002; Gilly 2004) expanded this theory to include both relational and cognitive elements.

King (2009) has compiled a considerable body of research examining transformative learning in various settings, including undergraduate, graduate, on-line, and English as a Second Language classrooms. She has tested and developed a survey instrument called the Learning Activities Survey (LAS). The results of the LAS group respondents according to whether or not they experienced perspective transformation. The survey is also used to identify interview participants and generate data with respect to demographics and the factors attributed to the transformative experience. Her findings demonstrate that many adult learners experienced perspective transformation that contributed to increased understanding and open mindedness when it came to themselves and others (King, 2004). In the survey respondents are asked to identify whether specific learning activities, people and outside events affected their perspective transformation. King’s (2009) research focuses on the individual’s experience and the features of adult education that may increase the likelihood of transformation. Although her work offers pragmatic contributions to setting up more transformative classrooms, other research aims to capture the nuances and context of transformation. For example, Scott’s (2003) study of community-based organizers explores how the “social construction of transformation co-emerges in the learner and the setting, that is, the personal and the social in dialectical relationship transform” (p. 283). Other studies examined the emotional (Kilgore & Bloom, 2002) and relational contexts (Groen & Hyland-Russell, 2010) that contribute to transformative learning.

Research into the nature and impact of transformative learning demonstrate findings similar to studies conducted by restorative justice educators such as Helfgott et al. (2000) and Toews (2013). Toews (2013) and Adamson (2012) both illustrate theoretical and practical convergences between transformative learning and restorative justices. Adamson (2012) refers to a transformative learning framework to examine the experiences of graduate students who complete a restorative justice course. Both restorative justice and transformative learning seek transformation of people and social structures through non-mandatory participation, empowerment, relationships, dialogue, and social action. These intersections justify the use of transformative learning methods to understand the transformative shifts that occur for students learning about restorative justice at the post-secondary level.

3.13. Summary

A review of transformative learning and restorative justice clearly demonstrates shared theoretical and practical elements. Adamson and Bailie (2012) claim that the values and practices associated with restorative justice can be brought into higher educational settings to create a restorative classroom, resulting in transformative experiences for adult learners. Adamson (2012), Helfgott et al. (2000), Holsigner (2008), Toews (2013), and Vigorita (2002) have found evidence of perspective shift through their studies of restorative justice education; however, this dissertation is the first to purposefully study the phenomenon of perspective transformation for students who have completed an undergraduate restorative justice course over the span of 15 years from multiple instructors. The following chapter outlines the research methodology utilized including the interpretative approaches, methods, instruments, procedures, ethical considerations, consent, confidentiality, and limits.

Chapter 4.

Methodology

Life is much wiser than science

- Boyes-Watson and Pranis, 2012, p. 270.

4.1. Introduction

This chapter details the research methods undertaken to explore students' experiences of an undergraduate restorative justice class. In particular,

What perspective transformation, if any, do students report after completing an introductory restorative justice course at SFU?

What influences or facilitating factors were, at least in part, perceived as contributing to these transformations?

How, if at all, did students' perspective transformation affect their beliefs, feelings, relationships, and actions?

To what extent, if at all, were these perspective transformations enduring?

These specific research questions are used to consider the broader issue of how tertiary restorative justice education can contribute to advancing restorative justice in the community and within social institutions.

This exploratory study utilized an inductive, mixed method approach to explore the phenomenon of perspective transformation. Engaging different methods to explore the same research questions enhances the credibility of findings (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011) and leads to more "valid, reliable, and diverse construction of realities" (Golafshani, 2003, p. 604). This research is phenomenological and employs methods and interpretative approaches that align with the values of restorative justice.

The research process followed a series of steps recommended by Moustakas (1994) and Yüksel & Yildirim (2015). First, the phenomenon is identified and what is

known from previous studies is described. This initial stage is captured by the literature review in Chapter 3 through the discussion of transformative learning and restorative justice education. Moustakas (1994) then recommends data collection from five to 25 interviewees who have experienced the phenomenon. To study perspective transformation, combining the strengths of surveys and interviews is a powerful form of data collection (Glisczinski, 2007; King, 2000; Taylor, 2008). Electronic surveys are useful for gathering data from a large number of respondents (King, 2009) and in-depth interviews obtain “thick descriptions” of social life recounted by participants (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011, p. 119). The electronic distribution of a well-established survey instrument from the field of transformative learning gathered quantitative and qualitative data from students who completed the RJC from Fall, 1999 to Spring, 2014. The survey also identified participants willing to be contacted for an interview. A diversified sample of participants were selected and interviews were conducted until the point of saturation was reached.

The next step involved data analysis which Creswell (2007) describes as a process which highlights statements, sentences, or quotes that provide understanding of how participants experienced the phenomenon. These statements are then clustered into core themes (Yüksel & Yildirim, 2015). Chapters 5 and 6 present data from the survey and interviews along with these core themes that describe *what* the participants experienced through the RJC and *how* the experience happened. Chapter 6 outlines a composite description of the phenomenon under study by describing the experience of both students who experienced perspective shift during the RJC and those who did not. The final step of the analysis is included in Chapter 7 where the essence of the participants’ experience is discussed in relation to my own experiences, the reflections of the course collaborators, and the transformative learning and restorative justice literature.

4.2. Interpretative Approaches

This research is grounded in a restorative approach and based on the following ontological and epistemological conventions.

4.2.1. Ontology & Epistemology

An ontological position is synonymous with “what is possible to know about the world” (Snape & Spencer, 2004, p. 19). Ontology includes a set of ideas or assumptions that inform epistemology (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). My ontological position is best described as phenomenological. Aligning with Husserl, I reject the belief that “objects exist independently and that the information about objects is reliable” (Groenewald, 2004, p. 4). Rather, what is knowable about the world can be contained within our lived experiences. Epistemology captures the relationship between the enquirer and the world known (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 13). Epistemological enquiry seeks to understand what constitutes knowledge and how knowledge is acquired, or “how it is possible to find out about the world” (Snape & Spencer, 2004, p. 20). Inspired by Groenewald’s (2004) articulation of his epistemological position when undertaking research in the area of adult education, I describe my theory of knowledge as a) data are contained within the perspectives of students who have completed SFU’s undergraduate RJC and b) because of this I directly engaged with former students in collecting the data. The phenomenon of perspective transformation was explored through inviting participants to describe and make meaning of the experience through their eyes.

Phenomenology has roots in the 18th century and is partially a critique of positivism, rejecting objective reality in pursuit of capturing how individuals create an understanding of social life (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). As the focus of this dissertation is to understand how students perceive their experience of studying restorative justice, a phenomenological approach “that describes the lived experiences of several individuals” (Creswell, 2007, p. 57) is most appropriate. The basic purpose of this undertaking is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a universal essence (Creswell, 2007, p. 58), thus allowing a deeper appreciation of the students’ experience with the RJC and what, if any, effect it had on their beliefs, actions, feelings, and relationships.

Phenomenology is based on the idea that humans are cognitive beings who actively perceive and make sense of the world around them. As such, we have the capacity to abstract from our experience, to ascribe meaning to our behaviour and the world, and we are affected by those meanings (Palys & Atchison, 2014, p. 7). This philosophy is also a research method that aims to capture these experiences using

strategies such as in-depth interviewing (Palys & Atchison, 2014, p. 24). Through such interviews, participants become storytellers who hold the power because they are in control of the story and the “researcher” becomes the listener or facilitator (Thomas, 2005, p. 245).

Traditionally, social science research has been based on positivist theory that suggests an objective reality can be discovered through observation by a neutral party. Through this lens, the researcher stands outside and looks into the field of study. The idea of researcher as ‘other’ has been thoroughly critiqued in light of a history of colonizing, oppressive social science research. According to Stanton (2014) “academia continues to privilege individual merit and hierarchical prestige, research methodologies that adhere to preconceived procedures and discursive norms, and work that culminates in publication and institutional recognition” (p. 573). Researchers must actively confront and deconstruct colonizing approaches by respectfully collaborating with participants on projects that involve dynamic storytelling and reciprocal benefit (Stanton, 2014).

Researchers cannot stand apart from what is known about the world; rather they seek to understand how social reality is constructed and meaning is ascribed. An alternative approach to positivism is interpretivism whereby researchers seek a collaborative understanding of how the social world is experienced and constructed (Snape & Spencer, 2004, p. 23). Therefore, the world is co-created between researchers, other people, and technologies (Campbell & Gregor, 2002). These interpretative, collaborative approaches are most aligned with restorative justice, which is based on inclusion, honouring participants’ voice, and respect (Elliott, 2011).

4.2.2. Transformative Inquiry: A Restorative Approach to Research

The restorative approach undertaken for this dissertation mirrors much of what is considered qualitative research in the social sciences. The transformative inquiry paradigm seeks to “respect and empower stakeholders while reducing othering” (Toews & Zehr, 2003, p. 263). This style is based on the principles of listening with respect and recognizing the meaning assigned to life experiences as subjective, constructed, and inter-relational. A transformative inquiry paradigm employs mindfulness to create safety

and acknowledge power dynamics throughout the data collection process. In addition, meaning is placed on both the process and outcome of human interaction (Toews & Zehr, 2003, p. 263-266). These principles, along with Toews and Zehr's (2003) conception of researcher as facilitator, collaborator, and learner (p. 267), provide grounding for this phenomenological research endeavour.

Kvale (1996) uses helpful metaphors to delineate the role of the researcher operating from a transformative enquiry paradigm. He describes these researchers as travelers, as opposed to miners. Embodying a positivist approach, the miner as researcher is seeking knowledge as "buried metal." Once uncovered, these nuggets are considered the "subject's pure experiences, unpolluted by leading questions" (Kvale, 1996, p. 3). Depending on the researcher's taken perspective, the purity of these knowledge nuggets is determined through correlation with either an objective world or subjective experience. Kvale's (1996) alternative metaphor portrays the researcher as a traveler who is "on a journey that leads to a tale being told upon returning home" (p. 4). The traveler may select specific places to go following a *method* according to the original Greek meaning, "a route that leads to a goal." Upon arrival, the researcher as traveller seeks out local inhabitants and asks questions to explore their "own stories of their lived world" (Kvale, 1996, p. 4). Within this paradigm, research aims to avoid over-valuing scientific and expert knowledge, prioritizing the wisdom we possess as competent and knowing human beings (Boyes-Watson & Pranis, 2012).

The conception of researcher as traveler aligns well with a phenomenological approach when investigators set aside their experiences, as much as possible, to take a fresh perspective towards the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007, p. 59). In the final analysis, however, the traveler/researcher's own journey can be woven back into the findings to enhance the understanding or "true essence" of the subject. Rather than seeking knowledge nuggets and presenting them in original form, stories are described qualitatively and reconstructed into new narratives through the researcher's interpretation in light of her journey. According to Kvale (1996), the conversations on the traveler's research journey can be transformative to both researcher and participant as they may lead to new ways of self-understanding and insight as both reflect on "previously natural seeming matters" (p. 4). At the end of the journey, a reader of this dissertation should

walk away with an understanding of what it was like for the RJC students to experience restorative justice education.

4.3. Reflexivity

Researchers will always impact the experience of their participants. We all wear different “hats” and those I have worn as a restorative justice advocate and educator are important to acknowledge. Being the researcher travelling on this phenomenological journey was about being reflexive, exploring new terrain while being ever mindful of the baggage I carry. In much qualitative research, a reflexive approach is widely accepted as a way of addressing the impact of the researcher on our research. Reflexivity is the “process through which a researcher recognizes, examines and understands how his or her own social background and assumptions can intervene in the research process” (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011, p. 141). It is not enough to acknowledge bias; researchers must actively ask and be asked critical questions to understand the potential impact of their conceptual and experiential baggage. Guillemin and Gillam (2004) note that reflexivity is a helpful theoretical tool for understanding both the nature of ethics in qualitative research and how ethical practice can be achieved (p. 262-263). A reflexive approach means that rather “than attempting to control researcher values through method or by bracketing assumptions, the aim is to consciously acknowledge those values” (Ortlipp, 2008, p. 295). As Moustakas (1994) states, this approach is about being present as a researcher while understanding the phenomenon with increasing depth, growing self-awareness, and self-knowledge (p. 9).

Along with being transparent about the researcher’s values and choices, a conscious awareness of the potential impact of personal history on the observations and interpretations of the data are essential. Ethical and valid research must readily acknowledge the lived experiences of the researcher and how this can be addressed in a way that will honour the authentic voice of the participants. A self-reflective journal, peer review of the instruments, and heightened awareness of the potential for interviewee reactivity were central to demonstrating ongoing and critical reflexivity.

The aim of the self-reflective journal is to make a researcher's "history, values, and assumptions open to scrutiny, not as an attempt to control bias, but to make it visible to the reader" (Ortlipp, 2008, p. 698). Journaling is a part of the reflexivity process and increases the credibility and integrity of the researcher (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). A self-reflective journal provides a detailed chronology of the decisions and influences on the data collection and analysis, which can be "examined by peer researchers, a student's advisor, or colleagues in the field" (Morrow, 2005, p. 252). I regularly made entries in such a journal to track the beliefs, opinions, and reflections that emerged throughout the research process. Through journal writing, the meaning I constructed around my own journey through restorative justice education provides evidence of transparency and critical self-reflection through each stage of the research: questions, interpretations, and analysis. Research of all types is impacted by the epistemological approach of the researcher and this work is particularly personal. Therefore, it was important to clearly articulate the interpretative paradigm through which the research is being conducted and to make clear the relationship between the phenomenon under study and myself. This narrative helps put the researcher into the picture (Campbell & Gregor, 2002) and provides insight into the potential for bias. Excerpts from my journal were incorporated to contextualize the research in Chapter 2 and to discuss results in Chapter 7.

The second strategy employed to practice reflexivity was a peer review of the data collection instruments. A peer review refers to an external check of the research process where there are opportunities to ask "hard questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations" (Creswell, 2007, p. 208). Prior to data collection, three peers outside of my supervisory committee with academic experience relevant to the RJC,²⁷ were asked to provide feedback about the survey and interview schedule. By inviting review of these established tools from the field of transformative learning, I confirmed that the respondents had ample opportunity to share diverse perspectives and the questions did not lend themselves to collecting only data that I agreed with as a restorative justice advocate.

²⁷ Jane Miller-Ashton, Melissa Roberts, and Dr. Karlene Faith each hold at least a Master's degree and are experts in the field of restorative justice. In addition to participating in the circle about how the course developed, they provided their reactions and suggestions with respect to the survey and interview schedule.

During the interview process I was mindfully practiced on-going reflexivity by continuously considering the inherent power imbalance that exists between researcher and participant. Morrow (2005) states that it is important to “attend to the power issues and relationships between and among researcher and researched” (p. 253). In conducting this research, I was conscious of the additional power imbalance given my role as an SFU instructor interviewing current or former students. At the outset of the interviews, I was transparent about my background and reassured participants that my researcher’s “hat” was firmly in place. This admission was important as it demonstrated transparency that can build trust and address potential role conflict. Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2011) state that during the data collection process, it is essential to disclose relevant background information to ensure informed consent. In addition, I advised participants that the interview transcripts/notes would be anonymized,²⁸ their identities would be kept confidential, and participation would not affect future academic pursuits. McConnell-Henry et al. (2009) suggest that “reinforcing the maintenance of confidentiality and anonymity throughout the research process and beyond is paramount” (p. 3). For participants I had a prior teacher-student relationship with, the dialogue that took place surrounding my role was particularly important.

In cases of pre-existing relationships between the researcher and participant, McConnell-Henry et al. (2009) maintain that rapport building can be rapidly accelerated. This history and trust may allow for more in-depth conversation, as the participant feels comfortable with a familiar interviewer. There are also risks associated with pre-existing relationships. For this research, I diligently followed McConnell-Henry et al.’s (2009) advice and only what was shared during the interview was included as data given that participants had only consented to the use of this information. Presuppositions and prior knowledge also require consideration given the pre-existing relationships that existed between some interviewees and me. For example, participants may leave out important elements of their story under the assumption I already knew this part of their experience. Additionally, the researcher may have previous knowledge about the participants that relates to the phenomenon being explored. When raising presuppositions, I took further instruction from McConnell-Henry et al. (2009), couching prior knowledge in the form of a

²⁸ Transcripts and handwritten notes were anonymized by assigning a pseudonym to each participant.

question such as, “I know that you have completed X previously, please tell me more about that” (p. 6). This allowed for transparency about previous knowledge while also demonstrating curiosity towards the participant, reducing the risk of the story being abbreviated. This curiosity and an enquiring mind is essential in an in-depth interviewer (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003, p. 141).

While conducting the interviews, I was aware that some participants may be inclined to say only what they think a RJC instructor would want to hear. I maintained openness and curiosity, attentive to this risk and the inherent power imbalance that exists between researcher and participant. I used active listening including paraphrasing and open questions to draw interviewee’s stories out in more depth. I intentionally selected interviewees who reported a negative experience in the RJC. These participants provided data to contrast with that which may have been shared only because it was thought to be favourable to me as a restorative justice educator.

In addition to practicing reflexivity and transparency, methods were selected to enhance the trustworthiness and reliability central to ethical research.

4.4. Trustworthiness & Reliability

An important consideration for any qualitative research is the extent to which findings are trustworthy or credible. Increasing trustworthiness is a process whereby the researcher gains the confidence of the reader that she has “gotten it right” (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011, p. 48). One way to assess this aspect of a study is to ask, “Does the researcher capture an understanding of the social reality of the respondents he or she has studied?” (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011, p. 62). Creswell (2007) recommends qualitative researchers engage in at least two strategies to enhance trustworthiness in any given study. For this research, the techniques employed were data saturation and triangulation.

Saturation refers to collecting data until newly collected data was found to be redundant with previous data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). According to Fusch & Ness (2015), there is no one-size-fits method to achieving saturation because study designs are not universal. However, saturation can be evaluated based the thickness and richness of

the data collected. Thickness is the quantity of data and richness is the degree to which the data includes layers, intricacies, details, and nuances (Fusch & Ness, 2015). To pursue saturation for this study, the general principle of collecting interview data until no new data, themes, or codes emerge was followed. In addition, the use of a semi-structured interview schedule to “facilitate asking multiple participants the same questions” (Fusch & Ness, 2015, p. 1409) was employed to enhance data saturation.

A triangulated approach to data collection — making use of multiple methods and different data sources — enhances trustworthiness, reliability, and saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015). For this research, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from participants who took the RJC over the span of 15 years from multiple instructors. A pilot survey was conducted with only students I had taught which allowed for the data from these participants to be isolated from data collected from students of other instructors. According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011), this type of triangulation improves credibility if the findings converge which they did.

In qualitative research, reliability is demonstrated by the extent to which data gathered are reasonable, fit together, and are consistent over time and in different social contexts (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). In addition to obtaining data from students who had been taught by different instructors over time, participants from diverse backgrounds were selected for interviews to improve reliability.

4.5. The Research Site

The RJC²⁹ is a four-credit class offered through SFU’s School of Criminology to both criminology and non-criminology majors.³⁰ Since 1999, class size has ranged from 32 to 175 students. The RJC at SFU has been taught by five different instructors and many different teaching assistants have facilitated the tutorials. Despite having varied

²⁹ Refer to Chapter 2 for a more detailed description of the RJC.

³⁰ From 1999 to 2010 the RJC was only available to Criminology majors. In 2010 it became a breadth course available to non-criminology students. Breadth courses encourage those in other disciplines to explore topics outside their area of concentration.

course instructors, since Fall 2006³¹ relatively consistent curriculum (both in terms of content and andragogy) have been offered since Fall 2007.³² From the first offering in Fall 1999 to Spring 2014, 2,935 students completed³³ the RJC.

Aside from being the longest running restorative justice course in the country, the RJC was chosen as a research site as it was geographically accessible, had the largest number of students compared to other restorative justice courses in Canada, and had minimal variance in terms of content and andragogy. Creswell (2007) refers to this purposive sampling approach as “finding a site where the central phenomenon they are trying to explore might be best represented” (p. 193). The following describes the procedures and instruments employed to obtain data from this population.

4.6. The Survey

The first phase of the research involved inviting all students who had completed the RJC to participate in an electronic survey (Appendix D). The primary purpose of the survey was to reach as many former students as possible in order to describe the characteristics of the population and to identify a sample willing to participate in an in-depth interview. To distribute this survey, a list of all RJC students including their most current email address was obtained through SFU’s School of Criminology records.³⁴ Students were sent an email with an invitation that detailed informed consent, anonymity, and provided them with a link to the survey (Appendix C). Kypri, Gallagher, and Cashell-Smith (2004) found that Internet surveys were a feasible option for university students to participate in research. Some of the benefits include lower costs for survey distribution,

³¹ From the Fall 1999 until the Fall 2006, Dr. Liz Elliott (the course developer) was the only instructor who taught the RJC.

³² From Fall 2007 to Summer 2013, a DVD set called “Tributary Streams of a Healing River: an in-depth study of restorative justice” was implemented as required viewing for students. This collection along with standard readings, lecture topics, and a Tutorial Guide of learning objectives and experiential activities was developed by the Centre for Restorative Justice (namely Dr. Liz Elliott & Dr. Brenda Morrison) and formed the basis of the RJC during the time participants in this study were enrolled.

³³ Completed is defined as finishing, but not necessarily passing, the RJC.

³⁴ Written permission granted by Dr. Neil Boyd, Director of the School of Criminology, Simon Fraser University on February 11, 2014.

less time for data entry, and high response rates. As technology changes, so must research approaches. Kypri et al.'s (2004) Internet surveying of post-secondary students demonstrated a response rate of over 80%. However, response rates of lower than 40% are now more typical for web surveys conducted with this population (Laguilles, Williams, & Saunders, 2011). Kypri et al. (2004) included written and telephone contact along with email and multiple methods are likely to increase response rates.

This research relied on email to obtain participation, as it is a less intrusive form of contact. Given the sole use of electronic methods, an incentive was offered to maximize participation. Laguilles et al. (2011) found that response rates for electronic surveys that offered lottery incentives were higher than those that did not. Given these findings and the desire to obtain a diverse sample, the chance to win one of four cash prizes was offered.³⁵ Survey respondents were given the option to provide their email address and this information was kept separate from the survey results to ensure anonymity of the data. Winners were chosen through a random number generator and prizes distributed via electronic money transfer.

The electronic survey was based on King's (2000) Learning Activity Survey (LAS). King (2009) developed and tested the LAS specifically for learners in higher educational settings as she recognized the uniqueness of adult learning contexts, learners, and content areas.³⁶ King (2009) found this survey useful for gathering data from a large number of respondents and selecting interview participants (p. 19). The survey uses a combination of multiple choice and open-ended questions to collect demographic information and indicators of perspective transformation.

For this dissertation, some questions were altered and added to reflect the content of the RJC and the research questions. For example, participants were offered the three conceptions of restorative justice definitions from Johnstone & Van Ness (2007) and asked

³⁵ Two cash prizes of \$50 and two of \$100 were available.

³⁶ King (2009) grants permission to all original purchasers of her book to freely reproduce the LAS instrument for their own research provided the name Dr. Kathleen P. King is displayed in all copies and any modifications are done following the guidelines she presents. For example, King does not recommend changing or omitting items 1, 2, 3 & 5 as this could affect validity. Modifications made to the instrument for this project have followed these guidelines carefully and include an acknowledgment of the copyright that belongs to King.

which definition they favoured. Specific question about whether their RJC experience affected future career, volunteer, and course selections were also included. In the on-going attempt to be reflexive, three of the course collaborators were invited to provide feedback about the survey. My favourable stance towards restorative justice and the RJC could bias the wording of questions and this issue could be more readily recognized by someone seeing the survey for the first time. Upon reviewing the document, no changes were suggested by the peer reviewers.

Applying the survey to a particular course allows researchers to understand the learning experience from the learners' vantage point (King, 2009, p. 32). The tool relies on the interpretation of answers to multiple questions to determine whether respondents experienced perspective transformation (King, 2004, p. 158). The survey contains four parts that identify the stages of perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1991). If transformation is indicated, participants are asked to identify specific people and activities that they felt facilitated this transformation.

Perspective transformation is determined by data sorting procedures developed by King (2009). The Perspective Transformation-Index (PT-Index) is a single score derived from Items 1, 2, 3, and 5 of the survey. According to King (2009), a combination of these items is a strong indication of perspective transformation as they rely on asking questions about the phenomenon in different ways, including inviting participants to briefly describe their experience in as a response to an open-ended question. Participants who indicate perspective transformation as a result of the RJC were assigned a score of "3." Students who reported perspective transformation not associated with the RJC scored "2" and students who did not identify any perspective transformation scored "1".

The survey data were imported into SPSS and analyzed using frequencies and cross tabulations to evaluate relationships between variables. Data from the open-ended questions were imported into *NVivo* and coded for emergent themes.

4.7. The Interview

A phenomenological approach to research usually includes in-depth interviews. In the field of transformative learning, narrative approaches to inquiry have been found to be more effective when compared to more linear, quantitative approaches (Wiessner & Mezirow, 2000, p. 338). Scott (2003) found that “transformations result from something deeper than the cognitive ego, and more organically dynamic and emotional” (p. 282) and interviews are an excellent way to explore experiences more holistically. Gunnlaugson (2007) states that research should seek to understand transformation in terms of the differentiation, maturation, and integration of these other ways of knowing (p. 138). Interviewing provides rich, layered data and “seeks answer to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 8). In addition, qualitative research gives priority to the perceptions, meanings, and emotions of research participants (Silverman, 2005), which are all important elements in the study of both restorative justice and transformative learning.

While the survey collected a large amount of data, interviews allowed for in-depth engagement and analysis of students’ experiences (Taylor, 2008). King (2000) notes that transformative learning “may not take place in an isolated classroom, rather the classroom experience, dialogue and transformation are deeply interwoven with the learner’s entire life” (p. 8). Cranton and Carusetta (2004) and King (2009) found that in-depth interviews provided insights into factors such as classmates, instructors, family, and other lived experiences that affect learning. The interview guide consisted of 31 questions that were based on, but not limited to, King’s (2009) interview template. King’s (2009) guide asks participants to expand on the survey questions and probes for further explanation and concrete examples. This interview schedule is flexible and meant to be modified to fit the unique context of a classroom experience (King, 2000). King’s (2009) guide, my skills and confidence conducting interviews,³⁷ and my researcher-as-traveller approach provided safe spaces for students’ stories of restorative justice education to be shared.

³⁷ I have received extensive training in effective communication and interviewing techniques and have been training others since 2001. Given my background and related experience in crisis intervention and restorative justice, I possess the competency required to create safe spaces for others to share their stories.

According to King (2009), interviews are a compulsory part of transformative learning research and “provide a check against responses obtained in the survey, and the conclusions being drawn about the survey data may be verified with the interview results” (p. 40). Providing a safe space is essential to conducting in-depth interviews. McConnell-Henry, James, Chapman, and Francis (2009) state that

a positive relationship between the interviewer and participant is likely to render the rich data sought in qualitative research. This relationship is built through building a feeling of connection, rapport, and trustworthiness. (p. 2-3)

Throughout the interviews, I utilized active listening skills and attended to the emotional well-being and unique needs of each participant. I worked hard to build rapport and provide the emotional safety required for participants to tell their story in a way that had meaning for them. I was mindful of Liebling’s (2001) advice that as a researcher, I must be physically and affectively present in order to feel, relate, and become involved with the participants. The engagement assists in the collaborative construction of their lived experience. Researchers who approach participants with devotion to the task, sympathy, warmth, and openness often obtain data that have depth and richness (Liebling, 2001, p. 475).

To unpack complex phenomenon like transformative learning, I used probes to explore the emotional, intuitive, and cognitive domains of students’ experiences. I incorporated Wragg’s (1999) suggestions and used questions such as: can you tell me what happened when... (cue critical event)? What do you think led up to...(critical event)? What is your own reaction to...(critical event)? How do you think X and Y (any students or teacher involved) feel about what happened? (p. 115).

4.8. The Pilot

A pilot was used to enhance the validity of the research instruments and attend to reflexivity. For the pilot, only students who I had previously instructed were invited to participate. It was anticipated that this pre-existing relationship would render a higher response rate, providing for more robust testing of the research tools. Arthur and Nazroo

(2003) note that piloting instruments “is important to review whether it allows participants to give a full and coherent account of the central issues and incorporate issues they think are important” (p. 135). These authors argue that the data gathered from the pilot portion of the study need not be excluded from the data set unless a very radical change of direction occurs. The pilot allowed for data to be grouped to distinguish students I had instructed from students with whom I did not have a pre-existing relationship.

4.9. Procedures

The surveys were distributed in April (pilot) and August (main survey) 2014. As recommended by Kypri et al. (2004), 10 days after the initial invitation, participants were sent a reminder and a link to the survey was included in case the first email was deleted. Once 10 days had expired, a final reminder was sent indicating that only surveys received within the next 10 days would be considered for the research. Once this date passed, the survey was closed. Completed surveys were defined as those that included responses to at least the first three questions. Surveys that did not meet this criterion were not included in the sample. The quantitative survey data were imported into SPSS and analyzed using frequencies and cross tabulations. Responses to open-ended survey questions were transferred into *NVivo* for thematic analysis. Completed surveys were sorted according to the Perspective Transformation Index (King, 2009).

- 1 – No transformation
- 2 – Perspective transformation from outside the RJC
- 3 – Perspective transformation from the RJC.

To best understand the concept of transformation and its relationship to the RJC, it was essential to interview students from all three groups. When selecting participants from those survey respondents who agreed to be contacted for an interview, demographic characteristics were considered in order to maximize diversity in terms of age, occupation, relationship status, and the discipline in which they were majoring. The participants were contacted according to their indicated preference (email or phone), and an interview time was arranged at a location that could ensure privacy. While pilot interviewees were chosen based on demographics and facilitating factors alone, a matched pair design was

utilized to select participants for the main study. The intention was to explore any differences between respondents with similar demographics and occupations but who differed in their experience of perspective transformation from the RJC.

Interviews were conducted until the point of saturation was reached whereby no new themes or codes emerged from the data. Given the qualitative nature of this part of the study, “what is far more important than sample size are sampling procedures; quality, length, and depth of interview data; and variety of evidence” (Morrow, 2005, p. 255).

Each interview was digitally recorded with permission (Consent for Interviews Script – Appendix E). According to Silverman (2005), audio recordings are preferred over field notes to ensure details are captured. However, written notes (with names omitted) were taken throughout the interview to provide a backup in case of a technological failure of the recording device. The interviews were transcribed verbatim onto my password protected laptop computer without participants’ names. Participants were reassured that the data would be kept anonymous through de-identifying the transcripts by removing any names and assigning pseudonyms. Audio recordings and written notes were destroyed within 96 hours of the interview.

Once transcribed, the interviews were imported into *NVivo* where the answers to the open-ended survey questions were separately retained. Organizing the data in *NVivo* was the first step in the process Creswell (2007) calls the data analysis spiral. Following this method, the researcher engages in a process of moving in analytic circles rather than using a fixed linear approach. Once the data were organized and appropriately filed as individual data sources, the transcripts were read in their entirety. This was the second opportunity for immersion in the data as transcribing the interviews provided the initial opportunity to hear the stories again and reflect on what was shared. Throughout this comprehensive review, memos were recorded in *NVivo*. As Creswell (2007) notes, “these memos are short phrases, ideas or key concepts that occur to the reader” (p. 151). This process of reading and memoing is the second step in the data analysis spiral that leads to describing, classifying, and interpreting.

The data sorting process began with what Creswell (2007) calls *lean coding* where a small number of categories were created. This initial step involved grouping the data

according to the four research questions posed in this study. The semi-structured interview format and specific survey questions provided a good basis for this level of coding. As the data were continually reviewed, these categories were expanded and refined to the most salient themes. Moving beyond coding involves taking the text apart and looking for categories or dimensions in the data (Creswell, 2007). This process reduces the data to a manageable set of themes that can be presented as findings and brought to life through including direct quotes from the data. These findings are presented in Chapters 5 and 6. From there, the data are interpreted. This process involves stepping back from the data and “forming larger meanings of what is going on” (Creswell, 2007, p. 154). This phase is presented in Chapter 7 – Discussion.

While *Nvivo* automatically keeps count of how frequently data are coded into a category, these counts will not always be reported in the findings as “a count conveys that all codes should be given equal emphasis and it disregards passages coded that may actually represent contradictory views” (Creswell, 2007, p. 152). Concepts were considered as themes if at least two respondents had referenced them. Codes were emergent, rather than prefigured and “represent information that was expected, surprising, and conceptually interesting or unusual” (Creswell, 2007, p. 153). Attention to nascent themes is more consistent with transformative inquiry as it respects and empowers participants (Toews & Zehr, 2003).

4.10. Ethical Considerations

Burman, Batchelor, and Brown (2001) say that ethical research involves researchers’ best attempt to do no further harm and recognize the potential to do so. Harm could be psychological, legal, political, or social, as in being ostracized by others (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). This study was determined minimal risk and approved by SFU’s Office of Research Ethics prior to engaging in any data collection. The following ethical considerations were employed to reduce risk of harm to participants.

4.10.1. Consent & Anonymity

Students were required to provide informed consent before completing the survey or participating in the interview (Appendix C and E). According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011) informed consent is a critical component in ethical research which uses human participants. It requires that participants fully understand what the study is about, how the results will be used, and that their participation is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time. Informed consent also requires clear provisions about how their identity will be protected (p. 110). Given that students' participation was being requested within a university context by someone who was, in some cases, their former instructor, it was essential that informed consent include assurance that involvement in the study would not impact any current or future academic pursuits.

The online survey was administered through fluidsurveys.com. This organization does not use or share any data or information uploaded in any way. Their server is protected by up-to-date firewalls and data encryption methods designed to prevent access by unauthorized parties. This website is owned by Chide IT Inc., operating out of Ottawa, Ontario. All data collected through this service are stored on servers in Canada to comply with Canadian privacy standards.

All data were fully anonymized prior to presentation of the results as fluidsurveys.com sends the survey data in anonymous format. The only identifying information came from students who voluntarily chose to submit their email addresses in order to enter the prize draw. Email addresses and identifying information submitted in connection with the prize draw were not linked in any way to the survey submissions, which were received separately as anonymized aggregate data. All survey data were removed from the server upon survey completion.

4.11. Limits

This research undertaking has several limitations. The first is methodological as this phenomenological study was undertaken with students from one specific course within a large Canadian university. Although data were collected from a diverse sample of

participants who took the RJC over the span of 15 years, the findings are bound to this context.

Karp (1997) distinguishes between empirical and analytical generalizability arguing the former is most appropriate in qualitative methods (as cited in Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Empirical generalization involves generalizing a sample to some larger universe while analytical generalization refers to how well the data represents the experience of the participants. Analytical generalization takes smaller forms of qualitative data and presents it back to the “real experts, those you have studied, and when they read your work say, You’ve really captured it!” (Karp, 1997, in Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011, p. 69). The research decision to refrain from asking participants to review their interview transcripts in the pursuit of analytical generalizability was a purposeful one. For this generalization process to have been meaningful, it would have required a time intensive commitment to an on-going dialogue with participants with respect to the interpretation of the data (Borland, 1991). Instead, the data were collected in a way that focused on the narrative, whereby “both narrator and the listener are caught up in the storytelling event” (Borland, 1991, p. 530). For this exploratory project, it was sufficient to triangulate the interview results with survey data from both pilot and main study.

Given that I had what I believe to have been a profoundly transformative experience as an RJC student, was mentored the course developer Dr. Elliott, and consider the course collaborators to be friends and colleagues, it was important to maintain vigilance about the potential for bias. As I have travelled the terrain of transformation as an educator and a student, the ground feels very familiar under my feet. Therefore, throughout all stages of this dissertation I have been mindful that although these personal connections fuelled the passion and energy for this research, my role is one of researcher. As a researcher as traveller, I invited the students’ personal stories and created space for their voice to prevail. As I collected and reviewed these stories and watched the themes emerge, I looked for similarities, uniqueness, and noticed the areas of connectedness between participants and myself. Throughout this process, I acknowledged and mitigated my conceptual baggage through reflexive processes such as reflective journaling. Although I felt a personal and deep connection to much of what the participants shared, I was able to remain focused on their experience. During

interviews, I relied on the interview guide and active listening skills to remain attentive, open, and curious. I was able to negotiate what Guillemin and Heggen (2009) would consider “a fine ethical balance between building sufficient trust to be able to probe participants for potential rich data, while at the same time maintaining sufficient distance in respect for the participant” (p. 292).

Another limitation of this work, which is shared by other studies utilizing methods from transformative learning, relates to the nature of such research taking place over the defined time period of a semester (Cranton, 2006). As a result of this constraint, this project may not have captured the more gradual perspective changes that may have occurred before the RJC. This research also relies on former students’ recollections of their experiences, some of which date back over 10 years. Issues with memory and the inability to isolate the influence of this particular course in the context of university and life experience may limit these findings.

When studying the phenomenon of transformative learning, researchers are often able to conduct pre-post surveys in the controlled arena of the classroom. These researchers are educators who purposefully introduce transformative learning techniques and evaluation (King & Heuer, 2008). This study asked students to offer their reflections about something that had already happened in a course that did not intentionally employ transformative learning approaches. The lack of pre and post testing make it difficult to ascertain the extent to which the RJC affected students’ perspective shift while controlling for other variables. King’s (2009) reflections about the importance of context are salient here. She notes that often the transformative experience is affected by factors outside of the classroom including life changes such as a relationship breakdown. To address this issue, King’s (2009) suggestion of combining interview and survey data and contextualizing it within previous research on perspective transformation has been followed. Also, inviting students to share about other events or experiences that may have affected their perspective transformation can lead to a better understanding of what they attribute to the RJC.

4.12. Summary

This chapter outlined the research design and methods for this study. Phenomenological, constructivist, and interpretative ontological and epistemological positions were employed for this inquiry. A pilot was conducted to test the survey and interview instruments. Data were collected to the point of saturation through a mixed methods approach. Data analysis was initiated once interview transcripts and answers to open-ended survey questions were imported into *NVivo*. The data were reviewed multiple times and coded according to emergent themes. The following chapters present findings related to the demographics of the samples, lessons from the pilot survey, and themes arising from the qualitative data.

Chapter 5.

Survey Findings

5.1. Introduction

Results from the electronic survey provide the first glimpse into the experience of undergraduate students who participated in the RJC. This chapter describes the population through presenting the quantitative data from the pilot and main study. The 481 completed surveys from a potential of 2,935 former RJC students represent a diverse sample and contained generous responses to the open-ended questions. The results provide descriptive, demographic data and portray the frequency with which students attribute certain factors to facilitating their perspective transformation. The survey results demonstrate that the experience of perspective transformation was reported by the majority of the respondents. This chapter contextualize these findings within the framework of the RJC so the reader can better appreciate the unique nature of the course. The benefits and challenges of employing King's (2009) Learning Activities Survey are also discussed.

5.2. Respondents

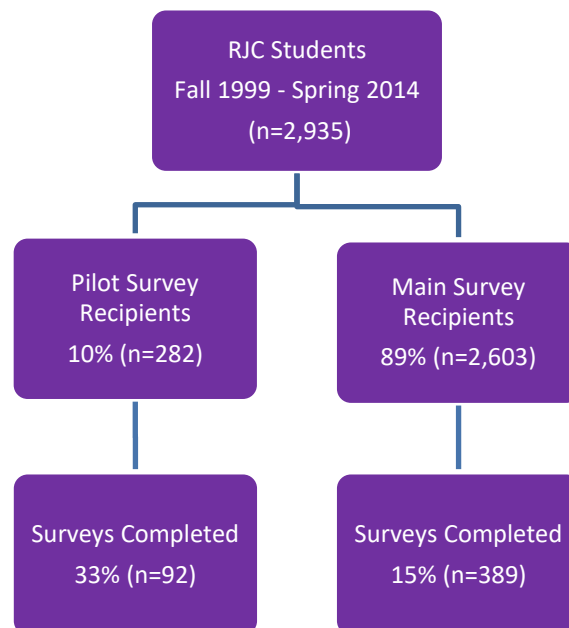
The SFU Records department provided a list of students (n=2,935) who completed the RJC from its first offering in Fall 1999 to Spring 2014.³⁸ This information included primary and/or secondary email addresses for 100% (n=282) of the pilot and 91% (n=2,603) of the main study. When students graduate from SFU, they are sent a notice from the university with an option to maintain an alumni email address and request to update contact information. The number of students who have graduated and kept their information current is unknown.

³⁸ Completed refers to students who finished the RJC but it does not necessarily mean they received a passing grade.

The email addresses from this list were entered into Fluidsurveys.com in order to distribute the survey. In cases where both primary and secondary email addresses were listed, the researcher used the SFU or SFU Alumni email address. For students where an SFU email address was not listed, the email address listed as “primary” was included. Students who did not have an email address listed were excluded from the survey.

The survey was emailed through Fluidsurveys.com to all students who had an address listed (n= 2,885). Following the initial invitation, the survey remained accessible for 20 days. During this time, two reminder emails were sent. The pilot survey was distributed in April 2014 (n=282) and 33% (n=92) were returned and considered *completed* meaning at least the first three questions were answered. The pilot results were then reviewed and minor revisions to the instrument were made. The main survey was released in August 2015 (n=2,603) and 15% (n=389) were completed.

Figure 5-1. Survey Response Rates



The average response rate for surveys distributed through Fluidsurveys.com is 24.8%. The pilot survey rendered an above average response rate (33%) compared to the main survey (15%) which was below this average. These findings are not surprising given that most web survey response rates of post-secondary students are lower than 40% (Laguilles, Williams, & Saunders, 2011). Two factors related to response rates were the time that had elapsed since taking the RJC and the timing of the main survey. The pilot study was comprised of students who had completed the RJC more recently (2009 – 2012) compared to 14% (n=366) of the main survey recipients who participated in the course at least 10 years ago. Further, given that the main survey was issued during the summer it is possible that lower response rates were due to students being out of school and/or on vacation.

The pilot was expected to result in a higher response rate given my pre-existing relationship with these students as their instructor. The similarities between the pilot and main survey supported combining the results. The total number of surveys completed represents 16% (n=481) of the all students who completed the RJC since its inception in the Fall of 1999 to Spring 2014.

5.3. Demographics

The survey contained several questions related to the demographics of the participants.

Table 5-1. Demographics of Survey Participants

Variable	Pilot Survey (n=92)	Main Survey (n=389)	Comments
<i>Gender</i>	62% Female 37% Male 1% Not reported	62% Female 35% Male 2% Not reported 1% Transgender	One transgender person replied to the second wave survey and was later interviewed to increase diversity of sample.
<i>Relationship Status</i>	46% In a relationship 40% Single 11% Married 3% Divorced/other	33% In a relationship 39% Single 25% Married 3% Divorced/other	
<i>Age (during the RJC)</i>	15% Below 21 74% - 21-29 7% - 30-39 3% - 40-49 1% - 50-59	14% Below 21 81% - 21-29 2% - 30-39 1% - 40-49 1% - 50-59 <1% - 60-79	
<i>Current Age</i>	----- 83% - 21-29 13% - 30-39 2% - 40-49 2% - 50-59 -----	<1% - Below 21 65% - 21-29 30% - 30-39 1.5% - 40-49 1% - 50-69 <1% - Over 70	
<i>Major</i>	60% Criminology	75% Criminology	15 disciplines were indicated as majors other than Criminology. Most common were Psychology and Economics (5%) and Biology (4%) in both groups.

The RJC is open to all SFU students who have completed 45 credits. Most students are in their third or fourth year of an undergraduate degree. Aside from the

difference in response rate, the pilot and main study were comparable in terms of demographics. The only other notable variance relates to the number of participants in the 30-39 age category. Most of the survey respondents were criminology majors under 30 years old, either single or in a relationship. The current employment of both groups of respondents varied considerably. The sample's similar demographics allowed for the data to be collapsed and analyzed together. The survey data were important in selecting diverse participants for interviews.

5.4. Favoured Definition of Restorative Justice

King's (2009) LAS survey can be easily adapted to gather data related to specific elements of a classroom setting. Several questions were added or modified so students could provide information about both the content and andragogy of the RJC. The survey presented three conceptions of restorative justice as defined by Johnstone and Van Ness (2007). Students were asked to identify which definition was most like, close to, and least like their personal definition. Given the focus of this research on the RJC's impact on students, it was important to ascertain how they related to the concept following the course.

As shown in Table 5.2, almost half (48%) of both groups felt the reparative definition was closest to their personal conception. The second most favoured was transformative (pilot – 28%/main -24%) and the least favoured was the encounter (pilot – 10%/main – 14%).

Table 5-2. Restorative Justice Definition

Restorative Justice Conception	Pilot Survey (n=92)	Main Survey (n=389)
<i>Reparative</i> – the harm which the crime (or wrongdoing) has caused to people and relationships needs to be repaired	48%	48%
<i>Transformative</i> – to transform the way in which we understand ourselves and relate to others in our everyday life	28%	24%
<i>Encounter</i> – that victims, offenders and other ‘stakeholders’ ... should be allowed to encounter one another outside highly formal, professional-dominated settings	10%	14%
<i>Did not respond</i>	14%	14%

Throughout the RJC, students are exposed to all three conceptions of restorative justice. The encounter conception is communicated through the stories of guests, instructors, and in films which describe the process of victim-offender mediation. For example, some students have heard from Suman and Manjit Virk³⁹ who had a restorative encounter with Warren Glowatski, one of the people responsible for their daughter’s death. Others have heard from Warren Glowatski directly and some students have heard from all these of these storytellers. Most guests who speak at the RJC have been involved in restorative justice as a result of serious and violent crime. These guest speaks are often the result of the relationship between the RJC instructors and the organization that facilitates such encounters, Fraser-Region Community Justice Initiatives.

The transformative conception of restorative justice is also presented in many ways in the RJC. Throughout the course, students may hear from former prisoners who have experienced personal transformation without participating in a restorative encounter with their victim. Such transformation often emerges through the guest’s involvement with initiatives based on restorative values such as the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) or FAVOR group. These stories highlight the importance of community connection,

³⁹ On November 14, 1997, Reena Virk (14 years old) was beaten by six youth and eventually killed by two youth, Warren Glowatski and Kelly Ellard. This tragedy that took place just outside Victoria, British Columbia, created international headlines and is considered to have created a moral panic with respect to youth, and primarily girl, violence. See Virk, M. (2008). *Reena: A Father’s story*.

acceptance, and compassion. Elliott's (2011) final chapter includes a similar message as she challenges readers to "declare themselves" by shifting their understanding of harm and take action towards the creation of a more peaceful world. Another required course text, Lederach's (2003) *Little Book of Conflict Transformation*, highlights the need for personal, relational, and structural transformation and provides a vision of "building healthy relationships and communicates, locally and globally" (p. 5).

Reparative conceptions are communicated through course materials that pose Zehr's (2015) popular definition and associated questions: Who has been hurt? What are their needs? Whose obligations are these? What needs to happen to make things as right as possible? While I have presented Zehr's (2015) idea of "changing lenses" as a transformative conception (see Chapter 3.4), this definition could also be considered reparative as a process to involve, to the extent possible, those with a stake in a specific offence, and to collectively identify and address harms, needs, and obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible (Zehr, 2015, p. 27). The course is organized in such a way that concepts like retribution and punishment are problematized before restorative justice is introduced (see Elliott, 2011). The results of this survey indicate that the reparative conception of restorative justice as repairing harm was the definition that resonated most for students who completed the RJC.

5.5. Values

In conceptualizing restorative justice, identifying and discussing values is a central component of the RJC and the field of restorative justice more generally. Throughout the semester, students are invited to explore both personal and societal values. For example, in one assignment students were asked to write their own obituary. They could write it as if they died tomorrow or any time in the future. Once composed, they are asked to respond to questions related to values such as:

What do you most value as an individual? How closely are your aspirations in consonance with your values? Do you live your life in harmony with your values today? What relationships are important to you? In what ways do your relationships with others help to shape who you are? How do your *current* thoughts and actions relate to where you *hope* to be in your life at some time, if not the present? (Elliott, 2010)

Students also complete readings related to restorative justice as a values-based approach (Elliott, 2011) and tutorials include activities where students are asked to reflect and share about values. Circle topics such as “I know I am experiencing justice when...” and small group work inspire individual and collective discussions about values. In an activity called “Freak Show,” students are given a scenario with no easy answer and asked to make a values-based decision by consensus. Throughout the tutorials, TAs are encouraged to provide students with “reminders about the broader sweep of RJ values and how they relate to democratic citizenship, ethical criminal justice practice, school cultures, and community development” (Elliott, 2009, p. 12).

In an effort to explore the values that most resonate with students following the RJC, survey participants were provided with a list of 12 different values. They were asked to select the three values they considered most important. These values have been used in previous research by V. Braithwaite (2009), and they are either considered security- or harmony-oriented. Security-oriented values include economic prosperity (being financially well off), authority (having power to influence others and control decisions), ambitious (being eager to do well), competition (always trying to do better than others), politeness (being well mannered), neatness (being tidy), and reliability (being dependable). Harmony-related values are the pursuit of knowledge (always trying to find out new things about the world we live in), inner harmony (feeling free of conflict within yourself), tolerance (accepting others even if they are different from you), trust (having faith in others), and helpfulness (always ready to assist others). Previous research has shown a connection between stronger preferences for harmony-oriented values and willingness to participate in a restorative justice process (V. Braithwaite et al., 2013). This survey question intended to provide insight into whether favoured values related to students’ tendency to transform their perspective towards a more restorative one.

The responses indicated that 73% of the pilot and 57% of the main sample chose at least two harmony values, versus 27% and 19%⁴⁰ that chose at least two security values. While it is important to note V. Braithwaite’s (2009) findings that most people hold a combination of both values, when asked to make a forced choice, these participants

⁴⁰ 24% of the main survey did not respond to the question.

favoured harmony-oriented values. Whether students felt their values were affected by the RJC is discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

5.6. Lessons from the Pilot Phase

Prior to presenting survey respondents' rates of perspective transformation, discussion of lessons learned from the pilot phase will be addressed. These lessons underscore the importance of conducting a pilot phase to test research instruments. Although the survey that was distributed was adapted from King's (2009) Learning Activities Survey (LAS), which has been utilized in much previous research, a methodological issue was discovered during the pilot phase. The concern related to the phrasing of a key question with respect to perspective transformation. Analysis of pilot data led to revisions to ensure the main survey results had more integrity with respect to this variable.

The LAS was built upon transformative learning theory (King, 2009). Given that this theoretical framework was employed to understand students' experience in the RJC, the LAS provided a well-established method upon which to base the electronic survey. The LAS is designed to differentiate between students who experienced perspective transformation and those who did not. Combining the responses to five survey questions renders a score for the variable "Perspective Transformation Index" (PT-Index). Once the survey questions were scored, the respondent was placed into one of three groups: 1 – No perspective transformation, 2- Perspective transformation attributed to something outside the RJC, or 3 – Perspective transformation attributed to something within the RJC. Based on these groups, interviewees were selected.

The concern with the LAS arose when four interviewees from Group 1 (No perspective transformation) revealed they *had* experienced dramatic perspective transformation attributed to the RJC. These false negatives were surprising given the extensive testing the LAS had been subjected to by the developer. There was also no indication in the literature that this instrument had been problematic.

To better understand the discrepancy between the survey and interview results, two interview participants were contacted and asked about the incongruity. The participants explained that the issue was with King's (2009) wording of survey Question #3, which reads: "Since you took the Restorative Justice course, do you believe you experienced a time when you realized that your values, beliefs, opinions, or expectations changed?" Those who clicked "Yes" were asked to describe the experience and to indicate what factors facilitated that change. Those who clicked "No" were taken to another part of the survey. These participants explained that they clicked "No" because they felt the word "since" implied that the change had happened *after* the RJC, however, they experienced their change *during* the RJC.

The lesson from the pilot phase requires the groupings based on the PT-Index to be examined cautiously. Specifically, we know that four participants were incorrectly placed in Group 1, which would increase the numbers in Group 2 or 3. Nevertheless, investigating these disparate findings provided an opportunity to collaborate with participants to create a more reliable survey instrument.⁴¹ As a result, the wording of Question #3 was modified before distributing the main survey to provide a more accurate assessment of perspective transformation.⁴² The fact that some of the pilot survey respondents were incorrectly grouped does not call the overall results into question as survey data were triangulated with interview data for analysis.

5.7. Perspective Transformation Index (PT-Index)

Through combining responses to five survey questions, the PT-Index gauged whether students experienced perspective transformation as conceptualized by Mezirow's (1991) model. As perspective transformation is the central phenomenon under study, this variable is critical. The PT-Index grouped respondents according to whether they

⁴¹ The revised survey was not without concern with respect to the PT-Index variable. When Group 3 participants were interviewed, several reported their perspective was *affirmed* through the RJC, versus transformed. These results are discussed in Chapter 7.

⁴² The other change to the survey was the addition of a question asking the participants to indicate the grade they received in the RJC. This question provided for a more detailed description of the sample and was used to assess whether or not there was a relationship between performance and perspective transformation.

attributed their perspective transformation to the RJC or a factor outside the course. The fact that 82% of the pilot and 78% of the main survey reported transformation attributed to the RJC demonstrate that the vast majority of respondents experienced something that changed their views. Only 1% of both groups of respondents attributed their perspective shift to something outside the RJC and 17% of the pilot and 21% of the main survey did not report perspective transformation.

Table 5-3. Perspective Transformation Index

PT-Index	Pilot Survey (n=92)	Main Survey (n=389)
<i>Group 3-Perspective Transformation attributed to the RJC</i>	82%	78%
<i>Group 2-Perspective Transformation attributed to factor outside the RJC</i>	1%	1%
<i>Group 1-No Perspective transformation</i>	17%	21%

The LAS was designed to determine which of Mezirow's (1991) 10 stages of transformation were reported most often. At least a quarter of all participants indicated they had experienced at least one stage of perspective transformation. While this does not necessarily mean their perspective transformed, the results demonstrated which stages were experienced most frequently.

Table 5-4. Stages of Perspective Transformation

Mezirow's Stages of Transformation	Pilot Survey (n=92)	Main Survey (n=389)
Stage 1 Disorienting Dilemma (Item 1a & 1b)	Item a – 57% Item b – 65% Items a & b – 43.5%	Item a – 40% Item b – 45% Items a & b – 28%
Stage 2 Self-examination (Item 1c & 1d)	Item c - 38% Item d – 22% Items c & d – 7.5%	Item c – 26% Item d – 23% Items c & d – 2%
Stage 3 Critical Assessment of Assumptions (Item 1g)	27%	19%
Stage 4 Recognition/Connection with Others (Item 1e)	42%	37%
Stage 5 Exploration of New Roles/Relationships/Actions (Item 1f)	50%	40%
Stage 6 Planning Action (Item 1i)	44%	26%
Stage 7 Acquiring Knowledge/Skills for Action Plan (Item 1j)	26%	17%
Stage 8 Trying New Roles (Item 1h)	38%	20%

Mezirow's Stages of Transformation	Pilot Survey (n=92)	Main Survey (n=389)
Stage 9 Building Competence (Item 1k)	35%	24%
Stage 10 Reintegration with New Perspective (Item 1l)	35%	20%

In addition to the high numbers of respondents who reported a stage of perspective transformation, over 90%⁴³ of all participants indicate they usually think over past behaviour or decisions and over 70%⁴⁴ frequently reflect on what their studies mean to them personally. These variables are discussed in further detail in Chapter 7.

The PT-Index results provide the first empirical evidence of the phenomenon of perspective transformation. While more needs to be done to unpack these experiences, the survey results are remarkable as they demonstrate that the majority of respondents report a change in perspective following the RJC. What was it about this experience that made it transformative for so many students?

5.8. Factors that Facilitated Perspective Transformation

King (2009) has noted that there are potentially an endless number of learning activities that could facilitate perspective transformation. The LAS was modified for this research and asked three different questions about facilitating factors. Students were asked to indicate whether a “person,” “class activity,” and “outside factor” facilitated their transformative experience. Under each of these categories, students were asked to select from specific people or activities listed. The lists were inclusive of all learning activities that have been a part of RJC since it was offered and also included some of the activities suggested by King (2009) such as non-traditional structure, reflective listening/journaling, personal reflection, and talking with friends/family/colleagues about the course. Although not every item would apply to every student, respondents were asked to indicate all activities to which they attributed their perspective transformation. Respondents were also

⁴³ 95% of pilot and 91% of the main survey

⁴⁴ 80% pilot and 73% of the main survey

given the opportunity to provide open-ended answers and name specific activities or people they felt facilitated their transformative learning experience.

The survey results indicated that 73% of the pilot survey and 65% of the main survey respondents reported that a *class activity* facilitated their perspective transformation. Table 5-5 presents the frequencies of specific class activities that influenced this change. Guest speakers, non-traditional class structure, personal reflection, lecture, class discussions and tutorials featured as the most impactful.

Table 5-5. Class Activity that Facilitated Perspective Transformation

Class Activity	Pilot Survey (n=92)	Main Survey (n=389)
Guest speaker	52%	29%
Non-traditional structure	42%	33%
Deep, concentrated thought	37%	24%
Circles in tutorial/class	41%	22%
Class discussion	44%	36%
Reflective listening/journaling	38%	28%
Assigned reading	25%	22%
Assigned DVD viewing	22%	10%
Writing journal assignments	20%	15%
Writing critical essays	6%	13% ⁴⁵
Class lecture(s) by instructor	45%	30%
Tutorial discussions	29%	26%
Talking with family about topics raised in the RJC	27%	13%
Talking with friends about topics raised in the RJC	27%	20%
Talking with work colleagues about topics raised in the RJC	14%	6%
Personal reflection	40%	33%
Writing a letter ⁴⁶	7%	4%
Telling my own story	15%	9%

⁴⁵ Critical essays were implemented after the pilot participants completed the RJC, therefore, only applicable to the second group. It is unclear what the pilot group was referencing when they selected this learning activity.

⁴⁶ Writing a letter refers to the final assignment where students are asked to write to someone who has most affected their understanding of justice during the RJC. This assignment was not implemented until 2009 so not all respondents would have experienced this learning activity.

King's (2009) suggested learning activity of "non-traditional structure" is related to other items on the list specific to the RJC including circles. The similar frequency with which these items as well as lecture were indicated suggests that the combination of didactic and experiential learning in the RJC was impactful. Although there is content communicated and storytelling during lecture, what makes the RJC unique is the opportunity to reflect on the lecture and actively engage in activities and dialogue in smaller group tutorials. Unlike more traditional tutorials where the TA answers questions about the readings, lecture, or assignments, the RJC tutorials are structured in very specific ways.

Once lecture is over for the week and a break is taken, groups of 15 to 20 students gather in a smaller classroom, not a lecture hall.⁴⁷ These groups are established upon enrolment and stay the same throughout the semester. The instructor or TA adopts the role of a workshop facilitator, rather than the expert, evaluator, or leader. Each tutorial includes at least three "events": an opening circle, an activity (or two if they are short), and a closing circle (Elliott, 2009). During the first tutorial, the facilitator explains the purpose and process of the circle, what their role is, and how this tutorial setting will differ from more traditional formats. The circles used in tutorial have the intention of being a "social practice"; asking participants to be willing to arrive, pay attention, to speak as clearly as they know how, and to help action and accomplishment arise out of the group (Baldwin, 1998, p. 63). These circles provide the opportunity for each student to share about a topic posed. Sharing is voluntary and each student has the right to pass.

Following the first circle when students share their name and why they chose to take the RJC, the facilitator leads the group through an activity called "Doing Family Business" where tutorial guidelines and values are collectively established. From the start, students play an active role in setting the tone and building a sense of community.

Tutorials provide opportunities for students to participate in both small and large group activities intended to create discussion, personal sharing, and critical reflection on

⁴⁷ This process differs slightly for the NOW offering of the RJC. In this case, 32 students will be in lecture together and once that is over, the classroom is re-organized in a circle where the tutorial format is followed with all students, rather than smaller groupings.

topics such as shame, trauma, inclusion, communication, and community. Following these activities, the facilitator leads a debriefing. This step was essential to the course developer who stated, “The adage that we learn by experience is not exactly true – we learn by *reflecting* on experience” (Elliott, 2011, p. 104). Closings are rituals or circles used to wrap up and allow a little more time for reflection at the end of the one hour and 50 minute tutorial. Overall, the approach to tutorials seeks to be empowering, emotionally safe, respectful and inclusive.

Just as the RJC engages multiple forms of learning, the data indicated that learners attribute more than one learning activity to their transformative experience. King (2009) acknowledges that while these factors are not mutually exclusive, they assist in understanding the specific factors that students most often relate to transformation. The RJC also attracts TAs, guest speakers, and instructors very passionate about restorative justice. Over 60% of all students surveyed indicated that it was one of these *people* that influenced the change in their perspective. Table 5-6 presents the frequencies of who most facilitated transformation during the RJC.

Table 5-6. People Who Facilitated Perspective Transformation

Person	Pilot Survey (n=92)	Main Survey (n=389)
Teacher Support	48%	31%
Teacher Challenge	20%	13%
Student Support	16%	8%
Other – Guest speaker – not specified	13%	9%
Other – Guest speaker – offender	4%	4%
Other – Everyone	4%	1.5%
Other – Instructor – General	4%	4%

The five instructors who have taught the RJC since its inception all have strong background and interest in the topic of restorative justice. Some were also practitioners, embedded in restorative justice as a way of being in the world. Given their depth of experience in the field and passion for the topic, they were often able to offer support to students through their perspective transformation. Their connections with the restorative justice community more broadly, facilitate the ability of instructors to invite thought-provoking guests to visit the RJC.

The data indicated that guest speakers who shared their stories with RJC students were strong facilitating factors to the students' perspective transformation. Many speakers were mentioned by name and included high profile figures such as Warren Glowatski and Suman and Manjit Virk. While students may have grown up hearing about these people through the news or their criminology textbooks, having them stand before them to share openly would have been an entirely different experience. The opportunity to hear from established speakers with such powerful stories of healing and transformation through restorative justice is a unique part of the RJC.

While most respondents indicated that their transformation was facilitated by a person or an activity related to the RJC, 24% of pilot respondents and 19% of the other students identified additional influences outside of the classroom. Table 5-7 indicates the frequencies of these non-mutually exclusive factors.

Table 5-7. Factors outside the RJC that Facilitated Perspective Transformation

Outside Factor	Pilot Survey (n=92)	Main Survey (n=389)
<i>Change of job</i>	62%	57%
<i>Loss of job</i>	33%	38%
<i>Troubling family concern</i>	34%	27%
<i>Death of a loved one</i>	29%	25%
<i>Divorce/relationship breakup</i>	17%	24%
<i>Moving</i>	15%	12%
<i>Serious health concern</i>	19%	13%
<i>Birth/adoption of a child</i>	2%	4%

While only 1% of students attributed an "outside factor" to their perspective transformation, most of those who did cited a work-related event. While these quantitative results do not capture the nuances of how these factors affected the students' experiences, the data are useful in understanding how often each factor was attributed to perspective transformation. The strength and context of the relationship between these factors and the students' transformative experience will be discussed in depth in Chapter 6 and 7.

5.9. Perspective Transformation & Behaviour

A central question to this dissertation concerns how, if at all, RJC students' transformations affected their actions and behaviour. While restorative justice education might be expected to impact learners' beliefs, their willingness to act upon this change is central to the transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991). According to Mezirow (1991), the final stage of transformative learning involves aligning behaviour with the newly acquired frame of reference. While the survey alone cannot isolate the impact of the RJC, the results provide the basis for further exploration of the relationship between changing beliefs and actions.

Survey respondents were asked whether their experience in the RJC affected their future behaviour when it came to course selection, volunteer engagement, and career choice. Table 5-8 reports the frequencies and demonstrates that a good number of respondents felt that the RJC played a role in behavioural change when it comes to these aspects of their lives.

Table 5-8. Did the RJC Affect Behaviour?

Action	Pilot Survey – YES (n=92)	Main Survey – YES (n=389)
<i>Career choice</i>	30%	30%
<i>Future course selection</i>	29%	27.5%
<i>Choice to volunteer</i>	22%	16%

These findings confirm that for many respondents, their transformation involved more than a change in perspective. How the RJC specifically affected students' behaviour academically, vocationally and beyond is described further through examining the open-ended survey items and interviews in Chapter 7.

5.10. Quantitative Data Analysis

Cross tabulations are quantitative methods useful for examining the relationships between two nominal or categorical variables (Palys & Atchison, 2014, p. 346). Due to small numbers of respondents in some categories, the original data were adjusted to meet

minimum requirements for observed frequencies. The Chi-Square for each of the demographic measures, favoured restorative justice definition, and willingness to be interviewed were assessed in relation to the respondents' PT-Index score. None of these variables were found to be significant at the $p < .05$ confidence level.

5.11. Grade

After reviewing the results of the pilot survey, a question was added to ask respondents to report the grade they received in the RJC. This question sought to explore whether success in the class was related to students experiencing perspective transformation. Although 30% did not recall the grade, 43% were in the A range, 23% fell into the B range, 4% in C range and less than 1% reported a D or F. Given the small number of cases outside of the A and B range, a cross tabulation was unable to show meaningful results in terms of the relationship between grade and other variables.

5.12. Summary

This chapter highlighted some of the unique aspects of the RJC that could relate to the perspective transformations reported by students through the survey. Comparing the pilot to the main survey demonstrated quantitative similarities that allow for the data sets to be considered together. The data revealed the frequency with which students felt their experience in the RJC affected not only their perspective, but also their actions related to volunteering, career, and course selection. The pilot phase demonstrated the importance of testing research instruments and triangulating survey data with interviews. The themes emerging from the in-depth interviews are presented in the following chapter in conjunction with related findings from responses to the open-ended survey questions. The interview data provided the nuances of the experience of transformation that could not be captured by the survey alone.

Chapter 6.

Interview Findings

In reflecting on the interviews I am conducting, the thought I always leave with is “we could have talked all day.” These former students, no matter how long ago they took the course, are keen to share their experience and learn about how the course is being offered today.

- Alana Abramson, Reflective journal entry (July 7, 2014)

6.1. Introduction

The generosity of time and spirit demonstrated by the 21 interview participants was a highlight of this research for me. This chapter describes how interviewees were selected and presents the themes that emerged from analyzing over 35 hours of discourse with respect to transformation and restorative justice education. The findings are organized in relation to the research questions and present the reader with the essence of the phenomenon of transformation; first describing *what* happened and then *how* it happened (Moustakas, 1994). Results that highlight the sustainability and impact of students' perspective transformations are discussed along with the aspects of the RJC that facilitated this change.

This chapter also includes the findings from interviews conducted with students who did not experience perspective transformation through the RJC. Other studies of transformative learning have failed to examine this group which makes this research an important and unique contribution to this field. These results also provide insights that will assist future restorative justice educators and advocates.

The themes presented emerged from the interviews of multiple participants. Verbatim quotes are utilized to reveal the salient aspects or textures of the experience of perspective transformation while honouring participant voice (Moustakas, 1994). Throughout this chapter, complimentary data from the open-ended survey questions are included to strengthen these themes. To demonstrate the congruence between the pilot

and main study, quotes from both groups have been selected. Pseudonyms were assigned for all interviewees⁴⁸ and survey respondents are distinguished using the following acronyms.

- Pilot survey respondent (PS) – a survey respondent instructed by the researcher
- Main survey respondent (S) – a survey respondent not instructed by the researcher

6.2. Interviewees

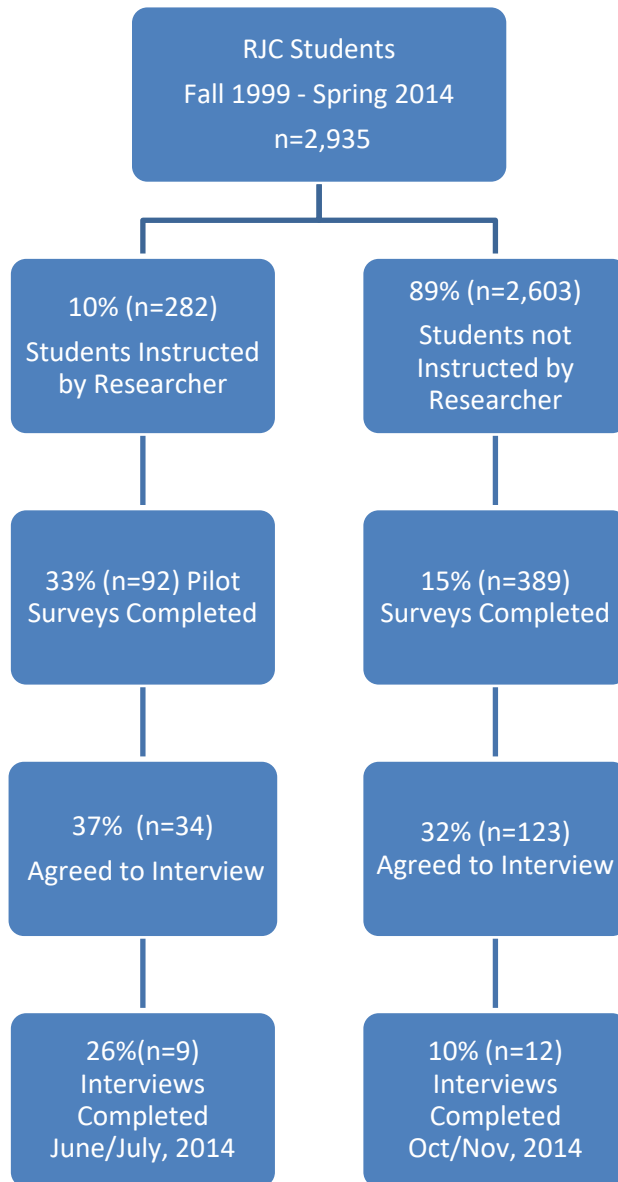
Interview participants were purposively sampled to maximize demographic diversity and to reflect different experiences and time elapsed since the RJC. Over 30% of both the pilot and main groups indicated willingness to be interviewed. These 157 potential participants were categorized into three groups according to the Perspective Transformation Index (King, 2000):

- 1 – Did not experience perspective transformation,
- 2 – Experienced perspective transformation outside of the RJC, and,
- 3 – Experienced perspective transformation attributed to the RJC.

Interviewees were selected from Groups 1 and 3 given the focus of this dissertation on whether restorative justice education contributes to students' perspective transformation.

⁴⁸ Interviewee profiles can be found in Appendices A and B.

Figure 6-1. Interview Participants



Interviewees represented three identities on the gender spectrum and multiple age categories. Participants who selected each facilitating factor (person, learning activity, event outside the RJC) were each interviewed so all of these factors could be adequately

explored. Interviews were an average of one hour and 15 minutes and all but three were held in person in a private space at SFU.⁴⁹

Cross tabulations were assessed to explore whether a relationship existed between demographic factors, PT-Index, and willingness to be interviewed. None of these produced any significant results at the $p < .05$ confidence level although quantitatively more women agreed to be interviewed. Given lessons learned from the pilot phase, the main study differed slightly in terms of interviewee selection. While pilot interviewees were chosen based on demographics and facilitating factors alone, a matched pair design was utilized to select participants for the main study. The intention was to explore any differences between respondents with similar demographics and occupations but who differed in their experience of perspective transformation from the RJC. Although cross tabulations did not demonstrate a relationship between these factors and perspective transformation, controlling for these variables in a matched pair design can help isolate the influence of the RJC.

Pilot interviews demonstrated qualitative differences in how participants working in different parts of the justice system were able to bring their perspective transformation to work. To further probe these differences, interviewees for the main study were purposively selected to represent three sectors of the criminal justice system: police, courts, and corrections. Although it was desirable to have interviewees working with victim services, the main survey respondents declined the interview⁵⁰ or did not respond.⁵¹

For both the pilot and main study, the goal was to conduct interviews to achieve saturation which Glaser and Strauss (1967) define as the point at which newly collected data are found to be redundant with previous data. Interviews were conducted *past* the point of saturation (n=9 or 26% of the group who agreed to an interview) for the pilot phase in an attempt to locate participants who had not experienced perspective transformation.

⁴⁹ Three interviews were conducted via Skype at the request of participants due to distance issues.

⁵⁰ Two participants declined the interview due to busy schedules despite offers of accommodation.

⁵¹ I sent one follow up email after the initial invitation. Six participants did not reply. This response differs from the pilot when there was 100% cooperation from interviewee invitees.

Despite efforts to interview these students, only participants who experienced transformation were accessible during the pilot. Therefore, the findings related to participants who did not experience perspective transformation are limited the surveys and interviews from the main phase. Saturation was reached after interviewing 10% (n=12) of the main survey participants who agreed to be interviewed.

The results of this approach to interviewee selection produced the following samples:

Figure 6-2. Interview Participants

	Pilot Interviewees (n = 9)	Interviewees (n = 12)
<i>Perspective Transformation</i>	9 – Yes	5 – Yes 7 – No
<i>Gender</i>	5 – Female 4 – Male	5 – Female 6 – Male 1 – Trans
<i>Current Age</i>	6 – 21-29 2 – 30-39 1 – 50-59	6 – 21-29 5 – 30-39 1 – 60-69
<i>Major</i>	7 – Crim 2 – Non-Crim	9 – Crim 3 – Non-Crim

6.3. What perspective transformation, if any, do students report after completing an introductory restorative justice course at SFU?

6.3.1. The Experience of Transformation

For those who reported perspective transformation, the experience, for most, was “profound” (S 30). As one survey participant shared,

I was deeply impacted. I was forever changed. I had no idea what the course was about and what it meant when I signed up. It was the most amazing and life altering experience. I saw the world entirely different. (S 347)

When describing the experience, participants said that they had a radical shift in how they looked at the world. Respondents discussed how their transformed perspective related to re-examining their values, thoughts, beliefs, and feelings throughout the course.

The difference is like night and day. It's the only way I can describe it. It's like polar ends of the spectrum. The way that I perceive the world, the way I see the world now is nowhere near how I thought before. Obviously, I didn't realize that in the moment because I didn't know how to be any different. But it wasn't until I took the course and had a lot of opportunity to reflect and journal and read and integrate and converse with people that I realize that I am feeling something very different. I'm seeing things very differently, and experiencing things very differently. I feel so different. (Susie)

Participants' experiences included elements of personal growth, opportunities to reflect upon values, and empathy development as illustrated by the following quotes:

I would also say that this course was a moment of transformation because it was an opportunity for me to look back and reflect upon where I was. To think about why it is I do what do, why it is I think what I think, and why it is that I thought of things as being as they were and taking the tools given out [from the course], making this toolbox, and allowing myself to grow as a person, thus, making me a better person. I saw it as another opportunity to transform myself. (Preet)

It pushed me out of my comfort zone on many occasions, but it help[ed] me realize that being open and honest within a safe environment was healthy for personal growth and education. This world is so big and we share so many different views that open discussions bring understanding and clarity to many questions in life. (S 33)

I probed interviewees to recall whether there was a single moment when their perspective changed. Although only one participant could remember the moment in detail, some described an "ah-ha moment" (Preet) or "awakening" (Susie). Others referred to the experience as "eye opening" (S 325; S 344; S 346). Lula described her experience as:

[e]verything I believed ... I had to change it because I don't believe in it anymore. It was kind of a light bulb moment. It was a very jarring moment. When you stop, and you pause and you reflect on things in your own life. (Lula)

Others described the transformation as a “process” (Susie) that happened over the course of the semester, “a gradual change” (Opal), or a quiet internal resistance eventually followed by acceptance of the change (Lula).

Students who reported perspective transformation mentioned how thinking critically and questioning assumptions were key factors of their experience. PS 45 noted it “was interesting as things [in the RJC] began to be more grey than black and white.”

The course really taught me to not be afraid to question status quo and to think critically about matters that impact minorities. (S 378)

I began to question some of the things I believed in. The critical aspect of the course has made me consider what I think I know. (S 14)

Participants said that during the RJC, many of their ideas or understandings of the world no longer “fit” so it was necessary to “re-evaluate what I was thinking and what I believed in my values system” (Lula) and develop new ways of looking at things. For some, this shift brought feelings of peacefulness, while for others it was more distressing as illustrated in the contrast between the two following quotes.⁵²

I don’t know how to properly describe it. I know it sounds lame or cheesy but I just feel really warm inside. I just feel really elated... everything is right. This is how it should be. There is nothing that feels skewed. There is nothing inside me that feels acidic or negative. I don’t feel queasy or nervous or anything like that. I just felt right. [I felt] light on the inside. Very warm, very light, and everything just feels at peace. (Preet)

I was feeling a bubbling of emotions. [The shift] was very, very fundamental and ... I do remember feeling emotional and there was this one point where I felt like I was going to cry. (Opal)

These data demonstrate strong evidence of perspective transformation. From those who reported this phenomenon, two distinct groups emerged: students who had changed the way they viewed the criminal justice system and those who had a more fulsome shift in their worldview. The findings from these groups are discussed in the following section.

⁵² To probe this aspect of the transformative experience, participants were asked to recall how the experience felt in their body.

6.4. How, if at all, did students' perspective transformation affect students' beliefs and feelings?

6.4.1. Shifting Beliefs about Punishment

Twelve interviewees and many survey respondents indicated holding retributive views prior to the RJC. Participants reported shifting from a belief in the utility of punishment to supporting views around restoration such as healing, support, second chances, and rehabilitation. A survey respondent captures this pattern well stating, "My beliefs on what justice was and what was necessary to achieve it changed radically during this course." (S 12) Other students described their shift in beliefs as:

I believed that anyone who committed murder should be put to death, but after hearing the stories of a couple of guest speakers, I realized that an eye for an eye was not the best solution. It may give temporary reliefs [*sic*] to the victim's family, but no real sense of closure would result. Also, locking someone up in prison doesn't help anyone, especially the offender. It just makes them angrier, while restorative justice gives them a chance to change their ways and perhaps, in some cases, help the victim's family and the offender work together to overcome whatever awful experience they went through. (S 31)

I was very punishment and jail oriented. I just knew that if you did something wrong you have to pay for it. I was very strong in my beliefs at that time. I believed in the death penalty. I didn't think [offenders] had any use for society. That's how I used to think. (Lula)

Two interviewees who reported transformation came into the RJC with a rather undecided view of the justice. Mandy states: "I don't think I have ever really had a clear notion of what justice means for myself or anyone else." Similarly, Lois reflects, "I always felt like I had a bit of a different view point. I just didn't know what it was missing and what the alternative was." Both of these respondents indicated perspective transformation characterized as a shift from a neutral or undecided view about justice to a restorative one.

6.4.2. Shifting Beliefs about Restorative Justice

All but a four respondents held almost no pre-existing knowledge about restorative justice. Those interviewees who experienced transformation from the RJC reported knowing “nothing” or “not much” prior to enrolling. Some indicated they thought restorative justice might be about rehabilitation while others were under the impression it only involved First Nations’ peoples. Others mentioned that prior to the course, they thought of restorative justice as a “joke” (S 66) or “get out of jail card” (Pedro). Following the RJC, almost all students, whether or not they experienced transformation, reported an increase in their knowledge about restorative justice. Although some described an encounter or reparative-based definition, others demonstrated good understanding of the transformative conception, as illustrated here:

Honestly, [restorative justice] is the human approach ... It allows for that opportunity to explore and to treat people as humans and entities of themselves but also it helps the greater good. It is a community thing. It takes [justice] out of the individual and brings it into the community and it is a permanent solution. I see it as a humanistic way of dealing with people. (Susie)

[R]estorative justice has principles in everything we do; with our friends and our family to our work and how we apply our work. I think I would approach it by talking about the values rather than giving a structured definition, which is what I think gives more meaning because restorative justice isn’t really structured. (Opal)

These more transformative definitions portray a holistic understanding of restorative justice and how it could be applied beyond a criminal justice setting. Participants described tremendous support for restorative justice as a way to help both victims and offenders.

6.4.3. Shifting Beliefs about the Criminal Justice System

A theme that parallels the increased knowledge and support of restorative justice is the shift in belief about the efficacy of the contemporary criminal justice system. For example, a survey participant said the RJC gave “insight into the [j]ustice [s]ystem and the flaws that are part of it, such as a lack of victim-orientated justice and offender personal

responsibility of the crime” (S 22). Others felt their views had been enhanced to consider stakeholders beyond the offender such as victims and community. Lillie explained:

I just saw a piece that I had neglected for a really long time. It was the community piece, especially. How the community isn't really involved besides being able to walk into a courtroom and watch the case. They don't really have much of a say in what goes on and you really see that in the newspaper when the community is speaking out about a specific verdict that has come out or some sentence so the community is really left out. As the victim, other than a victim impact statement and being able to maybe lobby their MLA or call up the prosecutor and complain ... other than that they don't have much say in the [criminal justice] process. So that is what restorative justice gave to me: the ability to see we are missing all these crucial pieces.

Respondents referenced the impact of learning that the “broken” (S 154; PS 24) criminal justice system was often unable meet the needs arising from crime.

I came into the course thinking jails, punishment, and the status quo government bureaucracy were there to assist us and help victims of crime. I left with an understanding that the state has been a poor parent. [The state] hasn't responded well to either victims or those who act out crimes and I questioned my belief that we need more jails. (S 267)

The pattern demonstrating students' perspective shifts from retributive or neutral/undecided positions to restorative ones was prevalent in the data. While there were differences in how restorative justice was conceptualized, the core principles such as empathy, inclusion, community involvement, dialogue, non-judgement, direct accountability, and healing all featured strongly in how former students framed their new or more developed understanding.

6.4.4. Shifting Worldviews: Becoming More Human

In addition to transforming the way participants saw the criminal justice system, some students said the RJC shifted their worldview. Susie describes this shift in the following way: “I guess you become more human when you realize there is different ways to talk to people, different ways to be with people, and different ways to listen to people.”

The impact of this transformative experience was discussed with a surge of passion and excitement, regardless of the time that had passed since the RJC. Regardless of whether they had an affiliation with the criminal justice system, or with restorative justice, respondents discussed how the transformation was personal for them. For example, Stacy stated:

[Transformation] really did happen for me because I started to think about [restorative justice] as more layered. So I thought I understood restorative justice to mean that we are going to listen to prisoners and offenders and give them a benefit of the doubt and try and work with them and see about their lives and who they are. This is what I am thinking. And then I start to clue in; I am not getting this, that is not what it is... and then it is this perspective, hit me [that] maybe restorative justice *is about me*. (*emphasis added, Stacy*)

Participants who reported a transformation in their beliefs included a more open and empathic worldview, which was often associated with behavioural change.

I can't even put [the transformation] into words. It is really my actions. My day-to-day actions [are] where this is reflected. I think I made it pretty clear that it doesn't take effort. That is the one thing that is really important to me. I realize that it feels so natural, it feels so normal. This is what being human is about. Whereas before there was always some internal conflict. (Susie)

I find restorative justice is a lot like religion. It is not so much memorizing the theory and all [those] abstract theoretical things. It is more taking what you have learned and putting it into practice. So the way you can sustain restorative justice is a) yes, by learning, but b) by acting it out in your daily life. So for me, I volunteer, I see my mother, all those things... how I write my term papers. So that is how I have sustained it and how I think others can sustain it also, by acting it out. So even in your interactions with the public and realizing that yes, this individual is violent but there is [*sic*] probably issues beyond his violence so you have to address those needs and bring the community to help. (Rufus)

The theme of behaviour change emerged from interviewees' recollections about the impact of their transformative experience. Common changes included how participants viewed crime-related media, interacted with others (usually family), and made decisions with respect to volunteer and vocational pursuits.

6.5. How, if at all, did students' perspective transformation affect their actions and relationships?

6.5.1. Media Consumption & Finding Voice

The data indicate that participants changed how they consumed media after their perspective transformation. Participants also reported seeking out alternative sources of news, critically reflecting on the messages that they were presented with by mainstream media, and attending events such as restorative justice conferences and political protests. Preet and Opal explain their experiences with respect to the media as,

[The RJC] was really changing because I find anytime now when I try to read an article or look through the paper or when someone is talking about when somebody has done something wrong, I don't look at it the same way I used to. I don't look at it like, "oh wow that was really wrong, this person shouldn't have done that." Now I find myself actually thinking, "Wait a minute, what, why did that person do that?" By no means do I condone their actions, but why don't we try to consider why they did that or ask have you ever really considered what was going on in their life? So for me, it's actually really cool because it does feel like it had an influence on me and changed me because I can't be stuck in a little, rigid box anymore. I far prefer being outside of the box thinking like those in the restorative justice community think. (Preet)

To this day I am careful about language... even the words we choose and every time I see the media or have conversations with friends and family where people talk about people who should be in jail, I am conscious of language and willing to discuss my point of view. (Opal)

Outside of specific discussions about criminal cases in the media, participants reported that they were more willing to bring up a restorative view of justice, rather than staying silent when faced with punitive rhetoric. Rufus commented that he had become more confident in discussing his beliefs about restorative justice with individuals who might disagree with him. Further, survey participant S 356 stated: "I take a greater personal responsibility to not be silent when important issues arise." Through such statements, respondents suggested that the RJC gave them tools be confident even when their beliefs did not conform to mainstream views.

Although those who found their voice and the courage to use it were predominant in the data, Lois and Stacy reacted in an opposing way. Rather than finding their voice, they shut down. Notably, they also identified their experience from the RJC as the main reason for leaving their place of employment within the criminal justice system. The following excerpts illustrate the how the RJC affected Lois' and Stacy's communication with others:

[The RJC] made me hate people a lot more. People who are really closed-minded about things and who refuse to listen to ideas about restorative justice or even just a lot of those little beliefs that are within restorative justice. It made me just not want to talk to a lot of people because I just think, you are of that viewpoint so let's move on. So I would say my overall communication with people changed. (Lois)

I love [my former co-worker] to death and she is a wonderful human being, however, we got onto the topic of Truth and Reconciliation. I was in an uproar about it and so was [my husband] and we were talking about First Nations' [people] in prison and I started talking to her about it and, honest to god... what she came back with was so racist. I hadn't seen it. I loved her and she is probably one of my only friends. I hadn't seen it or I wasn't willing to look. It had to have been there. We got into it and she could not see it... and we got into it at Starbucks! Now I am at the point that I don't want to talk to people about what I am thinking. Wow, that doesn't sound like me either. (Stacy)

While many participants found their voice to discuss restorative justice outside the classroom, Stacy and Lois highlight the personal risk-taking that comes with doing so. These concrete actions were demonstrative of the perspective transformation that respondents experienced as a result of the RJC.

6.5.2. Future Academic Pursuits

Almost 30% of all students surveyed indicated that the RJC influenced their future course selection. Counts of respondents are reported here to demonstrate the scope of this behavioural change. Ninety-three students (19%) said that the RJC influenced them to pursue more restorative justice education. Seventeen respondents (3.5%) specifically identified their plan to take the Advanced Restorative Justice course at SFU as their next step with restorative justice education. Twenty-nine students (6%) indicated they would or did enrol in unspecified restorative justice courses. Fifteen participants (3%) said they

would or did enrol in more courses that were interactive or had a non-traditional structures. Others said they would or did pursue courses focused on alternatives, Aboriginal cultures, critical criminology, social justice, or participate in advanced education in restorative justice through graduate work. Several students indicated that their future course selection was impacted by wanting to take another course with their restorative justice instructor.

For some students, the direction of their education changed after their transformative experience. For example, these participants said:

[The RJC] really changed my course of study to look at interconnectedness. I feel that I'm still trying to unravel [how to do this] in my course of study and [with] the greater goal of my career ... trying to see that we're all interconnected, enemies and all. We are all in this together. We're all sharing the space together. (Susie)

[Following the RJC] I [took] a completely different approach to my education. I was in my third year and yet I was a completely different student looking for different courses, applying myself. I was more dedicated and focused, like I had been given more clear direction in where my education was taking me. (S 71)

It is clear that the RJC encourages many students to further their education on the topic of restorative justice although seven students (1%) reported the opposite was true. These results are discussed below in section 6.8 that presents data from students who did not experience transformation.

6.5.3. Volunteer & Community Involvement

The pilot survey indicated that 22% of respondents said the RJC affected their decision to volunteer. Sixteen percent of the main survey participants felt the same way. The data from the open-ended survey questions showed that the volunteer activities pursued were most often related to social justice, restorative justice, community building, serving marginalized or vulnerable populations (youth and prisoners), and crime prevention. Many participants said they were inspired to volunteer and contribute to the long-term health of their communities. Some of the rationale provided included:

I learned the importance of giving back to my community. The stronger the relationship we build with our community, the more improvements we make towards safety and peacefulness. (PS 76)

I was passionate about any way I could put into practice what I had learned in [the RJC]. It was one step towards the change in the world/people I had always knew [*sic*] was missing. (S 270)

[The RJC] influenced me to become more active in my community and to help those around me. (S 378)

Compared to the survey respondents, only two of the interviewees had taken volunteer action after their experience with the RJC. However, several interviewees described powerful changes with relation to their vocational choices and behaviours at work.

6.5.4. Vocational Choices & Behaviour at Work

Thirty percent of all survey respondents indicated that the RJC affected their career choices. The impacts were diverse. For some, the RJC concretely influenced their future career aspirations as well as their goals related to their vocation. Respondents aspired to careers where they could “make a difference,” “support community development,” and promote “social justice.” A group of respondents identified movement away from the pursuit of law or policing. Examples of rationale for this decision include:

I already had work experience with the RCMP and I thought I would branch out there, but restorative justice made me realize I just could never do that. So that was good, it shut that door! (Lois)

Prior to the course I had intended on going to law school and practice[ing] criminal law. I believed this to be way to achieve justice. My beliefs on what justice was and what was necessary to achieve it changed radically during this course and I pursued graduate schooling rather than law school. (S 12)

Conversely, others felt encouraged to pursue a legal career.

RJC course inspired me to consider law school and to become a lawyer that deals with criminal law, which restorative justice might fit in well. (PS 19)

Encouraged me to attend law school and apply other perspectives while in practice. (S 85)

Both participants working inside and outside the criminal justice field discussed how their perspective shift motivated them and provided tools to bring restorative justice to their workplace. In fields ranging from fitness classes and medicine to policing and corrections, behavioural changes on the job included working to reduce power differentials, improve communication and openness, and demonstrate more empathy towards others. A group of respondents said they had introduced restorative practices like circles to increase a sense of equality, safety, and community. Some concrete examples of how restorative justice practices are brought to the workplace include:

[When I pull someone over] I will do a little restorative justice meeting on the side of the road, on the highway ... We are going to talk. I will be the lead. One person will talk at a time. [In the] first round everyone will tell us what happened, second round we will figure out what we can do and I will make up the final decision. Now, it is not the perfect restorative justice but it is one that actually takes up less time in the realm of things to say, "I did this. These are my actions." Then I ask, what can you do to resolve this issue? (Pedro)

It has changed who I am as a person when I have conflict at work or am coming up against something that is very black and white and they won't budge. My first instinct is to, [say], "let's see what we can do that is more restorative." Let's get in the room, let's find out what the issues are and sometimes through just having a conversation we get through and solve what we perceive are issues and problems. (Opal)

When I took the course I was a Sr. Corrections Officer at Matsqui Prison, so I was able to take those learnings and take a much more empathetic role in working with offenders (S 24).

Overall, the perspective transformations related to the RJC produced concrete changes in participants' behaviour at work, in school, and in the community. Many of these shifts affected the way they interacted with others, including within interpersonal relationships.

6.5.5. Relationships & Communications

Students who experienced perspective transformation provided examples of how their perceptions of other people had changed. Respondents reported being much more empathic, compassionate, open-minded, and trying to understand the experience of others, rather than rushing to judgement. The following excerpts reflect these changes in perception:

I am now more willing to look at the other person's perspective. More trying to think with their brain. That is one of the things for me that at first was the challenge. But now I'm more receptive to looking at the other person's perspective. (Ivan)

After taking the course, I found myself reflecting a lot on my personal perspectives. I stepped outside my comfort zone and began to think on different perspectives, especially on the level of my audience, I began to realize that behind a person's decision may be linked to a very complicated story. No one is ever truly correct, nor can anyone be utterly wrong. (S 361)

Participants specifically mentioned how this shift led to concrete changes in how they interacted with family and friends. Two participants expressed how they felt encouraged to repair a broken relationship after the RJC. Lillie and Opal described taking more compassionate approaches to the people in their life that had previously challenged them:

Previous to restorative justice, I was really hostile to my mum. Like, we wouldn't get along. We would clash often. We both have really dominant personalities so when she would say things to me I would just lash out or give really rude answers. But once you recognize how important relationships are and once you see your grandma deteriorate, you start to see how important those relationships are and how important family is. So that was the transformation I saw... both the life experience with my mum and my grandma and taking restorative justice and the circle experience both at the same time. At the end of the day, relationships are all we have. (Rufus)

[M]y brother has become an alcoholic. And he says I want to quit and then he quits and then two or three days and he goes back to drinking. And him [*sic*] and his wife are always fighting, obviously. Then he comes to my house because he wants peace of mind. So I'm not thinking, "You are a bad guy. You should not be doing this. Look at the impact it's having on your kids." Instead, I try to support him. I asked him, 'do you think there is an underlying reason? What happened in your past?' Restorative justice just gets into thinking these things, and

then I wonder why I am the only one in the family who hasn't lost it.
(Opal)

These examples demonstrate how both the RJC and familial circumstances can come together to evoke personal transformation. These also are indicative of transformation of beliefs that inspires behavioural changes beyond education or vocation. Pedro and Lula explained how their transformation affected multiple aspects of life:

I may not have been the perfect student that came out of the course, but it affects every time I deal with somebody ... respecting somebody and giving somebody that ability to confide in you. Where you try to give someone the ability to be open with you, to be real with you. This has helped me a lot as a person, as a boyfriend, as a police officer, as somebody that just wants to do the world a little better because, like I said, I didn't join this job [in law enforcement] because I like doing some of the things I do. But at the end of the day, we all want to leave this world a little bit better. We want to make the world a better place. [The RJC] has taught me a lot about growing up. (Pedro)

I think [the RJC] actually improved the relationships in my life. When I started to think, not in terms of how you "should be" or how you "should act". I think it made me think, well, there are reasons for everything, and just because somebody's reasons are not the same as mine doesn't mean I shouldn't try to see what they are. I think I used to be more dismissive when something didn't mesh with my values. I would think, that's just wrong, I'm going to do it my way. Now I stop and consider more. (Lula)

The transformation of beliefs also translated into actions oriented towards healing. When four participants recounted their experience as a victim of violent crime, they reported that the RJC helped them to interact with the criminal justice system differently and process their pain. They discussed how the RJC encouraged personal healing by providing a space to process their experience and write about it through journaling.

Former RJC students shared openly about their perspective transformations through interviews and were able to add depth to data collected through the survey. Respondents often drew on past and present examples to demonstrate how their perspective transformation continues to affect their beliefs, relationships, and actions. Although many of the interviewees had taken the RJC years ago, they maintain a restorative justice "lens" through which they view the world.

6.6. To what extent, if at all, were these perspective transformations enduring?

Whether participants had completed the RJC over a decade ago or in the last year, all interviewees who experienced transformation reported feeling that this change had endured. As Troy and Opal explained,

I don't remember anything about other crim courses I took, but something [about the RJC] was different. You remember that part of it [that] can't go away because it was different. It showed something new other than usual stuff and that is the part that stays. It has left its mark. It is left in my memory so there is nothing more about the course I can ask for. It is something other courses haven't done. (Troy)

There was something in me that changed forever that Fall of 2003 that never will quite be able to go back. It is sustainable. And it will always be sustainable because everyone wants to be treated well and you feel better when you treat other people well. (Opal)

Interviewees were probed to determine whether certain people or places influenced the sustainability of the perspective shift. While some participants indicated that certain work environments such as corrections made it more challenging to act from restorative values, their internal drive kept them grounded in this way of looking at the world. Others mentioned the opportunity to talk with family and friends and get support was important in solidifying their commitment to their transformed perspective.

6.6.1. Challenges to Sustaining a Perspective Transformation

Interview participants who reported a transformed perspective were asked to share what circumstances, if any, made it difficult to sustain. Some participants experienced adversity with certain people and environments that challenged the beliefs associated with their perspective. These experiences often took place within government workplaces like corrections or law enforcement that are highly structured through strict rules and policies. These organizational cultures created barriers for participants to act in ways that were in line with their restorative perspective. Lillie and Luz explained:

So in that [parole office] because it is a government facility and organization, it is very hard to have your own opinion or go against their

policies because everything is by policy. So sometimes you can't say certain things or do certain things or drive with an offender because it is "dangerous" or whatever, so it is very hard to bring the restorative justice thinking into the environment. I think it almost contradicts each other because it is so structured. My thinking didn't change to the punitive side because I already had my perspective, but I couldn't express my views. (Lillie)

[The Correctional Service Canada] can sometimes be hard to work at in terms of the things we do for the Aboriginal offenders because there are so many policies and procedures in place. Sometimes policies, especially those that restrict ceremonies ... you are not allowed to bring any tobacco into any institution anymore so that can make it really difficult to do the work I need to do with the guys. But it is what it is. I can't go against what is written down because that could put me in jeopardy of being disciplined. (Luz)

Opal who works in law enforcement revealed that she finds it difficult to utilize discretion in a restorative way when performance is evaluated through the number of seizures completed. She explained, "You get criticism from your colleagues and it breaks you down" and "black and white" rules can get in the way of being able to treat people with humanity. She felt her co-workers and superiors were not encouraged to think critically.

They just want to be given something in writing. They want an act or legislation and they will just want to follow it. So they can just say under section this and this, you are charged with this and this. They don't question anything. And sometimes it doesn't even make sense.

She recalled her first days on the job.

When I got back from training after four months, my Superintendent asked me, "why do you want to work for CBSA [Canadian Border Security Agency]?" I said, "I want to make a difference." And he said, "well, if you want to make a difference you shouldn't be working here." That was the first day on the job. It was shocking. It was like, "what do you mean?" I was very passionate about this job and now all the passion is gone ... What I see around me and maybe it is all over Canada with law enforcement is that we just want to punish people.

Lois and Opal affirmed that voicing different opinions or offering compassion in these environments is difficult.

Working in a police detachment is completely anti-restorative justice in general so that was very unsupportive of my [transformative] process

... even if you just think out loud the people in the office were unsupportive of any of those kind of ideas. (Lois)

If you practice compassion, if you show compassion for your human side, you are seen as a weak person who is not right for this job. So I actually was called into my superintendent's office and he was telling me that I smiled too much. I don't want to have conflict with myself. I don't want to do this, but I'm doing it, and even though you're not trying to make it hard for yourself, eventually it becomes hard because you're constantly in conflict with yourself. (Opal)

Some participants said their perspective was most often challenged upon hearing of heinous, gruesome crimes or harms committed against vulnerable people. However, they considered these opportunities to re-affirm and strengthen their perspective, not to discard it. Lois explained that, "in order to have these [restorative] viewpoints you have to get ready for that unsettling feeling and work around it." In the face of challenges, Preet and Mandy explained how these moments can have an affirming effect on their perspective not an erosive one.

[The challenge] only makes you stronger. It only makes you better. To not have obstacles would be ideal, but I try to now accept them as a challenge and to use them as a means to be stronger, to make the best of the situation. Because at the end of the day, again, I see that if I can't follow through with [restorative justice], I can't expect other people to follow through with it. So there is a mass murderer on trial and it is all over the news and everyone is putting this person down saying they should be getting the death penalty and this and that, but if I make light of my view or I am able to speak up for it then I feel like you are able to influence a change, hopefully you are able to do something. At least by speaking up for [RJ], even if someone doesn't agree with you they can still say, "that person has integrity and I admire that person because they will stand up for it and not fall under the pressure of everybody else." (Preet)

[My appreciation for RJ deepened] when [the speaker] talked about his [serious and violent] offence, what he did, and how it came to pass, what brought him there. It was really powerful. I thought about his story many, many, many times and sometimes I'd be very conscious of my own negative judgments about him and about it. And other times I would be very aware of my own vulnerability and empathy. My point is that that was available, and in my experience of university education, was completely unique. (Mandy)

Overall, while these challenges may have affected the ability of some participants to act or speak from their transformed perspective at work, all expressed a personal

commitment to this way of looking at the world. This connection inspired Stacy, Lillie, and Lois to leave their workplace due to the conflict they felt as their restorative perspective bumped up against the retributive culture. As for Ivan, he stayed in his conflicted role in corrections, but chose to volunteer with community policing where he felt his progressive ideas were respected. Opal was looking to leave her law enforcement position to pursue a career with people where she could act in line with her values.

These findings provide insight surrounding the experience of transformation and the effect on beliefs, feelings, relationships, and actions. The data also provide evidence that these transformations have been sustainable despite some challenges at work and in the community. In the following section, I discuss the factors students perceive to be most influential to their experience of perspective transformation.

6.7. What influences or facilitating factors were, at least in part, perceived as contributing to these transformations?

6.7.1. Class Activities

The data indicated that tutorials had tremendous influence on the students' transformative experiences. While several participants mentioned that the RJC content made them realize their views no longer fit with this new information, the tutorial discussion and personal reflection solidified their shift in worldview. The RJC tutorials were described overall as safe, respectful, and non-judgemental places for some of this processing to occur through sharing and listening to others' perspectives. This safety allowed for students to be both vulnerable about their own views and open towards the experiences of others. The participants described the impact of the class activities in some of the following ways:

With the tutorials what I really liked was how everyone was so willing to share. How comfortable we were able to make that room and how willing everyone was to share something, even if it wasn't the most profound thing ... it could be profound them [to them], and there was no judgment. It was almost as if you walked into the room and there was something in the room that dissolved judgment immediately. It was

really powerful. I just remember thinking 'Wow, I have never felt this in any situation.' Not to mention the situation where there is a whole bunch of strangers sitting in a room. So it was pretty powerful to me just how acceptance of one another could really go a long way. (Preet)

[The tutorial] created an environment that allowed me to learn new perspectives and really have a chance to think about things from other peoples [*sic*] perspective. I do believe that it has helped me be the person that I am especially when it comes to certain aspects of my professional career. (S 289)

Our circle was amazing. I mean, you don't think about it because it's a university class but there was a lot of love in that tutorial. And a lot of caring about each other and it was a safe place to talk about things. I don't know. It was just really different, and really special. (Lula)

The respondents observed that through the tutorial experience, they learned a great deal about others and, as a result, became more open minded and aware of what was shared between them as peers.

From the first week you could definitely tell it was a very kind group of individuals ... like we spoke of things that I haven't even spoken about with my own family or even my closest friends so it was just ... it was something that really resonated with me was that. (Lillie)

The fact that everybody had to be accountable and face each other with respect because we were all in a circle was definitely [an] influential aspect of tutorial. (S 98)

When asked about specific class activities that affected perspective transformation, most responses were general, such as "The activities were fun but they also brought people together and we were able to discuss important situations" (S 55)" and "All the activities in tutorial were awesome. Every activity influenced me in some way for the better" (S 89). However, five respondents specifically mentioned an activity called "Coloured Dots," designed to demonstrate inclusion and exclusion in social groups. Eleven different students mentioned activities outside of the classroom such as visiting a prison, attending a Truth and Reconciliation Canada event, or attending a restorative justice event hosted by a community organization influenced their perspective shift the most.

After four years of offering the RJC, the use of circle was formalized as a way to begin and end weekly tutorials. Participants described these circles as the place they found the most meaning with respect to their transformative experience. Generally, these tutorial groups have between 12 and 15 participants, although the RJC offered through the NOW⁵³ program had all 32 students participating. Although it might be assumed that students would have a more intimate and impactful experience within a smaller group, there was no difference detected between these two groups. No matter how large their tutorial, respondents experienced a deep sense of equality in the circle. This finding also demonstrates the similarities between the two groups of participants for this study as the pilot group was comprised almost exclusively of NOW students.

The promotion of this sense of equality and non-domination was often attributed to the use of a talking piece,⁵⁴ as it allowed everyone the opportunity to participate. Participants mentioned how important it was to “experience” restorative justice through participation in the circle process.

The non-traditional course structure of the RJC and the feelings it produced were transformative for students. Participants described the RJC as different, refreshing, and unique compared to other courses as well as their experiences outside of the university. This theme was brought to life through examples shared by Opal and Rufus:

It is totally unique. I have never had an experience like this. [In other parts of my life] we don't even talk the way we did on our [RJC]. So that is one thing that really stuck out for me and that is why I wish that other areas of my life were like that, where people were actually open – from family, to religion, to my other tutorial classes. It was really powerful. I just remember thinking, “Wow, I have never felt this in any situation.” The awkward barriers usually in a class were broken because we were all on the same level and we all talked about our stories and we all felt very included and respected and were respectful toward one another. And I felt that, you know, I was respected when I was in the

⁵³ NOW refers to Simon Fraser University's Nights or Weekends program whereby students must demonstrate they are working 30 hours or more per week to have priority enrolment in courses offered in the evenings or on weekends. The format of the RJC for the NOW courses differs from regular offerings as the class does not break into smaller groups to attend tutorials for the circles and activities.

⁵⁴ A talking piece is a physical object that is passed from one person to another in a circle process. The person who holds the piece is the one speaking and others listen without interruption. Participants have the right to pass the talking piece if they choose not to share.

class and I am sure other people did as well so that was different than any other class I have taken. I think the circle is a big thing because everyone is on the same plane so there is no judgement that comes from that ... so everyone is vulnerable so I think that creates a big bond for people. (Rufus)

Very different from any other crim classes I took. I think every single other crim class I took there was definitely a right and wrong answer that you could be graded on and with them you could let your mind go where you wanted. (Opal)

Overall, it is the collective sense of safety and the uniqueness of that feeling that participants identified as key facilitating factors in perspective transformation. The RJC was described as memorable, not only in terms of content, but with respect to the process and the feelings of connection, non-judgement and equality. In addition, the people students encountered through the RJC made a lasting impact and contributed to their perspective transformation.

6.7.2. People

When asked to identify the most memorable aspect of the RJC, almost all interviewees and a number of survey respondents (whether or not they experienced perspective transformation) said it was hearing “victims” and “offenders”⁵⁵ stories. PS 5 captured this theme well: “Having guest speakers share their stories took the class to another level, the impact their words had on me will be with me forever.” Students who reported perspective transformation described a particularly strong connection with the speakers that produced expressions of empathy and appreciation of a common humanity as evinced by Susie and Lula.

I think about my brothers and I think about Reena [Virk] and her family and I go, ‘Wow, if that family could accept [Warren] after their daughter was quite heinously and mindlessly killed.’ So I had to ask myself a very tough question of who am I to be so harsh and so critical towards other people? What gives me the right? I mean, I am in good health and I have a lot of earned privileges and I work really hard and I am quite happy and I do well and so not only who am I [to judge], who is anybody? I think there is just better ways if we take the time and just

⁵⁵ These terms are chosen to honour participant voice, however, I feel discomfort using these labels, as they do not reflect the wholeness of individuals being referred to.

listen and talk and deal with people, it just the world would be such a better place. (Susie)

People who, through the restorative justice process, actually got a lot of healing and help [were memorable]. And I completely changed my views. It was just, there is this criminal in front of me who has got tattoos and is huge. And you hear his story. And you're like, oh my God. How he managed to change his life around. I wanted to be friends with this man afterwards. Seeing that people can change and that we should be giving them the chance to. That was huge and completely changed how I thought. (Lula)

Of those who were most impacted by victims' stories, it was the demonstration of forgiveness, compassion, and resilience that participants found meaningful. In addition, respondents' became introspective in the face of the qualities demonstrated by the guest speakers, as well as commenting on the connections to the principles of restorative justice.

Students also reported that guests contributed to their perspective transformation by providing evidence to support the idea that restorative justice can change lives and heal. The guests brought the theory and the "information we have studied to life" (S 106).

The most memorable was having the opportunity to hear restorative justice in practice. Meeting the guest speakers that came in and having people come in makes us understand the theory better and kind of bridges that gap for students. (Luz)

In addition to guest speakers, the RJC instructor was identified as a key person in facilitating students' perspective transformation. When instructors were passionate storytellers and created openness for the discussion of diverse perspectives, they lay fertile ground for the transformative experience. As S 13 notes, "My professor was amazing and really did a good job with opening our eyes through her vivid personal stories." The passion of the instructor stood out as something that changed students.

[The instructor's passion] transferred, you could feel it. It transferred to the class. It transferred to me and it made me want to really want to pursue this that much more because I felt if someone could have that much passion for this there must be something about it that's important. It's not just something that superficial or flaky. It's real, there is substance here. (Preet)

Survey results indicate that “Instructor support” was the strongest facilitating factor when it came to the people who influenced perspective transformation. In the interviews, this support was described in terms of the instructor’s personal characteristics such as open-mindedness and warmth. Similar qualities in other students were mentioned as facilitating factors as well. For example,

My instructors and classmates challenged my views while also supporting me in exploring alternatives. (PS 34)

We [the students in the tutorial] really cared about each other. We would check in on each other outside of class. Are you okay? Some things that were shared were so strong. There was hugging. There was all kinds of support, people saying, hey, we’re here for you. And even now if I see them outside of tutorial, it’s strange because we shared so much we know so much about each other. But I feel like emotionally there is such a strong connection. (Lula)

The combination of interview and survey data illuminate the aspects of the RJC that students perceive most influenced and facilitated their perspective transformation. While this shift happens within a particular context and cannot be reduced to one aspect of the RJC, the reflections from students demonstrate a powerful connection to particular people and activities. These data are helpful in understanding the approach to restorative justice education that has the most potential for shifting individuals’ perspectives.

6.7.3. Outside Factors

In exploring the factors outside the RJC that contributed to perspective transformation, no themes from the interview data emerged. While there were individual stories of very particular circumstances (i.e. a move, illness in the family) that contributed to perspective transformation, all reflections about transformation were centred on the RJC.

While the data are rich in stories of the impact of perspective change, facilitating factors and the sustainability of such shifts, this research would be incomplete without an examination of those former RJC students who had a different and, even, negative experience.

6.8. Participants Who Did Not Experience Perspective Transformation

Nine interviews were conducted with participants who did not report perspective transformation from either the RJC or an outside event. These participants were categorized according to the PT-Index, which grouped participants based on responses to selected survey questions. Two subgroups emerged from these interviews: five participants felt that the RJC reaffirmed or broadened prior beliefs and four found their experience was partly negative.

Not only those who did not experience perspective transformation reported a partially negative experience with the RJC. Two interviewees had negative feedback about elements of the RJC, but experienced an enduring transformation in perspective. These results demonstrate that while a negative experience with the RJC may prevent some people from experiencing perspective transformation, such is not necessarily the case for everyone. Although the experience of those who had a negative experience is qualitatively different from those who report a positive experience, a perspective transformation could still result for those students who took issue with the RJC.

The matched pair design produced interesting results in relation to those who did not experience transformation. Four pairs (eight individuals) with matched demographics were interviewed. One individual in the pair had reported transformation and the other had not. Within Pairs 2, 3 and 4, the participants who reported no transformation had a mostly negative view of the RJC. Two felt unable to voice their opinions during the RJC and one said the level of emotion displayed by the instructor in the RJC was inappropriate. While they did not discount the merits of restorative justice, they felt unable to engage in the RJC in a way that was meaningful for them.

Conversely, the individuals who did have a transformative experience reported a very positive experience with the RJC. Rave reviews about the quality of instruction and the safety in expressing diverse views were referred to often during these interviews. These participants identified to the RJC as one of the best classes they had ever taken and attributed their satisfaction to their shift in perspective.

The responses of Pair 1 demonstrate the role that students' perspectives coming into the RJC play in determining whether they experience transformation. For Tracy, an Indigenous woman active within her culture, her perspective was affirmed rather than transformed. She and another Indigenous participant, Luz, enjoyed a positive experience but reported no perspective transformation.

Being Aboriginal, I had a foundation in [restorative justice] because some of the restorative justice principles and concepts are related to what I learned as a First Nations person in terms of dealing with conflict within our community. So I knew about restorative justice that only because it was so related to me as a native person. (Luz)

Comparatively, Tracy's counterpart in Pair 1 had a retributive view upon entry into the RJC and, after enjoying the class, experienced a profound shift in perspective to a restorative one. These participants now share a more restorative perspective despite different experiences with the RJC. The following section presents additional data from those who did not experience transformation to provide a better understanding of this group.

6.8.1. The RJC Reinforced My Beliefs

Fifteen survey respondents and three interview participants said the RJC reinforced, strengthened, or affirmed their views. The following quotes highlight the nature of this pattern:

I don't think [my beliefs] shifted. Because coming into [the RJC] I was already a fan of restorative justice but I think after taking the class and throughout the class that it just reassured me that my view was correct. That it is almost the best way, in my opinion, to communicate with each other. So it is more that the course *reinforced* my views. (emphasis added, Rufus)

I came into the class with knowledge of a lot of critical theories. So I knew there was [*sic*] shortcomings of the system. I wasn't a disbeliever [in restorative justice] that became a believer. I was familiar with and agreed with what was being said. So [my beliefs] *solidified* or got *firmer* but it didn't go black and white.... But no, I can't recall the 180 change in belief. (emphasis added, Malcolm)

One of the seven participants interviewed who did not report perspective transformation came into the course with a punitive view and left with exactly that. While Grant learned more about what restorative justice was and saw a place for it within the system (if victims requested it), he was clear that the RJC did not affect his views or his actions in any way. Grant was open about his deep commitment to a conservative view. When reflecting upon his experience in the RJC he said:

There is the concept of transformative justice and that relates to changing society as a whole and given my deeply held political beliefs, I am always very suspicious of that. In fact, whenever I hear the term "social justice" I think of communism. You can't coerce equality. You can't coerce people love one another.

Respondents who reported affirmed, not changed, beliefs all experienced the RJC favourably. Many recalled experiences similar to those who experienced transformation, such as hearing from the guest speakers and the instructor. Even conservatively-minded Grant recalled:

It was memorable to be able to have a respectful argument with [the instructor]. She would always still welcome me into her office. Even if we had a disagreement on the subject. She always maintained her respect.

Tracy also felt favourably about the RJC saying:

Restorative justice was a fantastic course. It really was. There was a space for people to be different. There was a space for you to believe and not to believe. The way that [the instructor] presented ideas really allowed for there to be an evolution. It allowed for there to be a perspective shift. It allowed for students to come in with no knowledge and have that knowledge emerge by providing all of these different perspectives on restorative justice.

Overall, this group of participants enjoyed the course, but did not experience the transformation of perspective many others did. Coming to the course with a critical (Malcolm) or indigenous (Tracy; Luz) worldview resulted in the RJC affirming the students' perspective, rather than shifting it.

6.8.2. I had a partially negative experience

Of the interviewees who did not report transformation, four indicated that they experienced parts of the RJC negatively. Similar feedback was found in five answers to the survey open ended questions. During the interviews, these participants often expressed lingering feelings of frustration about the RJC. Negative experiences were most often attributed to the instructor's teaching style and approach to evaluating student performance. Several students felt that unless they agreed, uncritically with restorative justice, they would not get a good grade. For example,

I didn't really like my teacher so a lot of people in my class had the consensus that my prof was a little bit bad and she made us really frustrated. It's not like we don't like the idea of restorative justice, it's just that we don't like how she presented ... And then she was very passionate about her points because we had a couple of people in our class who didn't necessarily agree with her point of view and when they got their paper back they got a very low grade. So even though we wanted to talk about our points on restorative justice, we felt that our views were oppressed. (Vivian)

[The instructor] would often become hostile when you would question aspects of restorative justice. It felt like if you did not agree with her views, then your academic standing could suffer. I believe that her mentality was in direct contradiction of what university is supposed to teach us. Instead of being instructed and allowed to form our own opinions and interpretations of restorative justice, it felt at times we were forced to paint by numbers and only discuss the positive sides of restorative justice, while ignoring the rest. (S 348)

However, even when these issues around instruction came up, interview participants were quick to say that the tutorial largely made up for their poor experience with the instructor. The two students who had similar complaints about their instructor experienced transformation that they attributed to tutorial and guest speakers. It seems that for some students, these experiences were more important than the instructor.

The data suggest that the main complaint amongst these few participants was that an environment was not created through lecture or written assignments that allowed for a critique of restorative justice. There was also a keen sense from these participants that how the RJC is taught should be aligned with principles of restorative justice. As one survey respondent noted: "I was frustrated with the disconnect between how the class was

taught and what was taught” (S 330). The negative experience these participants had led to pessimism about further education with restorative justice. Six students indicated that after their negative experience, they would never take a course in restorative justice again.

Although those who had a partially negative experience appear to be in the minority, their voices are important. There is much to learn from them with respect to which approaches to restorative justice education can produce feelings of frustration or dissatisfaction.

6.9. Additional Findings

The open-ended nature of the interviews created an environment where participants shared their reflections beyond the questions posed. Although the focus of this research was with respect to individual perspective transformation, the participants shared insights regarding the potential for the RJC to affect the restorative justice movement more broadly. As any advances will be affected by how restorative justice is understood, patterns related to how former students define restorative justice are presented along their thoughts for the future of the RJC.

6.9.1. Defining Restorative Justice

Evidence of all three conceptions of restorative justice definitions were found in the data. While some participants articulated a transformative definition of restorative justice, others described encounters and reparations between victims and offenders.

The transformative conception was presented by Susie and Tracy as:

Honestly, it is the human approach. What I have realized is that a lot of times the way we deal with—whether it is in the CJS or people in general—a lot of times these rules can serve as guidelines, a framework of how, a reference point to come back to but there is so much that can happen in between and above and beyond that. So I think with restorative justice it allows for that. It allows for that opportunity to explore and to treat people as humans and entities of themselves but also it helps the greater good. It is a community thing. It takes it out of the individual and brings it into the community and it is like a

permanent solution. I see it as a humanistic way of dealing with people.
(Susie)

We are seeing those connections and the community-building initiative and anything that is building community is an act of restorative justice. It is a way of restoring the imbalances, the power differentials that have created these situations and bad conditions that we have to face daily.
(Tracy)

The transformative definition of restorative justice was most often discussed in relation to Indigenous worldviews. There were many participants who expressed appreciation for the deepened understanding of Indigenous issues and perspectives. These learning experiences contributed to their understanding of restorative justice as a way of living everyday life, not just something different that happens when a crime occurs.

Some participants defined restorative justice as attempts to repair harm to people, both victim and offender, and relationships. Others described face-to-face processes and provided examples of mediation and circles where parties discussed the harm and what to do about it. These definitions were noticeably criminal justice focused and several participants did not identify a place for restorative justice aside from responding to criminal incidents.

6.9.2. The Role of RJC in Advancing Restorative Justice

The majority of the participants felt that the RJC could play an important role in advancing restorative justice, particularly within the justice system. They saw the benefit in exposing future criminal justice actors to restorative justice ideas and practices. Many felt that the university setting provided a good opportunity for this education to take place, before people got into the criminal justice field. For instance, Mandy stated:

When I was in the class, there were times I found myself looking at the others, the kids, and thinking I hope they take this away too. Future probation officers and cops... I hope they take away that these things are complicated and I am a part of what happens with people.

Some participants felt that the RJC was not enough to advance restorative justice. Several pointed out that many Canadians do not attend university and for those who do, only a minority would be exposed to the RJC. There was a sense amongst the participants

of a general lack of knowledge in the public realm about restorative justice and a belief that this situation needs to change. Many participants felt strongly that education about restorative justice should begin much earlier than post-secondary. In addition to early education, political will and education for those currently working in the system were seen as important to advancing the movement. Some of the mechanisms participants suggested included voting and becoming more politically active in promoting restorative justice. They favoured getting more positive stories about restorative justice into the media and holding public forums to communicate the ideas more broadly.

For the RJC to successfully assist in advancing restorative justice through personal transformation, it is important to regularly hear feedback from former students. From the time the RJC was first offered, the course developers have been responsive to the voices of former students. These data can be helpful for future iterations of the RJC at SFU. Understanding why students chose to enrol in the RJC is important to institutions that offer restorative justice education.

6.9.3. Reasons for Enrolling in the RJC

Participants identified several reasons for enrolling in the RJC. Some had their curiosity piqued through the course description, as it appeared interesting and different compared to other courses. Students not majoring in criminology enrolled because they had taken other criminology courses and enjoyed them. Others signed up because they needed an upper division credit and the RJC does not have pre-requisites. For others, they had heard from a friend it was good course so they signed up.

Luz took the course specifically because he heard it included Indigenous content. This was in Fall 2013 during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's events in Vancouver. Luz noted: "There was First Nation content, there was going to be more than one Aboriginal student in the class because normally that is just me." Another Indigenous student noted the same issue with respect to her experience at post-secondary education. Tracy reflected:

It's difficult, especially because indigenous enrolment in universities is quite low ... Here [in Saskatoon] it's higher, but everywhere else it's

quite low. Makes it that you are the only indigenous person in the class a lot of times. And if you stand up and say anything you are now the ambassador for all indigenous people in the world. And it's not a role that any of us want to take on. So you end up in this place where you are alienated and not able to address anything without being stereotyped and given the power that you don't even have. It's like being the only woman in the class and something coming up about women's studies and asking you to comment.

The inclusion of Indigenous content was seen as a strength of the RJC by several of the non-Indigenous participants, as well. For many, it was their first in-depth examination of the history of colonization, the inter-generational impact of residential schools and the *Indian Act*, and the resilience and richness of Indigenous culture and justice approaches. Those students who were able to attend the Truth and Reconciliation events as a part of the RJC said that this was one of the most meaningful experiences of their academic life.

6.9.4. Strengths of the RJC

Aside from Indigenous content, students reported the strengths of the RJC as the inclusion of diverse voices on the topic of restorative justice, guest speakers, storytelling in circle, being encouraged to think critically, journaling and connecting deeply with others in tutorial. Some of the favourable comments shared were:

I thought the journaling was really effective for me because I was able to write a lot of raw stuff in those journals and just see myself grow throughout that process. (Susie)

The course really taught me to not be afraid to question status quo and to think critically about matters that impact minorities. Journal assignments enabled me to self-reflect, which I often didn't take the time to do. I am very grateful for that. (S 378)

This feedback helps explain the high demand for the RJC. The more people drawn to the RJC due to hearing about it as a positive experience, the more will be exposed to the ideas of restorative justice.

The data indicate that a high number of students experienced perspective transformation from the RJC although it could be argued that it is only one of many

university courses that impacts students in transformative ways. After all, should not a university education be about challenging and changing students' perspectives? While this may be the goal for many educators, the data show that for most participants, the RJC was unlike anything that they had experienced in their post-secondary education.

6.9.5. The RJC Was Unique to My University Experience

Participants routinely indicated that the RJC was not only one of their favourite courses at SFU, but also the most unique. The non-traditional structure and the relationships they formed made it exceptional. A survey participant highlighted this theme stating:

[The RJC] offered me the chance to interact in a way that is unique and different from any other course at SFU. Furthermore, it also caused me to consider perspectives that I had not before. (S 254)

The depth of relationships participants formed with other students during the RJC was repeatedly mentioned as notably different from other university classes. The fact that many of them have stayed connected after the RJC was identified as both positive, but also unusual in the context of their undergraduate degree at SFU. It appears that not only did the RJC lead to an enduring perspective shift, relationships were also sustained.

Additional evidence of the unique relationships that emerge from the RJC can be found by the higher response rate to the pilot survey for this research. Once the survey was released, several survey recipients sent personal emails to me. These messages contained well wishes for the dissertation, expressions of desire to assist with the research, and overall gratitude for the RJC. Several interviewees reflected on how much the RJC meant to them and how connected they still felt to other students and their instructor.

Despite the positive feedback about the RJC, courses can always improve. In addition to what can be learned by those participants who reported a partially negative experience during the RJC, the following section synthesizes suggestions for improvement from participants.

6.9.6. Suggestions for RJC Improvement

Most participants felt the RJC should continue being offered in its current form, as it is an excellent way to expose students to the ideas of restorative justice. Some students like Troy and Lila felt it could be mandatory for all undergraduates.

I think it should be a mandatory first- or second-year course as you go through the criminal law ... I think it should be mandatory because it is a different component of the system anyways so I don't know why ... or maybe it should be taught earlier so it moulds the thinking of first- and second-year students because they get more into the whole thing. I don't know. It that was me, I would have wanted it to be a mandatory course. (Troy)

I wish everybody could take this course. Even if they walk away with the same view they started with, at least they'll be exposed to something else, and they will know that something else exists, this is another option. (Lula)

While the majority of students gave almost exclusively positive evaluations of the RJC, there is always room for improvement. When asked, several participants provided concrete suggestions. While not all these recommendations can be considered themes as some were only mentioned by one student, given the history the RJC instructors have in being responsive to student feedback, they are listed for future consideration:

1. Don't grade the letter written at the end of the term (Vivian);
2. Have quick emotional check-ins at the beginning and end of class (Vivian);
3. Have more interactive lectures with fewer students (Gerry);
4. Make space for critique of restorative justice in journal writing and in class (Vivian; Malcolm; Lula);
5. Have more empirical evidence presented about restorative justice (Lance);
6. Connect the "games" played in tutorial with the course content, should not just be fun (Tracy);
7. Explain the circle process used in the RJC as a "talking circle" so it is not equated with all indigenous practices, some of which were used to deal with very serious situations (Tracy). This critique is particularly

important to heed given the risk of appropriating and coopting indigenous practices in the name of western restorative justice⁵⁶;

8. Continue bringing in guest speakers to share stories while ensuring there is balance; must hear from victims and justice professionals, not only the offender (Grant; Malcolm);
9. Ensure that the TA and instructor are modelling restorative justice values (Preet; Malcolm; Vivian);
10. Ensure affective engagement, being careful about being superficial (Mandy); and
11. Continue to honour Aboriginal worldviews and contributions to restorative justice (Tracy).

While there were personal preferences and ideas for improvements to the RJC, overall, the feedback from this sample was very positive with respect to both the andragogy and content. Given the number of students who reported sustainable perspective transformation, the contributions the RJC has made to advance the restorative justice movement thus far have been formidable. Participants' stories from both inside and outside of the criminal justice system have demonstrated that the ideas taken from the RJC make their way into the lived experiences of the students and others with whom they interact.

6.10. Summary

This chapter presented the findings from the 21 interviews that were held with former RJC students. The descriptions of their experiences with the RJC, the impact it had on their beliefs and behaviour, as well as what factors facilitated the transformation were described and augmented with survey data. This chapter also presented a unique look into the experiences of those who did not have a perspective shift. This section concluded with evaluative comments about the RJC and how students felt it might contribute to the advancement of restorative justice. In the next chapter, these findings are discussed in relation to the restorative justice and transformative learning literature and reflections from the course developers.

⁵⁶ See Tauri, J. (1998). Family group conferencing: a case study of the indigenisation of New Zealand's justice system. *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*, 10(2), 168-182.

Chapter 7.

Discussion

7.1. Introduction

The purpose of this research was to understand whether perspective transformations occurred for students who completed the RJC. After documenting the genesis of the RJC from the course developers, interviews and surveys were conducted with former RJC students to capture their experiences. Utilizing established research methods from the field of transformative learning, research questions surrounding the experience and enduring impact of perspective transformation, as well as factors that facilitated it, were explored. These findings help recognise how students' personal transformations can advance the restorative justice movement within communities and social institutions.

The results could inform restorative justice educators interested in enhancing students' experiences through transformative learning. Trainers in the field may also find this dissertation helpful in designing more meaningful restorative justice workshops for adult learners. Given the ongoing interest in restorative justice expressed by former RJC students, this research could be beneficial to these or future students as they compare their experiences with the sentiments of the sample.

This study used a phenomenological approach to document and analyze perspective transformation. The data indicate that many, although not all, students experienced a transformation from a retributive or undecided perspective to a restorative one. This transformation affected their beliefs about more than criminal justice and included new ways of seeing and acting in the world. In this chapter, these findings are discussed in relation to the transformative learning and restorative justice literature and observations from the course developers and me.

7.2. Sample Population

This project was motivated by my personal journey of transformation through restorative justice education and similar stories shared by RJC students. The restorative justice field in BC is filled with volunteers, researchers, and practitioners like myself who found their passion through the RJC. Anecdotally, it appears that individual perspective transformations resulting from the RJC at SFU contribute to concrete actions that advance restorative justice within communities and social institutions. This research aims to understand how such passion is ignited through personal transformation within tertiary restorative justice education.

All interview participants, whether or not they had experienced transformation, articulated support for restorative justice as a response to harm. They expressed hope that restorative justice would benefit victims and offenders. All interviewees said they had learned something new about restorative justice through the RJC. Similar findings were reported by Helfgott et al. (2000) who found that following restorative justice education, participants felt more hopeful than cynical about advancing restorative justice as a response to harm doing. Support for restorative justice was consistent amongst participants, notwithstanding students' experience in the RJC, background, or current occupation.

The purposeful selection of interviewees rendered a diverse sample of participants in terms of occupation, gender, discipline, and time since they completed the RJC. Seven participants were entrenched in their occupations in law, law enforcement, or corrections while five were university students approaching the end of their degree. The remaining nine were employed outside of the criminal justice system in fields as varied as construction, income tax, and disability services.

Despite varied motivations for enrolling in the RJC (see Chapter 6), what participants said about their experience in the RJC were very similar. Most students reported that the RJC was their favourite course at SFU and they gained relationships and lessons that have stayed with them to this day. For some, the RJC was life changing. Although this study was not meant to be evaluative, the data clearly indicate that the RJC was an enjoyable, unique, and memorable experience to the majority of the sample.

Interviewees who had a negative experience in the RJC reported that this did not affect their support for restorative justice. With the exception of one student, it was the andragogy or the instructor of the RJC, not the content that did not work for them. This indicates how acceptable the notion of restorative justice is for students despite the dominance of the retributive perspective. V. Braithwaite, Ahmed, Morrison and Reinhart (2003) reported similar findings amongst adults who consistently favoured non-punitive, dialogic responses to harm. As Elliott (2011) writes, “so integral is punishment to the presumed behavioural and social order of things that very little has been written to challenges its place” (p. 25). The RJC was student’s first exposure to a different conceptualization of justice and they embraced it.

Mirroring findings from previous research in adult education (King, 2009), no significant relationship existed between gender, age, and marital status and perspective transformation for RJC students. Similarly, certain learning activities were not more or less meaningful to people with differing demographics. Some previous research suggests that cultural and learning differences can affect whether transformation occurs (Taylor, 2008). In this study, cultural context played a role for Indigenous participants. Notably, the similarities between the RJC and some of their cultural experiences resulted in the course affirming, rather than shifting, their existing worldview.

Survey responses revealed that students appreciated learning specific content related to Indigenous worldviews and the history of colonization and residential schools in Canada. The Indigenous interviewees acknowledged the importance of having their history given concentration in the RJC. As restorative justice is informed by Indigenous knowledge and practices, it is notable that findings demonstrated both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students highlight the importance of Indigenous content within the RJC. Several of the course developers and Elliott (2011) acknowledged how Indigenous teachings informed their understanding of restorative justice. Thus, the RJC was designed around storytelling and circles, andragogy which departs from conventional Western, didactic teaching methods. Ross (2014) notes that an emphasis on “heart learning” is reflected in many Indigenous peoples’ reliance on storytelling where by the story first grabs the heart then sticks in the mind (p. 242). Storytelling, in particular, resonated deeply with both Indigenous and non- Indigenous participants in this study.

While the data indicate that some participants experienced an affirmation of their perspective through the RJC, many more reported perspective transformations mirroring the shift discussed by Zehr (1990; 2015) in the restorative justice literature. “Changing lenses” (Zehr, 2015) from retributive to restorative was often facilitated by guest speakers and other students sharing their stories in the context of the safe, respectful, and non-traditional class structure. Transformations endured over time and affected participants’ beliefs, relationships, and choices with respect to vocation, academia, and community engagement. The following discussion is organized according to the guiding research questions for this endeavour concerning the experience of perspective transformation, the factors that facilitated it, the impact of such transformation, and whether the impact was enduring.

7.3. The Experience & Impact of Perspective Transformation

I learned that the problems were much deeper than a flawed criminal justice system and that our work needed to begin in our relationships with each other and the natural world and, most importantly, with ourselves.

- Elliott, 2011, p. xii

Central to this study was the phenomenon of perspective transformation: a process usually involving a disorienting dilemma, critical reflection, dialogue, and action. Transformative learning is that which permanently affects beliefs and actions. Transformative learning occurs in adults, is voluntary, and defined as “a radical shift from one state of being to another, so significant it requires a shift of culture, behavior, and mindset” (Anderson & Anderson, 2001, p. 39). This research specifically examined whether such a perspective transformation was related to the RJC at SFU and what the nature of this shift was.

Transformative learning theory and restorative justice are premised on the notion that meaning is constructed through experience. These experiences are filtered through our own eyes and include distortions, prejudices, stereotypes, and unquestioned belief systems (Cranton & Wright, 2008). The lens used to examine crime and justice affects

what are included as relevant and important variables and which outcomes are considered appropriate (Zehr, 1990, p. 178). These lenses are socially constructed and, when it comes to crime, are profoundly affected by media accounts, which overstate the frequency of violent incidents and rarely offer a non-punitive vision of justice. The result of being saturated by punitive rhetoric is an unquestioned, impulsive calculation that justice equals punishment and anything less is perceived as 'soft on crime.'

Although significant reforms have occurred within the criminal justice system in the last hundred years, Zehr (1990) considers alternatives to prison such as community service or victim compensation attempts to patch up the retributive paradigm. He believes an alternative vision is required. This vision must be rooted in both principles and experience that guide a search for innovative solutions to the present crisis in criminal justice (Zehr, 1990, p. 180). A perspective transformation from retributive to restorative is required to realize more satisfying justice for victims, offenders, and those who care about them.

Transformative learning creates such shifts and occurs when one encounters an event that calls into question what one believes and subsequently revises their perspective (Cranton & Wright, 2008, p. 34). Moving from retributive to restorative justice requires changing lenses with respect to how crime and justice are problematized and responded to (Zehr, 1990). Although this process begins as a personal, reflective journey, new meaning is validated through dialogue with others; hence, learning is relational. These shifts in perspectives and relationships can create a sense of renewal in communities and individuals, procedures, and, ultimately structures and institutions. According to Van Ness and Strong (2010), "transformation of the world begins with transformation of ourselves – our own values, behaviour, mindset and character. Without this personal transformation, we risk a hollow victory in trying to transform the wider world" (p. 180).

Such personal transformations were evident in the data as students reported entering the RJC with a retributive perspective and leaving with transformed frame of reference. Restorative justice educators, Carson and Bussler (2013) shared similar observations of their undergraduate students who were fairly punitive and also unfamiliar with restorative justice. They explained that for most of students' lives prior to the

restorative justice course involved schooling practices primarily based on retributive justice. Helfgott et al. (2000), Vigorita (2002), and Holsinger (2008) also found that their restorative justice students reported a notable shift from supporting punitive responses to compassionate and restorative approaches to harm doing.

The perspective transformation described by many of the RJC students go beyond changing views about criminal justice to include how they perceive the world and their place in it. The ability to see justice as something they could participate in through cultivating respect, empathy, and compassion provided a more relational lens that they applied to their everyday lives. Being able to live and work from a place of their values became of keen importance to students. In other words, for many participants, restorative justice was perceived not only as “what you do” but “who you be” (Gustafson, 2007). As RJC students experienced this process of transformation, they integrated the head (what they believe), the heart (what they feel), and the feet (how they act).⁵⁷ Another way of framing the multiple aspects of transformation is with respect to the epistemological (change in worldview), ontological (change in being and sense of self), and behavioural (change in actions). Students who experienced this phenomenon reported that their values aligned with a new vision of justice that differed significantly from what they had come to know as “reality.” Common media portrayals of bitter, vengeful victims and handcuffed, tattooed arms were replaced by the kind eyes and thoughtful recollections of the storytellers who stood before them. Guest speakers were instrumental in humanizing those impacted by crime and giving students a sense of hope that transformation and healing is possible.

Participants who reported perspective transformation shared experiences akin to Zehr’s (1990) “changing lenses” and Van Ness and Strong’s (2010) transformation of perspective. Zehr (1990) defines a genuine paradigm shift as movement towards new language and a set of principles and procedures (p. 226). For Van Ness and Strong (2010), this shift has four elements: creativity, openness to learning, looking at familiar problems in new ways, and considering new alternatives (p. 176). These features overlap

⁵⁷ Understanding restorative justice education as head, heart, and feet was introduced to me by one of my mentors, Eric Stutzman. This conception is related to John Paul Lederach’s (2003) work on conflict transformation where he discussed head, heart, hands, feet/legs.

with Mezirow's (1991) stages of transformative learning and emerged as patterns in both survey and interview data. Those who experienced a perspective transformation exhibited critical reflection about personal values and the criminal justice system, receptivity to restorative justice, increased empathy, openness to sharing and hearing stories.

Frames of reference or worldviews shape what we know is possible. They are also limiting as they include ideological preconceptions that blind us to the possibilities that lie outside those conceptions (Van Ness and Strong, 2010, p. 173). The paradigms that underscore the contemporary justice system are due process and crime control. These approaches have been considered *battle* models that are adversarial, grounded in assumptions of disharmony and the need for external behaviour controls (Griffiths, 1970). Battle models can be contrasted with *family* models based on assumptions that harmful behaviour is expected in a society. The family model emphasizes self-control and upholds a natural state of being that is one of mutual support and love. Van Ness and Strong (2010) identify similarities between the family model and restorative justice that, they argue, makes restorative justice transformative. This approach considers the *people* who are involved in justice, not just the *laws*. The values underpinning restorative justice, including interconnection, empathy, and compassion, were evident in the perspective students embraced as a result of their experience with the RJC. The adversarial nature of the battle model no longer fit with the relational perspective that replaced students' retributive one.

While shifts from a retributive to restorative perspective were evident in the data, how restorative justice was conceptualized differed. Some students described their new outlook in a way that aligned with Harris' (2004) transformative conception of justice that focuses both on individuals involved as well as the preconditions and antecedents of the harm that include structural elements (p. 139), while others reported encounter or reparative understandings. Van Ness and Strong (2010) have discussed the generous overlap between the various conceptions; therefore, it may not matter what definition of restorative justice students take away. What is important, Van Ness and Strong (2010) argue, is the ability for students to identify inadequacies in the status quo and ask new questions. In doing so, old problems, issues, and solutions fade in importance as new ones come into perspective (p. 174).

According to Elliott (2010), the course developer, the objective of the RJC is to

introduce students to the restorative/transformational paradigm where particular attention is paid to the importance of values and relationships in restorative justice practices. The needs of those who harm and have been harmed are considered in the context of community capacity and social justice. (1)

The content, experiential andragogy, and aims of the course developers demonstrate learning objectives consistent with a transformational conception of restorative justice. The course developers hoped the RJC would be much more than a class where information is memorized and regurgitated. Rather, the RJC offers praxis, which becomes learning that students actively use. The hopes for the course developers are for students to actively contribute to social justice issues (B. Morrison, personal communication, April 5, 2014), have a voice and enhance personal and professional relationships (M. Roberts, personal communication, April 5, 2014), to bring restorative justice values into their daily lives and their future occupations (J. Miller-Ashton; C. Douglas, L.; Moore, personal communication, April 5, 2014). For many of the research participants, these hopes were realised. Students routinely reported personal and relational transformations, a sense of community in the class, and the motivation to take their learning into “real life.” These findings align with assertions that transformational impacts can be felt when restorative justice values inform restorative justice education (Toews, 2013).

In considering the most meaningful approach to introducing restorative justice to post-secondary students, Gilbert et al. (2013) suggest that

effective teaching of restorative justice should emulate the values and principles of restorative justice in the organization and management of the course. Teachers of restorative justice must ‘walk the talk’ and apply restorative principles and values to the design and delivery of the course itself. (p. 43)

Several other methods to restorative justice education have been suggested, including Toews’ (2013) “restorative justice pedagogy” built partially on transformational learning theory. Zellerer (2003) and Adamson (2012) recommend applying the principles and processes associated with problem-based and experiential learning. While there is utility in looking at existing educational strategies, this research demonstrates the

importance of factors such as circles and storytelling that illustrate how to “walk the talk” in restorative justice education.

Gilbert et al. (2013) emphasize the importance of students *experiencing* restorative justice when the course is taught in a way that espouses the values. This “restorative andragogy” enables students to engage in and understand restorative encounters and research, which empowers them to undertake innovative leadership roles within the justice workforce (p. 47). This research demonstrates that through participating in the RJC, students experience praxis that creates cognitive and emotive transformations that affect behaviour. Their actions, in turn, affect people and relationships inside and outside the criminal justice realm. These ripple effects contribute to the tide change needed to advance the restorative justice movement.

Although it is important to align restorative justice education with the values and processes, there are obstacles, particularly within larger universities. High student enrolment, fixed classroom seating, and signs in lecture halls that state, “Do not move the desks,” can impede the relational nature of restorative justice education. The RJC at SFU has addressed some of these by separating small, tutorial groups of 12 to 15 students from the large, lecture portion of over 100. Although similar options may not be possible in some settings, these considerations are crucial to enhance participatory learning. Restorative justice educators may refer to a Toews and VanBuren (forthcoming article) that will provide guidance on how to apply restorative justice values and principles to the architecture and design of a learning environment. A future discussion of university culture and restorative justice education is provided in Chapter 8.

Although the RJC instructors do not have specific training in transformative learning techniques, the course was transformative for many students. The data reveal patterns that mirror Mezirow’s (1997) stages of perspective transformation including disorienting dilemmas, critical reflection, dialogue, and action. While the feelings and actions that followed perspective transformation comprised much of what participants shared for this research, the moment itself was of great interest. In reflecting on my own transformation, I can recall the instant on an emotional level, but without the details of a photograph. This aligns with conceptions of transformative learning that go beyond the

rational realm. Willis (2012) describes transformation as producing a sense of enrichment, becoming better, brighter, more potent and alive. As I delved into this research, the experience resurfaced with more depth although an air of mystery still surrounds it. The essence of this transformative moment was captured in the personal narrative written as part of the self-reflective research journal.

Writing about this experience now, I can feel the same sensations overtake me. I feel the intensity of the pain and suffering that those involved with crime experience, the ripples of harm and loss that never seem to end. In that intensity, I feel a deep sense of connection to all humanity I realized I was not alone! We have all known suffering and shame and many, like myself and Glen, had taken steps to restore our lives. And through all of this, I feel a burning motivation that swells in my guts and fires through my heart and brain. I have come to know this burning as hope. It is something I felt that day on a level I had never known. (A. Abramson, November 10, 2013)

The work I do, and who I am, provide daily, tangible reminders of my personal transformation; for example, I have constructed this moment with Glen as a dramatic and all-encompassing shift. While two participants recalled a similar “light switch” moment, others described a more gradual process. As they were invited to recall the time they realized their perspective had changed or was changing, their eyes often would cast upwards and to the right. A softening befell, sometimes silence. After some time, some referred to a moment where a speaker or the instructor “said something,” but the details would be far from their grasp. Others referred to transformation that occurred following reading the material, reflecting on what it meant in their own life, and participating in class and tutorial. Although for some it was a jarring and confusing experience, most settled quickly into this new frame of reference. They felt more grounded and truer to who they are and want to be. Participants described a process that was personally reflective, internal, and involved reconsidering many beliefs and relationships. For example,

Being in that course provided another a-ha moment for me... the course enlightened me in a lot of ways and I literally shed the last layer of being. At the end of the class I walked out feeling pretty darn good about myself. (Susie)

How do I describe this? It’s a very internal, quiet, kind of thing where you’re realizing that things are not lining up the way they used to. Do you know what I’m saying? It’s very strange. And then the more you talk about the ideas in tutorial and heard examples in class, it was like,

oh my God. I was kind of resisting it initially and then you get to the point where you accept it and you're like, okay, I guess my views are changing. (Lula)

While the details of the transformative moment itself may not lend themselves easily to the written word, more about the transformative experience can be uncovered through an examination of the data in light of what has been written about the process. The following are ten stages transformative learning as originally articulated by Mezirow (1991, p. 168-169):

1. a disorienting dilemma;
2. self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame;
3. a critical reflection of epistemic, socio-cultural or psychic assumptions;
4. recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change;
5. exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions;
6. planning on a course of action;
7. acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans ;
8. provisional trying of new roles;
9. building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships and;
10. reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective.

These stages have been refined by several scholars (Cranton, 2006; King, 2009) and Herber (1998) further condensed the ten phases to (a) disorienting dilemmas, (b) critical reflection, (c) rational dialogue, and (d) action. Gliszinski (2007) maintains distillations of the process are helpful as they reflect the foundations components of the transformative experience. Herbers' summation is used below to discuss the research findings where several of these elements emerged from the data.

7.3.1. Disorientating Dilemma

The most apparent of the four core elements of transformative learning is the disorienting dilemma or trigger event (Mezirow, 2012). Poutiatine (2009) describes this phenomenon as an encounter with “something that does not fit into his or her dominant narrative of how the world is or how it works” (p. 7). This initial stage in the transformative learning process was often described by participants as the realization that their belief in punishment no longer “fit.” This dilemma can trigger self-examination of personal beliefs, which was evident in the data.

Students could not identify the exact moment their perspective started to shift, describing the experience as a combination of “everything” in the course. Most often transformation resulted from more of an accumulation of information and experiences, rather than “one sudden illumination” or epochal change as described by Cranton (2006). These findings align with Baumgartner’s (2001) assertion that while transformation could be the result of one incident it is more likely the result of several events that cumulate. For example, the survey results indicate that 62% of the pilot survey and 57% of main survey respondents said a change of job affected their transformative experience. These results indicate that the transformative process could be either initiated or encouraged by events outside the RJC. While this research focused on the contributions of the RJC, the transformative process is too complex to reduce to a single factor.

Cranton (2006) notes that even if the precipitating event to the transformative experience is abrupt, it seems to be followed by a process of “unfolding” including critical reflection, discourse, and conscious revision of assumptions (p. 72). The RJC, for many, was the place where more than one event came together to create the disorienting dilemma. King and Heuer (2008) contend that transformation can be gradual, uneven, and iterative (p. 19). According to Cranton (2006), this incremental transformation can happen over months or years, perhaps unconsciously, until the person looks back and says “I was a different person then” (p. 71). While the interviews made space for students to explore the experiences that may have preceded the RJC, they chose to focus largely on the aspects of the course. Many expressed gratitude for being able to revisit these memories.

A major contributor to students' transformative learning experience was the information they gained about the shortcomings of the retributive criminal justice system. Similar results were documented by Helfgott et al. (2000) who found that after participating in a prison-based restorative justice seminar, participants were less hopeful about the criminal justice system and, thus, more open to restorative responses. Helfgott et al. (2000) and Vigorita (2002) also found participants were less punitive and had decreased faith that the contemporary system could address the needs of those impacted by crime. The same theme emerged from these data as students reported little confidence that the legal system could address the needs of offenders, victims, and the community.

Participants described learning about the critiques of the current retributive system as eye opening and insightful. Increased awareness about these shortcomings laid the foundation for them to be open to alternatives like restorative justice. While some participants reported having misgivings about the system prior to the RJC, they lacked an alternative notion of justice beyond the status quo. As one participant said, "It made me consider justice as something other than jail time" (S 385). It appears they had taken the permanency and utility of the criminal justice system for granted until this frame of reference was challenged. For example, learning that longer prison sentences, especially for those people who are already traumatized, can cause more harm and do nothing to meet the needs of victims was described as "revolutionary" (S 28).

These results are not surprising given how the RJC is structured. Initially, the focus is on deconstructing punishment and questioning its moral and practical implications. This reframing impacts students, as punishment is a common response to all sorts of behaviour: from penalties in sports and zeros for plagiarism, to fines for speeding and parents who give their children a "time out," punishment remains the largely unchallenged consequence of breaking a rule. Given this reality, it is no wonder that course content that presents a critical view of this "every day" occurrence could be experienced as disorienting.

Cranton (2006) notes that disorienting events are particularly impactful when learners are confronted with information that contradicts knowledge accepted and acquired from authority figures (p. 62). Dirkx et al. (2006) explain that disorienting events

involve “the recognition that an alternative way of understanding may provide new insights into a problem” and sometimes “context awareness of the sources, nature, and consequences of an established belief” (p. 124). The data provide evidence of this “context awareness” in relation to their participants’ insights about crime and justice. They identified the source of their established beliefs as the media, other university courses, and parents. For instance, one survey respondent wrote:

[The RJC] allowed me to look at people, victimization, offending, forgiveness, healing, etc. from a different perspective than what *I was brought up with*. (S 59, emphasis added)

The data were clear that transformation was more than just seeing criminal justice differently. More fulsome shifts in worldviews were the result of several disorienting dilemmas or triggers from the course content, andragogy, and, most often, stories shared by guest speakers and peers.

Storytelling

During the RJC, students had the opportunity to hear directly from victims and offenders who have participated in restorative justice. As Morrison (personal communication, April 5, 2014) mentioned in the course developers circle, “storytelling and the face-to-face relational pedagogy” is central to the RJC. Participants described these moments as some of the most memorable in their transformative process. This is unsurprising given that humans are story-making creatures who have evolved language that leads to self-consciousness. This self-consciousness is the ability of the mind to step back from experience, to filter and interpret, and reflect (Baldwin, 2005, p. 77). Students reported being able to see offenders, in particular, as human. Ross (2014) discusses the importance of learning new ways of relating to each other where people are not defined by a particular act (p. 255). These survey participants made reference to humanizing the “offender” so often stereotyped and feared:

I changed my dehumanizing view of criminals in general and learned to be more empathetic. (PS 83)

One of our guest speakers was a man who had been convicted of murder and was now living in a half-way home and working with street kids. Hearing his story and being able to connect with him as a human being

rather than an “offender” helped me to understand that it was possible to hate the behavior but still like the person. (S 258)

Participants perspectives were also affected when they heard speakers share their experience moving from victim to survivor or offender to contributing community member. Taylor (2007) found that “one of the most powerful tools for fostering transformative learning is providing students with learning experiences that are direct, personally engaging and stimulate reflection upon experience” (p. 182). For example, MacLeod, Parkin, Pullon and Robinson (2003) reported that students who spent time with patients in hospice, hearing stories from them and their families, experienced empathy and a range of emotions that directly contributed to their transformative experience. Because story facilitates connection between people, empathy emerges. This theme of empathy presented strongly through the data.

Stories are excellent vehicles for engaging learners. As Baldwin (2005) says,

Story opens up a space between people that is unbound from the reality we are standing in. Our imaginative ability to tell story and our empathetic ability to receive story, can take us anywhere and make it real. In the act of telling story, we accept an invitation into experiences that are not our own, although they seem to be. Story weaves a sense of familiarity. We are simultaneously listening to another’s voice and travelling our own memories. We are looking for connectors, making synaptic leaps linking one variation of human experience to another. (p. 7)

Story is transformative not only because it connects us as human beings but also because it makes actions conscious, rather than unconscious (Baldwin, 2005). In order to change something, it must be named. Shifting experiences into language lays the groundwork for transformative personal development (Baldwin, 2005, p. 82).⁵⁸ Eisenstein (2013) argues that sharing stories that result in personal, relational, or local transformations can have global significance as changed people, change other people (p. 63). In the restorative justice field many high-profile, powerful stories have contributed to

⁵⁸ For more on the impact and experience of sharing stories related to restorative justice from the perspective of storytellers, see Savail, D. (2015). “*We can’t just tell the good stories*”: *Reflections on Experiences of Storytelling and Restorative Justice* (Unpublished master’s thesis). Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC.

greater awareness of the movement. Participants specifically identified Warren Glowatski's story⁵⁹ as transformative, as meeting him did not mesh with the media-created monster about whom they had heard. As a result of these experiences, students questioned the labels they and the media impose on people. Mezirow (1991) has noted that labels—characteristics we assign to someone—are one of the more insidious ways that habits of mind are perpetuated. Given the rampant use of labelling in criminology (victim, offender, murderer, rapist, thief), questioning these labels is important as they deny human dignity by reducing people to certain behaviours. Labels are often used without thinking and reflective practice that highlights this is part of what Dirkx (2012) calls “soul work”—bringing the unconscious to consciousness.

Students reported that hearing from the guests provided evidence that restorative justice was a legitimate and meaningful option. These stories were indicative of what Dirkx et al. (2006) consider part of the perspective transformation process when a new belief is reinforced “by an empirical test of the truth of its claims” (p. 124). As one participant summarizes,

[t]he speakers gave human credibility to what we typically only study in textbooks and academic articles. (S 216)

Not only did stories provide cognitive proof for restorative justice, they triggered a shift in perspective from an emotional place. Students said when they listened to the stories they were crying, or trying not to cry. Others indicated feelings of hopefulness and joy for the power of healing. Rossner (2011) found similar results by studying the interaction rituals of restorative justice conference participants noting that through successful processes, “negative emotions of fear, anger and hostility are transformed into positive feelings of solidarity” (p. 95). Unlike the courtroom or a traditional classroom, restorative processes and andragogy provide safe spaces for stories to be shared and received. According to Tyler and Swartz (2012), telling personal stories is inherently social and requires some vulnerability. However, this risk is accompanied by opportunity for exploring an experience that can foster transformative learning (p. 460). RJC students

⁵⁹ Warren Glowatski was one of two young people responsible for the murder of Reena Virk in Saanich, BC, on November 17, 1997. This case was highly publicized and produced a moral panic according to Barron, C., & Lacombe, D. (2005).

reported beginning the course with punitive feelings toward people who committed serious crimes. Hearing stories from people directly involved in these cases moved them beyond the realm of conventional reason and engaged them on an emotional level that was transformative.

Emotion & Transformation

Transformative learning and conventional justice have been critiqued for concentration on cognition and rationality whereby arguments are weighed, evidence is evaluated, and conclusions are drawn. This appraisal unsurprising given that “rational thinking is basically a Western concept, since researchers in the West tend to ignore the body, emotions, and spirit as valid learning agents, thus limiting learning to a sheer cognitive process that takes place in the mind” (Papastamatis & Panitsides, 2014, p. 76). This separation of the body and mind fails to acknowledge the physical, emotional, and spiritual realms of our being. A more holistic view is present in many Indigenous ways of knowing. For example, the concept of the medicine wheel symbolizes how the mind, body, emotion, and spirit are at play in all life (Ross, 2014).

Just as transformative learning has evolved to uncover the emotional impact of perspectives and meanings to integrate new information through an alternative learning channel (Papastamatis & Panitsides, 2014, p. 76), restorative justice reconsiders the role emotion plays in justice. Learning and justice are no longer objective searches for truth, but subjective explorations of central questions. In restorative justice, the guiding questions include: what happened, who is affected and how, whose obligations are these, and what needs must be addressed to start to heal people and relationships (Zehr, 1990). Sherman (2003) considers restorative justice “emotionally intelligent justice” whereby emotions are engaged rather than suppressed as in court-based justice. Providing opportunities for dialogue between offenders, victims, community, and justice professionals where remorse, guilt, shame, empathy, and hope are expressed can be useful in reducing harmful behaviours. Just as emotional engagement can lead to a more fulfilling experience of justice, transformative learning occurs when learners and teachers engage more holistic ways of knowing oneself and the world.

Scott (2003) found that “transformations result from something deeper than the cognitive ego, and more organically dynamic and emotional” (p. 282). Taylor (2007) noted that transformative learning research affirms the essentiality of affective ways of knowing and effectively engaging emotions in practice, particularly in relationship to its counterpart critical reflection (p. 188). According to Mezirow (1997), disorienting dilemmas can often be associated with self-examination that produces feelings of guilt or shame. Participants often referred to emotions when reflecting on their transformative experience: elation, a sense of peace, and, at times, frustration. There was no evidence of shame, guilt, fear, anger, or loss after the trigger event or realization that transformation had occurred. Although two participants felt a sense of frustration about where to take their new perspective, others found their transformed view comfortable and calming. There was a sense of alignment between personal and restorative justice values.

Frustration played a role for those who did not experience a perspective transformation as a result of the RJC. These feelings were associated with the impression that their perspectives critical of restorative justice were not welcomed by the instructor. Being able to critically reflect on ideas and discuss them is essential for the transformative learning process to move past the stage of experiencing a disorienting dilemma. Taylor (2007) says that “without the expression and recognition of feelings participants will not begin critical reflection” (p. 291). Without emotional safety for critical reflection, strong negative emotions will result, which is not helpful for advancing restorative justice or for supporting adult learning.

We often come into contact with information that disorients and does not fit into our worldview or preconceptions. Mezirow (1997) suggests that in the face of such ideas, there is a strong tendency to reject them as unworthy of consideration—aberrations, nonsense, irrelevant, weird, or mistaken (p. 5). Once a disorienting dilemma has been experienced, learners can choose to reject this information or critically reflect and question assumptions they hold. According to Mezirow (1997) there are circumstances and people that make it more likely the learner will choose to process this new information and talk to others. These include a safe and respectful environment and an encouraging instructor. For those who experienced a perspective transformation, the RJC was a place that made space for and encouraged a process of critical reflection and dialogue.

7.3.2. Critical Reflection

Critical self-reflection and questioning assumptions is at the heart of Mezirow's model of transformative learning (Cranton, 2006). It is doubtful that many people feel comfortable describing themselves as unreflective. When surveyed, 95% the pilot and 91% of the main respondents said they frequently reflect on the personal meaning of their studies. Eighty percent of the pilot and 73% of the main survey respondents said they usually think back over past decisions and behaviour.

Reflection is a key component of transformative learning and a major goal in adult education generally (Cranton, 2006, p. 33). This process is both internal and external, as transformation has both an individual and a social dimension (Mezirow, 2003). As such, it usually occurs in relation to others following a disorienting dilemma, when the learner voluntarily examines how the new information or idea fails to fit within their frame of reference. Cranton (2006) suggests that when people critically examine their habitual expectations, revise them, and act on this revised point of view, transformative learning has occurred (p. 19).

Pedro clearly articulated the importance of critical reflection in the transformative learning process:

Personal transformation has to do with a lot of self-reflection. Transformation has to do with being able to see a situation and then determine if you handled that situation appropriately by your own set of rules, your values, what you think. And based on your life circumstances, your values, you might transform or adapt or continue to act the way you do.

The data demonstrate that participants often identified critical reflection as part of their perspective transformation. Specifically, students said they reflected on their thoughts, values, personal experiences, actions, and other things they had learned in their criminology degree. The practice of critical reflection requires a level of personal risk and self-awareness that was fostered by the RJC. The interviewees articulated how they were encouraged to reflect on their own perspective through journals and tutorial activities. For those who experienced perspective transformation, their written work and classrooms provided safe, respectful, and non-judgemental spaces to explore alternative

perspectives. Many considered this a unique opportunity in their lives, not only the university setting.

Through reflecting, students became more aware of their views about crime and punishment as well as what was important to them about justice. This exemplifies what Eisenstein (2013) considers the breakdown of an old story that uncovers old wounds and exposes them to the healing light of awareness of a new story (p. 13). Van Ness and Strong (2010) contend that the recognition that restorative justice involves people, not just the law, is inherently transformational (p. 174). Similar results were reported by Moore (2003) who identified that self-awareness emerged as a cornerstone of transformation for restorative justice participants (p. 299). Through reflecting on one's own perspective, new insights are gained and empathy towards other perspectives is developed.

The current banking model of education where the teacher deposits information into the student or receptacle to receive, file, and, store (Freire, 2000, p. 72), is rarely a place for critical reflection. The more students work at storing these deposits, the more passive they become and thus, less likely to develop the critical consciousness required to transform their world (Freire, 2000, p. 73). To advance restorative justice philosophy and practice, future criminal justice actors and citizens must resist the adaptation of the status quo that perpetuates the retributive paradigm. Given that the theme of self-reflection emerged so strongly from the data, it appears the RJC lives up to its developer's aspirations for a relevant course that encouraged critical thought and inspired action. Critical reflection is action in itself, even if it results in the postponement of tangible behaviours (Freire, 2000). From the place of critical reflection, dialogue and action follow to complete the process of transformative learning.

7.3.3. Dialogue

Dialogue is essential to justice and peace on both an interpersonal and a structural level. It is not the only mechanism, but it is an essential one.

- Lederach, 2003, p. 21

Dialogue, beyond every day conversation, is central to restorative justice and transformative learning. According to Lederach (2003), dialogue is needed to provide

access to and have voice in the ways we are in relationship and how our organizations and structures behave (p. 22). This dialogue is necessary to advance restorative justice. Dialogue and critical reflection are active components in the transformative learning process. Dialogue is central as “we need to engage in conversation with others in order to better consider alternative perspectives and consider their validity” (Cranton, 2006, p. 36). This dialogue involves an examination of values, beliefs, and feelings. Effective discourse depends on how well the educator can create a situation in which those participating (Mezirow, 1997, p. 10):

- have full information;
- are free from coercion;
- have equal opportunity to assume the various roles of discourse (to advance beliefs, challenge, defend, explain, assess evidence, and judge arguments)
- become critically reflective of assumptions;
- are empathic and open to other perspectives;
- are willing to listen and to search for common ground or a synthesis of different points of view; and
- can make a tentative best judgment to guide action.

Vaandering (2010) highlighted the importance of dialogue when she connected Freire’s conceptions of transformative learning and restorative justice. She noted that humanization comes to life through pedagogy that uses dialogue to increase awareness of social conditions and becoming agents of change. Through these dialogic processes, the essential components of restorative justice are fostered. These components include a deep respect for humanity and community. Freire (2000) believed that human beings were essentially communicative creatures.

Participants reported that humanization and empathy emerged from communicating with one another during tutorials where circles and experiential activities were a regular occurrence. The data are rich with expressions of gratitude for being able to share without judgement listen to alternative perspectives, and experience empathy. Many of Mezirow’s (1997) conditions for effective discourse were reported, including feeling safe with the group, non-coercion, and taking on the roles of both speaker and listener.

Pranis et al. (2003) note that circles are built on the premise that every human being wants to be connected to others in a good way (p. 9). They can be a place of non-coercion, collective accountability, community, and healing (p. 10). According to Ross (2014), virtually all group discussions with Indigenous peoples are held in circle where everyone is equal and has an opportunity to speak as much or as little as they like when the talking piece is passed to them. Circles have been used throughout the centuries by many traditional societies to solve problems, make decisions, celebrate, and build community. The majority of RJC students identified circles to be powerful and memorable. During each week's tutorial, students would sit in a circle and the TA would pose a phrase or question at the beginning and end of the session. Each student was given the opportunity to respond. These circles are referred to as gatherings and closings in the Tutorial Guide (Elliott, 2009) and are explained as follows:

Gatherings are used to bring the group together after an absence, and closings signify the end of the group's meeting. In the short time we have for tutorials (1 hour and 50 minutes), many of these will be one-word responses to statements or questions posed by the teaching assistant (TA). Sometimes, however, we will deliberately spend more time in gatherings to get to know each other better. Both gatherings and closings are important for group cohesion and building community. (p. 1)

Participants referred to these as "sharing circles," "healing circles," or "circles." They reported that these processes created equality, respect, and understanding, and created a safe space for reflection and learning. Restorative justice educators Carson and Bussler (2013) reported similar findings, noting that "[r]ather than allowing the confident students to monopolize the discussion, the Circle process, as practiced in restorative justice, insures that every class member has an opportunity" (p. 140). The following excerpts highlight the patterns that emerged from the data about circles.

During Circles, we were all given a chance to speak and share our experiences. Typically, you never have an opportunity to view individuals when they are most vulnerable and willing to break their outer cover to let you in and see who they truly are. It was empowering and inspiring – my heart went out to my classmates when they spoke of their struggles, and I felt elated and happy for them when they spoke of their victories. I saw that a person can never be judged based on their appearance or on what you think they are all about, but rather a person is who they are because of their experiences and their situation in life. (PS 20)

Many people around the circles shared the same stories I shared and I realized that I would not be alone in things people tend to face. Gathering everyone's stories, we always come to impressive conclusions in how to move ourselves forward. (PS 19)

The data provide evidence of what Bai, Cohen, and Scott (2014) would describe as students seeing themselves as connected to others (p. 12). This connection was nurtured through sharing and receiving stories within the safe space of the circle. Baldwin (2005) notes:

Events become real when we organize experience into narrative: we literally cannot think without words. People become real when we put interaction into words: story is the foundation of relationship. With words alone we can create connection, establish community. With words alone, we can recognize ourselves in each other's lives. (p. xi)

The unique form of dialogue that took place during the RJC tutorial facilitated students' transformations. Adamson and Bailie (2012) also observed that restorative processes provide specific mechanisms that support the various components of transformative learning (p. 149). Elliott (2011) detected that as people become more accustomed to participating in circles, they begin to make a paradigm shift in their way of thinking about harm and become more attuned to values based approaches (p. 197). Scott (2003) has written about the transformative potential of storytelling and the subsequent possibilities of social reform as individuals are empowered through their stories being heard. By valuing the historical, familial, and political contexts of one another through listening to individual stories, Scott (2003) found that the individual and the social could be viewed more holistically, as interdependent change agents. Pranis (2002, p. 5) said that sharing stories, especially stories of pain or struggle, or those reflecting our imperfections, can radically change how we see one another and, therefore, radically change how we relate to one another. Pranis (2002) regards attentively listening to stories as a form of empowerment. Within Western culture particularly, stories that are usually attended to indicate a level of positional and economic power of the storyteller. Boyes-Watson (2008) concurs that in today's highly stratified society, not all stories are given equal value or people given equal voice. Seeking out and encouraging storytelling from those who have been or are marginalized is not only about distributing power differently but enhancing learning and empathy.

The data indicate that through circles in the RJC tutorials, students felt their stories and experiences were valued and they, in turn, made space to listen to others without judgement. When students' stories are honoured in this way, they gain personal power that can be transformative. Exchanging stories through the circle translated into listening outside of the classroom with significant others, family, and others. Several students reported using the circle process with their co-workers, clients, and children. The transfer of restorative justice processes from the classroom to the community is an example of the action generated through their experience of perspective transformation.

7.3.4. Action

Everyone one of us can bring transformative justice nearer to fruition in our society. Only as everyone who believes there is a better way takes these kinds of small steps will we bring it about.

- Morris, 2000, p. 220

Taking action is an essential component of transformative learning (Dirkx et al., 2006; Freire, 2000) and advancing restorative justice (Brathwaite, 2013; Elliott, 2011; Van Ness & Strong, 2010). According to Baumgartner (2001), not only *seeing*, but *living* a new perspective is necessary (p. 17). Cranton (2006) states that social reform has long been the goal of adult education and cites examples of the Antigonish movement in Canada and the Highland Folk School in the USA. These movements sought to provide education for ordinary people as a way of effecting social change through literacy and economic development (Cranton, 2006, p. 44). V. Braithwaite et al. (2013) argue that the public must be mobilized to engage in restorative justice with confidence and goodwill while also owning the initiatives (p. 113). The shift from state-based, top down justice and education to participatory, empowering, and collective social engagement is one that requires both individual and systemic action. This shifting of responsibility can be achieved, in part, through restorative justice education.

While critical reflection is considered action, further intervention into reality is necessary (Freire, 2000). If one perceives the world differently, one responds to it differently; the internal perception change will find expression in external actions (Cranton, 2006, p. 171). Once a new frame of reference is in place, it is not uncommon for the

learner and people close to them to report a change in their behaviour. For transformative learning to have an impact beyond the individual, learners must engage in praxis: using reflection and action to transform structures (Freire, 2000). When it comes to advancing the philosophy or practices of restorative justice, these actions could take place inside and outside the criminal justice system, schools, or community. Although, restorative justice has been critiqued as unrealistic in the face of the massive institutions that govern social and public life, the story of the hummingbird reminds us that individuals have the power to facilitate change that affects everyone (Elliott, 2011, p. 211).

Participants shared concrete examples of actions that resulted from their experience of perspective transformation following the RJC. Susie, an indoor cycling instructor, put her students in a circle rather than rows and introduced restorative justice processes to teachers at her child's school. Susie also explored a restorative justice process with someone who victimized her family. Mandy is a mature student who enrolled in an honours program and completed original research on restorative justice. Rufus, an aspiring lawyer, used empathic and patient listening to transform a challenging relationship with his mother. Lois, a clerk within law enforcement, now uses careful discretion while doing police checks, digging deeper to understand the context of the situation before deciding whether potentially life changing information should be disclosed. Pedro, a police officer, routinely takes extra time to use "roadside" restorative justice. Preet, a medical student, vows to bring restorative values into the examination room and truly listen to her patients. Stacy was working in victim services and quit her job when she could no longer dehumanize the "offender" in cases of domestic violence. She also reports a voracious appreciate for learning about restorative justice. For example, every paper she has written in courses since the RJC has explored restorative justice more deeply.

Following the RJC, many participants reported choosing volunteer work that would advance social justice. The desire to volunteer and provide service to community was also discovered in Moore's (2003) research on transformation that occurred for restorative justice participants. Thirty percent of both the pilot and main survey respondents indicated that the RJC affected their career choices. Respondents aspired to careers where they could make a difference, support community development, and promote social justice. King (2009) also found learners who experience perspective transformation "realize new

capabilities, new interests and new dreams; it is as though the world opens up before them” (p. 6). Following a restorative justice course both Holsinger’s (2008) and Vigorita’s (2002) students reported having a more clear career path and many felt their passion for helping others ignited. Holsinger’s (2008) students said that the restorative justice course “provided them with direction in their career searches” (p. 331) towards vocations more focused on offering support and rehabilitation, rather than punishment. Adamson (2012) found restorative justice students reported that what they learned was practical enough to bring into personal and professional settings (p. 116). Carson and Bussler (2013) also provided accounts of restorative justice students bringing circle processes in to help deal with complicated and sensitive family matters. These actions have potentially countless ripples within relationships and the settings they occur.

Behaviour can be understood as concrete manifestations of our values. Elliott (2011) states that consonance between values and actions create the personal accountability and integrity necessary to cultivate care in our relationships and our communities (p. 206). In her discussion of ethical restorative justice practice, Sharpe (2011) explains that ethics refer to the motivations, concerns, or efforts that reflect a desire to contribute to a common good that lies beyond one’s personal identity or organizational mission. Ethics concern a desire to be and do something that matters for the sake of some larger purpose (Sharpe, 2011, p. 13). Our belief in what is right and wrong is deeply personal and, yet connected to how we exist in relationship to others. The participants spoke to how their perspective transformation connected them to the importance of caring for others, being curious rather than judgemental, and understanding that “everyone has a story.” This learning indicates that their transformation is not only about a shift in cognition and emotion, but has relational aspects. The change is not about just seeing differently, but doing differently in relation to and in service of others. Acting on these values stems from this deeper commitment to a different way of being. The specific values that emerged as themes from the data included compassion, non-judgement, forgiveness, and empathy. These survey participants highlighted the connection between action and values:

It was the only course where I actually got something positive out of it. I will take the values from this course and use it in my everyday life to [sic] the day I die. It inspired me to make a change to our criminal

justice system through my career and I have taken on that responsibility. (S 74)

This class was completely life changing. I realized what my values were and what I want our Justice System to incorporate. (S 165)

Actions stemming from these values are a commitment to what Moore (2003) calls “transpersonal experiencing,” which reflects restorative justice participants’ choice to reach beyond self-interest and personal gain (p. 301). This finding is exemplified through results that demonstrate RJC participants taking up volunteerism and vocations that would allow them to contribute to the betterment of all. Toews (2013) reported similar results as she noticed that many of her students wanted to contribute to their communities and effect change in the world (p. 14).

When participants sought to connect their actions with these values, they reported that more caring interactions with strangers, family, friends, partners, and clients followed. Participants felt they were more empathic, compassionate, open-minded, and tried to understand the experience of others, rather than rushing to judgement. As a result of the RJC, they reported becoming more patient listeners, asking more questions, and being more forgiving. Adamson (2012) also found that participants noted changes in their relationships following a restorative justice graduate course (p. 101).

Lederach’s (2003) conception of circular change is useful in understanding how the perspective transformations experienced through the RJC can assist in advancing restorative justice to communities and others. He notes that change, like life, is never static. Often things feel like they are moving forward and other times one reaches an impasse and can start moving backwards (Lederach, 2003, p. 42-43). Rather than looking at change as a linear process, Lederach’s (2003) circular notion seeks to respond to immediate as well as long-term and systemic issues. His strategy to attend to both when pursuing social change involves developing the capacity to see pressing issues with empathy while resisting a knee jerk reaction. This approach also encourages developing the capacity to look at change through multiple time lines, reframe questions in light of numerous frames of reference, embracing complexity, and exploring questions of identity (p. 48-60). These components were evident in the stories of many participants as they sought to bring a more restorative perspective into their daily life. They appeared to be

attending to both the short and long-term changes required to achieve meaningful social change. They did what they could in the arenas where they had influence while maintaining their vision centered on the philosophy and possibility of restorative justice. This approach is precisely what Zehr (1990) meant by using this new lens of restorative justice to inform and shape our decisions in parts of “our lives where we have some control: within our families, our churches, our daily lives.” (p. 227)

Participants appeared to experience what Vaandering (2010) considers the heart of restorative justice: a restoration of our sense of connection with one another (p. 173). This change could be characterized as a shift in what Mezirow (2003) calls the *moral-ethical habits of mind*. These habits have to do with how we define good and evil, act on their views of goodness, and the extent to which they see themselves as responsible for advocating justice (Cranton, 2006, p. 26). Participants who reported these broad shifts in how they viewed people and the importance of relationships reflect Vaandering’s (2014) aim for restorative justice education. She highlighted the importance of students understanding restorative justice not as a model, but as a relational view of humanity where all beings are worthy. It is these relationships, rather than rules, that create the guidelines necessary to nurture human interaction (p. 513).

These themes related to relationships may be the most salient to addressing a central question regarding advancing restorative justice in the community and our institutions. As former RJC students find places for restorative justice values and processes within their intimate networks, this perspective becomes more ingrained and begins to influence others. As several participants revealed, restorative justice is a part of who they are now and their interactions with others are affected. Operating from a restorative lens, former RJC students become part of the restorative justice movement.

Barriers to Action

Although action is an important aspect of perspective transformations necessary to advance restorative justice, barriers often exist. Given their social location as university students, RJC participants had the freedom, safety, security, and support to make choices about work and further study and interact differently in their relationships. Several interviewees reported that although sometimes their family or friends may not have agreed

with their new perspective, they were able to take actions without relational or economic repercussions. However, not all learners have these opportunities. For example, Kilgore and Bloom (2002) found that although students reported “I am a new person now,” taking action on this new perspective did not occur. They discovered that for women in crisis, “In order to survive in the various contexts of their lives, these women often held many contradictory perspectives while learning the script of those in power” (Kilgore & Bloom, 2002, p. 131). Constrained by their current context of prison, addiction, and poverty, these women were unable to act on their transformed perspectives. Similar findings have been reported with respect to the prison education program, *Inside Out*. Although post-secondary education in prison can be transformative, students’ actions can be limited by the “complex web of social, political, economic, institutional, and individual forces” (Weil Davis, 2013, p. 172).

The institutional contexts where action might occur are particularly important considerations for advancing restorative justice. As many RJC students endeavour to work within the criminal justice apparatus, a central concern is whether their personal perspective transformation can lead to taking action within these institutional spaces. Although some interviewees had brought restorative justice practices to their work in law enforcement, this was not the case for everyone. Other students who experienced transformation felt unable to operate from a restorative perspective at work given their punitive role expectations. For example, Opal recounted how a supervisor wrote her up for “smiling too much” at work and demanded she use less discretion and charge more people with offences. For Pedro, a law enforcement officer, the attitude of his supervisor affected whether he could use restorative interventions. These examples highlight the importance of considering the economic and emotional risks that may thwart action. Kilgore and Bloom’s (2002) findings from prisoners mirrored those found with the criminal justice actors in this study, as both groups indicated a sense of powerlessness. Some RJC students expressed frustration and sense of hopelessness for change, feeling “stuck” in workplaces such as law enforcement and corrections where a restorative perspective was discouraged, misunderstood, or looked upon with suspicion.

While the emotions associated with these struggles were not debilitating, it is probable that security oriented institutions (V. Brathwaite et al., 2013) can inhibit whether

a perspective transformation can lead to action for those living or working within these structures. These findings highlight the importance of both institutional and interpersonal support required for individual perspective transformation. Initially, the support of teachers and other students is imperative in creating the emotional safety needed for questioning previously held beliefs. Upon starting to shift perspective, the ongoing support of peers and family were important. Without this, some former RJC students ended up working in an environment where using punishment is required as part of their job and then experienced frustration as they felt these approaches had little value. The response to these feelings for Lois and Opal was to look for other work to which they could bring their values. For Ivan, the risk of being stigmatized and called a “con lover” at work was too great. He parked his perspective at the door saying:

[Leaving your perspective at the door] is challenging. It is one of those things that you have to let go of. Yes, it’s difficult, but at the same time, it is one of those things that you have to set your own beliefs aside while you are doing your job. But when you walk out the door at the end of the day, you can be yourself and believe what you believe. But while you’re there, it’s not really an open place to do that. (Ivan)

While it is clear some environments that are less conducive to taking action from a restorative lens, the power of the individual to take action should not be discounted. For the participants in this study, their transformed perspective affected other areas of their life and, although some may have felt constrained at work, they found places to take restorative action in the community and within their relationships.

Action in the Community

In order to advance transformative justice, Morris (2000) advocates disseminating awareness everywhere and challenging information sources. At the heart of this call to action is dialogue within family and community. Initiating and participating in critical conversations about justice issues emerged as a strong theme in the data. Former RJC students said they found a voice to discuss high profile cases, share information about restorative justice, and invite others to consider the utility of harsh punishment. Many participants mentioned that they regularly talked about the ideas from the RJC with others. The data indicate participants observed mainstream media with a more cautious and critical eye after their transformative experience.

According to Kohm, Waid-Lindberg, Weinrath, Shelley, and Dobbs (2012), the majority of what the public knows about crime and criminal justice is constructed from media accounts and despite decreasing crime rates in Canada, fear of crime has not declined. Media focus disproportionately on crime that is unusual, violent, and random (John Howard Society of Alberta, 1999; Kohm et al., 2012). The overrepresentation of serious and violent crime has an impact on the public. Fear of crime often leads to avoidance and protective behaviours, which can impede life satisfaction (Kohm et al., 2012, p. 68) and led to labelling and harsh judgements of “offenders.” Since the use of protective (i.e., installing a security system) and avoidance (i.e. staying home and steering clear of certain areas) measures do not completely eliminate fears, often citizens call for more police presence and deterrence through punitive sentences (Callanan, 2005; John Howard Society of Alberta, 1999). People of all ages experience fear of crime and university students are amongst them. Kohm et al. (2012) found media was a significant predictor of fear of crime in university students even when controlling for respondent characteristics, estimated risk of victimization, and concern about crime (p. 82). Interestingly, criminology and criminal justice majors and minors were somewhat less apt to be fearful (Kohm et al., 2012, p. 83).

While Kohm et al. (2012) suggest that studying criminology and criminal justice may affect how students view media accounts of crime, the saturation of alarmist broadcasting remains a powerful force in shaping perceptions. Cranton (2006) notes that people do not stop to question things they experience and tend to believe their friends and accept media interpretations (p. 19). While it is likely RJC students came into the course with some skepticism of media accounts of crime—particularly if they were criminology majors—the data indicate that students reported even more critical media consumption following their perspective transformation. Approaching stories from the media with curiosity rather than judgement was an emergent theme as interviewees shared the tangible actions they attributed to the RJC. Taking their voice into the community and sharing a different perspective is key to advancing ideas of restorative justice.

While the behavioural changes that occurred for students following perspective transformation were reported as individual acts, the experience and impact are often nested in relationships. From the tutorial and classroom to families, clients, and co-

workers, relationships matter. The following section examines the role relationships play in personal transformation and further advancing restorative justice.

7.4. Relationships as Facilitators of Perspective Transformation

Central to this research was understanding how perspective transformation affected students' beliefs, behaviour, and relationships. It is clear from the data and literature that relationships are both facilitated and affected by the transformative learning process. A relational focus on learning has profound implications for tertiary institutions as it diverges from the assumptions of individuality and competition on which the banking model of contemporary education is based (Freire, 2000). Similarly, advancing sustainable restorative justice practices and philosophy must be grounded in a view of humanity as equally worthy and relational (Vaandering, 2014, p. 511).

The concept of interconnection in restorative justice is drawn from Indigenous worldviews (Ross, 2014). Within these perspectives, all beings are interrelated and everything is connected, in some way, to everything else—human and non-human. Harm is that which affects the ability to be in relation to one another, to be in balance. Accordingly, the disharmony within one individual is seen as everyone's disharmony, for it infects all relationships with which the person is involved (Ross, 1996, p. 64). One who causes harm is not constructed as a "criminal" but is seen in their entirety and in relationship to others. Zion (1999) notes that when an individual causes harm to another he is acting as if he has no relatives (p. 367). Therefore, responding and preventing harm must consider both individuals and relationships. Elliott (2011) reminds us that relationships can be a source of great trauma and also tremendous healing (p. 187). Lobb (2011) observes the reciprocal nature of restorative justice and transformation as: "Restoring justice and caring for others initiates this process of transformative change, for ourselves, and more importantly, for others" (p. 131).

Similarly, Cranton (2006) notes that transformative learning occurs in relationship with others through developing integrative and holistic ways of seeing the world, understanding others' points of view, empathic listening, nurturing, and caring (p. 98).

Learning occurs when one is able to enter into another's frame of reference with empathy, to see the world through another set of eyes. Toews (2013) notes that a "critical component of both restorative justice and education is acknowledging and respecting the unique perspectives and lived experiences of the involved individuals" (p. 17). The data indicate that this occurred for many students of the RJC as relationships developed between learners, guests, the instructor, and TA.

The RJC was created and is maintained with a clear focus on relationships. The course developers referred to the importance of keeping the RJC connected with the community and restorative justice field. Instructors capitalize on relationships when they invite speakers to be vulnerable enough to share often painful stories with a group of students they have just met. The responsive nature of the RJC whereby instructors obtain feedback from TAs and make changes further highlights the integral nature of collaborative relationships. In addition, TAs and instructors employ relational andragogy when they ask people to share in circle and dialogue about activities designed to evoke critical reflections and feelings. As Elliott (2009) noted, the goal of the tutorials is to

[p]rovide an experience of building community, through discussion of individual and communal values. This is particularly useful in an introduction to restorative justice, which is easily co-opted when a values-based community component is missing. (p. 1)

Forty-eight percent of the pilot survey and 31% of the main survey respondents indicated "teacher support" as a facilitating factor for their transformation. Students were not asked to differentiate between support from their TA and instructor, so it is not possible to determine who was being referenced as "teacher" because sometimes the instructor also ran the tutorial session. Support from "fellow students" ranked lower with 16% for the pilot and only 8% for the main survey. Despite these quantitative findings, patterns from interview and survey data indicated the importance of the tutorial for students' transformative experience. While their disorienting dilemma may have involved a story from a guest speaker during lecture, being able to process this new information in a safe and respectful group setting was key. As Max says, "You learn about [restorative justice] in class and then you get to put it into practice in the tutorials." Survey results indicated that the circle (42% pilot/22% main), class discussions (44% pilot/36% main), and tutorial discussions (24% pilot/26% main) proved meaningful for students' learning. Many

experienced what Elliott (2011) described as outcomes of circles, the development of meaningful and sustainable community through storytelling, clarification of norms, relationship building, and accountability (p. 199).

7.4.1. The Role of the TA

Baumgartner (2001) notes that transformational learning emerges from interdependent relationships based on trust. Cranton (2006) believes a particular set of skills required to establish the relational conditions for transformative learning. While group dynamics play a role, the educator must operate from a place of authenticity, the expression of the genuine self in a community (p. 162). Authenticity is central to being supportive and can include demonstrating interest in and concern for student learning, personal disclosures, goal-setting with students, being open to learning from students, being accessible, open and helpful, and following up with students (Cranton, 2006, p. 162-163). In addition to modelling these qualities, educators can also foster collaborative and supportive groups of learners by co-creating clear guidelines for interaction, encouraging personal stories, and empowering learners to solve problems collectively (Cranton, 2006, p. 165-166). In the RJC tutorials, TAs and instructor have the responsibility to model the values of restorative justice as they take on the role of circle keeper and facilitator, inviting students to take risks and learn in non-traditional ways. Unlike the instructor, the TA may not have specific training to conduct circles or facilitate groups. Instructors must support TAs to model the values of restorative justice and provide a welcoming and safe space for the learners to experience restorative justice education.

Pranis et al. (2003) state that to feel safe, we need to feel protected—that who we are will not be dismissed, dishonoured, or attacked—not only physically, but also emotionally. We want to be treated from our wholeness, respected, and welcomed (p. 31). Circle keepers are the caretakers of the circle and endeavour to hold a space that is clear, open, respectful, and free. They might introduce a talking piece, guidelines, ceremony, and consensus decision-making to do so (Pranis et al., 2003, p. 81-82). Participants often mentioned that the talking piece and the equal opportunity to speak created safety for them. The data suggest that for many students, the TAs and instructors were successful in cultivating a safe and respectful space in tutorial. The elements of non-

judgement, honesty, and equality emerged strongly as patterns when analyzing students' descriptions of their tutorial experiences.

Surprisingly few survey respondents or interviewees specifically mentioned their TA. There were four respondents and one interviewee who identified the positive impact of the TA on their learning specifically citing their compassion and understanding. Conversely, eight survey respondents and one interviewee found their TA to have a negative influence. One participant mentioned "everyone in my tutorial was very disrespectful and nothing was taken seriously. TA did little to intervene" (S 159). Other respondents found the TA was disorganized, did not respect their critiques of restorative justice, was mean, or demeaning. While these respondents represented only 1% of the sample, their feedback is important to consider given the role the educator plays in facilitating transformative learning experiences. These findings highlight the importance of instructor support to the TA so s/he can model the values of restorative justice and be comfortable facilitating in a non-traditional format.

Although the tutorials played a significant role in students' transformative experience, the lack of specific mention of the TA suggests that their experience was not about one person, but about the group. This omission could be interpreted as evidence that TAs were successful in taking on the role of a circle keeper. As Pranis et al. (2003) note, circle keepers are meant to be humble, supportive, and unassuming. Rather than taking charge, the keeper helps participants to run the circle (p. 82). Several students mentioned that they usually find tutorials a waste of time; however, the RJC tutorials were different. According to the survey data, the other students, circles, non-traditional structure, and the affective nature of their experience resonated for their learning.

As Bai et al. (2013) note, "critical thinking is inextricably bound up in the quality of our relationship with others" (p. 11). It appears that for many of the students who experienced perspective transformation, relationships cultivated in tutorials facilitated such critical thinking. While the TAs were not often identified as a facilitating factor for transformation, the instructors were. Although the RJC instructors were not attempting to utilize transformative learning techniques, what they personally brought to the class affected whether participants experienced perspective transformation.

7.4.2. The Role of the Instructor

While students found the tutorials to be a safe space, the data indicate that the instructor played a separate and important role. The perceived qualities and skills of the instructor in terms of their lecture, presence, marking/evaluation, and communication either fostered or hindered students' perspective transformation. Belenky and Stanton (2000) highlighted the importance of the relationship between learners and teachers. They argue that support is integral to the transformative process and educators have a moral obligation to provide for it. Although support need not come from directly from the instructor, it must be accessible. Cranton (2006) notes that this support may not look any different from that offered in any educational context (p. 160), however, it is particularly important when students are engaging in transformative processes that may evoke strong feelings and changes in behaviour.

According to Holsinger (2008), good teachers "have the capacity to inspire their students in a way that allows their influence to be transforming and indelible" (p. 319). When criminal justice professors were asked about their best teachers, they reported these individuals had an abiding "compassion for humanity" and a commitment to "confront injustices" (Acker, 2003, p. 223). According to Cohen, Porath, and Bai (2012), one conception of the exceptional educator is that

he or she is an exemplary human being with strong qualities of warmth, ethical integrity, caring, supportiveness, educational vision, verve, experience, discernment in the domain of teaching, and insight into who the student is as a developing human being; he/she also possesses strong abilities to facilitate classroom contact. (p. 2)

Instructors with such qualities can create the democratic spaces that are required for people to learn about the merits of alternatives like restorative justice. Gilbert et al. (2013) recommends that those teaching restorative justice be well versed in the theory and practice, volunteer to teach the course, and capable of teaching in a style consistent with restorative andragogy (64). Students' recollections of RJC instructors highlighted qualities of engagement, personal passion and commitment to restorative justice, lived experiences, warmth, and openness. For many students, the instructor was described as the main facilitator of their perspective transformation. Although the format of the RJC relies on lecture from the instructor using visuals such as PowerPoint or overheads, many

students did not experience this andragogy as oppressive. Rather, they engaged in a personal way with the content they were invited to consider.

Support and safety in the classroom are especially important when it comes to studying criminology, as many related topics such as violent victimization, racial profiling, or knowing someone incarcerated are not uncommon experiences. While exploring new ideas is common in tertiary education, restorative justice could elicit emotions that may not show up in other courses. The data indicate that ten participants directly related previous, personal victimization with their experience in the RJC. As the RJC invites students and guests to be vulnerable in their storytelling, these experiences are powerful mechanisms for transformation. Without this safe environment, at best students will just “go through the motions” to get their participation mark. A good instructor can provide sure footing as the student journeys into these unique learning processes.

Although certain aspects tertiary education instruction that cannot be changed such as the obligation to submit grades, instructors are afforded tremendous latitude in the classroom. Elliott (2011) considered teaching in a university with young and motivated people a privilege (p. xv), although that sentiment is not widely shared. This discretion provides ample opportunity for transformative learning approaches to be employed. Although some argue that schooling itself is oppressive and exclusionary (Wadhwa, 2016), others have found ways to bring critical pedagogy into the classroom that resist traditional, hierarchical approaches of the banking model of education. These methods can be replaced by a Freirean (2000) conception of education whereby teachers become partners with their students to engage in critical thinking (p. 75). The teacher does not impose thoughts, but encourages the kind of thinking with students that generates acting upon the world (Freire, 2000, p. 75-77). Nesbitt and Clarke (2004) consider a “restorative educator” one who “recognizes the uniqueness of individuals, and the power of collective bodies, specifically communities for the purpose of working together to bring about change that will result in a betterment of both individuals and the larger community” (p. 5). Cranton and Wright (2008) suggest that those engaging transformative learning techniques could consider themselves “learning companions” who help the learner to recognize his or her own expertise and experience and draw on this background (p. 34). According to one of the course developers, the instructor must personally align with the andragogy of the RJC.

The circle is key because as soon as you drop the hierarchy and as an instructor, you can be as open as you wish to be. And you're going to be well received. You must make it clear that you value every person in the room. You don't allow the students to become anonymous people that just file in. (K. Faith, personal communication, April 3, 2014)

Although we can learn a lot about the role instructors play in cultivating the safe spaces through reports from students who experienced transformation, we can gain a fuller picture by analyzing data from those students who did not. The transformative learning literature is silent about this group; therefore, this research provides important insight from students for whom transformation has not occurred.

It must be emphasized that the data represent the experiences of only a fraction of RJC students. These results must be considered critically as the perspectives of instructors and TAs are missing. Also, the experience may be explained by something other than students' views about the instructor. Svanum and Aigner (2011) highlight a well-established link between university teacher/course satisfaction and grades earned. Notably, the better student performance in a course, the more likely the student is to provide a positive evaluation of the instruction and class. Therefore, students' evaluations of teachers are flawed measures as they are bias by course grades and other student characteristics that may be unrelated to the course and instructor activities (Svanum & Aigner, 2011, p. 668). While the RJC students were not specifically asked to evaluate the RJC, exploring the phenomenon of perspective transformation indicated a relationship between the instruction and transformation. Students that reported a negative view of the instructor may have also received an unsatisfactory grade. Although the connection between a negative experience in the RJC and performance was not present in the data, student perceptions of instruction are viewed with caution given other variables that are related to course satisfaction.

Participants who did not experience transformation and reported a partially negative experience in the RJC did not leave the semester with a negative view of the

concept of restorative justice.⁶⁰ However, the experience affected future course selection for six students who indicated they would never take a restorative justice course again. If students have a bad taste in their mouth from the RJC, it is less likely they will be promoters of restorative justice in the future. When these negative sentiments are contrasted against the meaningful experiences of so many other students, it is a missed opportunity.

Two interviewees and 11 survey respondents said they had a partially negative experience in the RJC. The data indicate that students felt there was no room for dissent in the classroom. They perceived their instructor as biased and believed they would be penalized with a lower grade if they offered an opinion contrary to that expressed by the instructor. This fear runs contrary to Smith-Cunnien and Parilla's (2001) assertion that restorative justice curriculum should increase students' knowledge of the topic, provide useful contrast to evaluate the current criminal justice system, and improve their ability to "critically assess its strengths and limitations" (p. 391). The climate these students described does not empower or make space for critical analysis, which is both a goal and a condition of transformative learning (Cranton, 2006).

To inspire a transformative experience, students must be able to "freely and fully engage in critical reflection, participate in discourse, and act on revised perspectives" (Cranton, 2006 p. 59). Essentially these findings portray the opposite experiences of the respectful and open classrooms that others who experienced perspective transformation reported. This disparity is troubling given the centrality of critical thinking in the transformative learning and the importance of including diverse voices in restorative justice. Learners attempting to re-frame their perspective through self-reflection often require the support of others, a positive self-concept, and freedom from intense anxiety (Dirkx et al., 2006, p. 125). With the pressure of doing well in a four-credit course and the inherent power imbalance between student and teacher, the added stress of feeling that any debate about restorative justice will be quelled can impede learning. Restorative

⁶⁰ It is interesting that despite the lack of a safe space for the student, the content still stayed with them as they could articulate a sound definition of restorative justice and also saw the potential in the criminal justice arena. This speaks to the strength of the content of the RJC. Future research could explore the transformative experiences of RJC distance education students.

justice processes aim to create safe space for all perspectives to be heard and can be utilized to do so in the classroom with willing and skilled instruction.

The learning context and the role of the instructor are vital components of ensuring that the RJC is delivered in a way that aligns with the central values of restorative justice: respect, inclusion, trust, humility, sharing, empathy, courage, honesty, love, forgiveness (Pranis, et al, 2003). The data indicate that when students perceive that the instructor is not operating from a restorative justice philosophy, they are much less inclined to be open to the experience of the RJC. Although students' willingness to embrace the concept of restorative justice does not seem to be affected, as course developer Liz Elliott would say, "You can't get to a good place in a bad way."⁶¹ Restorative justice education is more likely to inspire transformation and engagement when the andragogy aligns with the course content.

Discourse, dialogue, and support play major roles in the transformative experience (Cranton, 2006, p. 65). Educators can challenge students; however, this must be coupled with safe, respectful, and inclusive space. A disorienting dilemma and storytelling in restorative justice can produce unpleasant emotions so a supportive classroom environment is essential. Interestingly, two students reported a negative experience with their instructor that was mitigated through support they received from a friend and classmate. Other examples from the data that suggest although the student may not have liked the instructor, a positive tutorial experience compensated for this perceived lack of connection between student and teacher. Therefore, while support does not necessarily have to come from the instructor, they must be careful of the influence they have through their personality and approach to grading and student interaction. The findings regarding participants' negative experience with the RJC demonstrate the importance of regular student feedback and instructor self-awareness and support.

Despite some negative comments about the RJC, for most participants the experience of restorative justice education transformed their perspective. According to

⁶¹ For more on how Elliott's phrase has impacted restorative justice in British Columbia, see Norris, W. (2013). *"I think of Liz Elliott's words: You can't get to a good place in a bad way"* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC. Retrieved from <https://open.library.ubc.ca/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/24/items/1.0073922>

transformative learning theory, for the experience to truly be transformative, it must endure. The following section discusses how perspective transformation was sustained with a particular focus on values.

7.5. Enduring Perspective Transformation

Dirkx (in Dirkx et al., 2006) noted that transformative experience can evoke

[p]owerful feelings, such as fear, grief, loss, regret, and anger, but also sometimes joy, wonder, and awe. At times, these experiences may leave us feeling deeply moved or shaken to our core. We are left with the feeling that life will not be as it was before, that this experience has created a sense that we cannot go back to the way we were before the experience. (p. 132)

The permanency of Dirkx's statement was evident in the data as all but one interviewee agreed that they could not return to the way they thought before the RJC. Vivian described the enduring nature of the transformation when she explained:

I feel like once you get information on something, once you become informed, you really can't go back because once you see it, you can't unsee it. It is like once you have learned it, you can't unlearn it. You could try all you want to block it out, but now you know it. I feel like there is certain information that hits you in a certain way that if you try and neglect it, you don't feel right inside. What I feel in light of that definition is that I can't go back. I can't go back and start thinking about things the way I used to think about them. I could if I wanted to, but I know in my heart it just would not feel right. I wouldn't feel like a whole human being if I did that. I feel like I would be denying myself of what I want to be.

According to Rokeach (1973), values are ideal goals in life and ways of behaving that people adopt as principles to guide their decisions and actions across situations (in V. Braithwaite et al., 2013, p. 94). As such, they are an important consideration when discussing the sustainability of perspective transformation through the RJC. V. Braithwaite et al. (2013) note that a close examination of how restorative justice can be meaningfully integrated with the beliefs and values of community members has yet to be undertaken (p. 92). As this research attempts to understand how restorative justice education can contribute to advancing restorative justice in the community and institutions, considering the role of students' values in taking action is essential.

According to V. Braithwaite et al. (2013), values can be considered either harmony- or security-oriented (see Chapter 5 for more detail) and restorative justice is an expression of the harmony value system (p. 94). The majority of the participants (73% of the pilot survey and 57% of the main survey respondents) left the RJC favouring harmony- over security-oriented values (27% of the pilot and 19% of the main survey). This finding is unsurprising given other research that indicates for the “population overall, the harmony value orientation tends to be stronger than the security value orientation” (V. Braithwaite, 2009, p. 162). V. Braithwaite et al. (2013) suggest that people with a preference for harmony values are more likely to assign greater importance to offender reintegration and rehabilitation, victim voice and amends, and victim forgiveness. These values and attitudes are likely to be associated with a stronger belief that restorative justice will offer benefits for victims, offenders, and communities (p. 97).

While the survey results did not show a relationship between values orientation and perspective transformation, patterns that emerged from the data affirm that students who embrace a restorative perspective often identified with harmony values such as forgiveness and rehabilitation. These findings prompted discussion of whether the RJC contributed to a shift in values or simply uncovered or confirmed those held previously.

There is no doubt that an enduring shift in perspective from retributive to restorative occurred, but others reported an existing restorative perspective that was affirmed or broadened. The RJC experience of the latter group is best characterized by what Levy and Mary (1986) described as first order change where adjustments do not involve the core of a being. Comparatively, second order change is transformative change that is “multidimensional, multi-level, qualitative, discontinuous, radical organizational change involving a paradigmatic shift” (p. 5). Students who brought an Indigenous or more critical perspective to the RJC did not experience a change in the core of their being, but rather affirmed or expanded their existing beliefs.

Poutiatine (2009) suggests that although transformation always involves a broadening of perspective, this augmentation is not sufficient to be considered perspective transformation, which is so dramatic it reaches beyond a cognitive realm and involves all aspects of the individual's life (p. 196). Those participants who reported an affirmed or

broadened perspective do not align with Poutiatine's (2009) definition of transformation as "a radical shift from one state of being to another, seeing things in such a new way that you cannot go back to what you thought before. It can feel like everything in my life is different now". (p. 196)

While the data indicate all RJC participants learned more about restorative justice, it was only participants with a transformed perspective whose beliefs and actions changed. When participants were read Poutiatine's (2009) definition of transformation, all but two⁶² agreed that their transformative experience constituted an irreversible, radical shift in perspective. However, there were some shared characteristics between participants with a transformed perspective and those with an affirmed one. These interviewees' sentiments suggest the presence of pre-existing values and/or cultural background with which restorative justice aligned with:

In my culture, we are not [individualistic] at all. Everyone's problems are everyone's problems. It could be as simple as a marital dispute going on and we would hear about it. My parents would be called in to have a conversation. We are coming over to talk to you about X, Y, and Z. And we have *manguddoo*⁶³, it is exactly like the elders in Indigenous communities. I still need to uncover more of this, but it all started in [the RJC]. I think I started evolving and the layers started coming down in ... class and I am still on that trajectory. (Susie)

The values resonated for me personally. Like, it makes so much sense, the way [the instructor] explained. It was like, why aren't we all doing this? (Opal)

These findings suggest that despite the dramatic transformation of beliefs that occurred as a result of the RJC, their core values had not changed. Beliefs, although related to values, are more accurately considered habits of mind that emerge from our

⁶² Pedro took issue with the word "radical" stating that his notion of personal transformation was more incremental. Ivan found the irreversibility part the definition problematic, "I think you can go back, but you have to keep your mindset a certain way so you don't go back. If you let yourself get eaten up by various things and allow negative emotions get the better of you, I think you can go back."

⁶³ *Manguddoo* is a term used by one of the Indigenous peoples of Ethiopia meaning "elder" or "elderly." Their role is related to the *gadaa* system described by Jalata, A. (2012). in *Gadaa (Oromo Democracy)/An example of classical African democracy*.

background, experience, culture, and personality. Mezirow's six overlapping habits of mind are (Cranton, 2006, p. 24):

- Epistemic—the way we acquire and use knowledge,
- Sociolinguistic—social norms, cultural expectations, the way language is used,
- Psychological—how people see themselves, self-concept, needs, inhibitions, fears,
- Moral ethical—conscience and morality, how we define good and evil,
- Philosophical—transcendental worldviews, philosophy or religious doctrine related to values, beliefs, guides to behaviour and rules of living, and,
- Aesthetic—values, attitudes, tastes and standards about beauty.

Sociolinguistic habits of mind are largely shaped by familial, cultural, and social contexts. During the RJC, students critically questioned the messages they had received about crime and punishment. No longer were students constrained by the picture painted by the media and stories told by their parents. The data indicate that students' views were disoriented when they were able to humanize "offenders" through hearing their stories. Realizing that change and forgiveness were possible altered their perspective. Through critical reflection and dialogue, students realized that there were other ways of achieving justice with better outcomes than harsh punishment. As an outcome, students challenged labels like "offender" and "murderer" that deny human dignity to those assigned them.

Many participants recounted the recognition of a common humanity with those who had committed crime as "life changing." This acknowledgement is evidence of transformation within the moral-ethical realm. Related patterns that emerged included increased empathy and compassion along with more focus on relationships. These patterns indicate changes in how students define good and evil and how to act on those views of goodness. These moral and ethical shifts were more prevalent in those who reported perspective transformations beyond the scope of the criminal justice system. According to Cranton (2006), perspective transformation often means people donate time and money to charitable organizations, protest, and stop and help. Volunteer work in restorative and social justice arenas are further evidence that perspective shift attributed to the RJC involved the moral-ethical realm.

Although students were not asked to identify the values they held prior to the RJC, patterns from the data indicate many students entered the RJC with an orientation towards openness, thinking critically, curiosity, reintegration, and the desire for a different university experience. While the philosophy with which they started the course was often identified as punitive, this did not appear to be associated with a strong preference toward security-related values. Instead, they described a process where what they learned in the RJC was able to resolve the dissonance they experienced from harmony values conflicting with retributive beliefs into which they had been indoctrinated. Overall, what might have seemed like a radical shift may have been more of an awakening to values they already held. The RJC provided a conceptual framework and language for their previously held, but not fully consciously realized values. Following this awakening, they adopted a restorative justice perspective which has persisted over time.

Related to this discussion of values is Lange's (2004) study that examined whether it was possible that students who appeared to have experienced transformative learning did not, in fact, shift their fundamental principles and values. Rather, those values already existed but, through their learning experience, were uncovered. Lange's (2004) participants reported "restorative learning" characterized as returning to "their inner compass, which was submerged under the deluge of adult expectations, cultural scripts, and workplace practices" (p. 30). Their values of honesty, integrity, fairness, courage, respect, loyalty, community service, and citizen responsibility did not require transformation, but restoration to a rightful place in their lives and in society at large (Lange, 2004, p. 130). Her work raises critical questions about the nature and location of transformation. It also supports Poutiatine's (2009) argument that transformation always involves a movement towards wholeness and personal integrity, bringing one's inner self—values, beliefs, feelings—into alignment with one's actions (p. 193). This alignment of values, beliefs, and actions is consistent with the experiences of perspective transformation reported by RJC students.

V. Braithwaite et al. (2013) argue that in order for policy to shift towards more restorative justice approaches, the public must see the movement's legitimacy in light of their own personal values and beliefs. The RJC is a place where this phenomenon occurred for many students. Lange's (2004) study "affirms that transformation is not just

an epistemological process involving a change in worldview and habits of thinking; it is also an ontological process where participants experience a change in their being in the world including their forms of relatedness” (p. 137). The RJC provided opportunities for students to get in touch with who they are and who they want to be with others. The results of this increased personal awareness are evidenced by the number of students who reported changes in how they saw themselves, how they acted within their relationships, and made career, educational, and volunteer choices. The importance participants placed on social engagement is relevant to the restorative justice movement that requires action inside and outside of the justice system to become a more widely accepted approach.

Whether values are uncovered or shifted, perspective transformations attributed to the RJC encouraged students to critically reflect on whether their actions and values aligned. The discussion of values is important for restorative justice educators as the risk of cooptation of restorative justice exists by institutions that are predominantly concerned with security values (V. Braithwaite et al., 2013, p. 116). However, when students can personally connect with the values of restorative justice, the philosophy and practice has the best chance to advance with integrity inside and outside these systems.

7.6. The RJC & and the Restorative Justice Movement

The enduring nature of perspective transformation from the RJC relates to how such individual transformations can lead to change within the institutions and communities in which students find themselves. All participants thought the RJC had a part to play in advancing restorative justice and believed the course should be offered regularly. Several students argued that the RJC should be mandatory for all students, not just criminology students. Such a requirement would be ironic given the voluntary nature of both restorative justice and transformative learning. As King (2009) noted, although educators can create opportunities for transformative learning to occur, the learners themselves must take the risk (p. 8). The same is true for participating in restorative justice as coercion can affect the safety and integrity of the process. Coercion should be minimized so the choice to engage in restorative justice is voluntary and informed (Van Ness & Strong, 2010).

According to Gilbert et al. (2013), post-secondary students truly *experiencing* restorative justice, compared to being told about it, is particularly important for future criminal justice actors. When restorative justice is taught in a way that espouses the values, students can develop skills that enable engagement in and understanding of restorative encounters. This approach can empower students to undertake innovative leadership roles within the justice workforce (p. 47). Geske's (2005) Restorative Justice Initiative at Marquette University in Wisconsin is a concrete manifestation of such objectives. Through this Initiative, law students learn about and experience restorative justice and develop the skills necessary to be agents of change in their communities. Geske (2005) explains:

[a]s a legal educator, I know that the best way for future lawyers to learn about serving their clients, particularly the disadvantaged, is for them to listen to and to collaborate with others in working toward creating processes and programs that truly address issues of justice and equality through addressing peoples' interests and needs. (p. 327)

Geske (2005) believes that through learning restorative justice in a law school, students develop the vision, the skills, and passion to positively transform the justice system (p. 334). These data indicate that many RJC students were inspired to pursue legal training in order to promote social justice. Others were able to see opportunities for restorative justice outside of the criminal justice realm. Britto and Reimund (2013) argue that restorative justice education is essential for criminology and criminal justice studies and can assist students in recognizing applications for restorative justice in a variety of different contexts (p. 166). Students from a restorative justice course offered by Holsinger (2008) agreed. These college students supported more restorative justice education at the tertiary level stating: "if more people learn about restorative justice it might be implemented" (p. 332).

Although there was overwhelming support for restorative justice education at the post-secondary level, some participants were concerned that support was not enough for restorative justice to become more credible or better utilized. They recommended earlier, widespread public education and awareness raising with those currently working in the system. V. Braithwaite et al. (2013) concur noting that public support is necessary to shift responsibilities for justice from professionals to the community. Citizens must be willing

to participate in and support restorative initiatives while criminal justice actors must be ready to make referrals and let go of some of their power.

British Columbia is home to a rich collection of community-based programs that operate mainly on volunteer resources.⁶⁴ These programs work with police and other referral sources, including Crown counsel, schools, and the community to have cases referred to be addressed in restorative ways. These initiatives are usually grassroots and utilize different models of practice. In addition to direct service delivery, community-based groups can play an important role in educating criminal justice actors and the public with respect to restorative justice. For example, the North Shore Restorative Justice Society (NSRJ) offers Community Dialogue sessions that use circle processes to engage community in discussions about social issues. Through this process, the goal is to introduce community members not formally involved with the justice system to the values and practice of restorative justice (NSRJ, 2015). It is noteworthy that several RJC students became active volunteers with programs like NSRJ. This community education is precisely what the research participants were advocating in order to advance restorative justice.

In addition to community-based programs, restorative justice has been introduced within the criminal justice system in the form of First Nations' court, Youth Justice

⁶⁴ Most of these programs emerged as the result of a community-justice initiative introduced in 1997 under then Attorney General, Ujjal Dosanjh. The Community Accountability Program (CAP) supports community-based restorative justice programs that are volunteer-based and began with accepting only cases involving less serious harms (Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, 2004). In 1998, a community could apply for \$5000 to start up a CAP in their community and models such as victim offender mediation, family group conferencing, circles, and neighbourhood accountability board/panels were identified as appropriate. Currently, there are approximately 41 programs that are eligible for \$2500 per year from the Province of BC (Ministry of Justice, 2015). The lack of funding remains an impediment to these programs for advancing the practice and philosophy of restorative justice.

Conferencing,⁶⁵ and, *Gladue* sentencing principles.⁶⁶ Although some of these initiatives are well established, they make up a diminutive part of the criminal justice apparatus. Morrison and Pawlychka (2016) note that although Canada has made significant contributions to the restorative justice movement, these programs and practices currently remain at the margins of the system, particularly compared to other countries (p. 437). This phenomenon is demonstrative of a lack of praxis in the field. According to the interviewees working within the system, criminal justice actors pay lip service to restorative justice and the majority are either unaware or misinformed. Participants reported that this lack of engagement by the system motivated their participation in the research as they see such value for restorative justice to be included across the justice sectors.

Van Ness and Strong (2010) regard the advancement of restorative justice as the result of the transformation of structures, perspectives, and persons. While it is important to attend to all three, the RJC begins with transforming individual perspectives that can affect other people and, ultimately, institutions and structures. In BC despite the preponderance of legislation, programs, reports,⁶⁷ and court decisions that encourage the widespread use of restorative justice, the majority of public education has resulted from the efforts of passionate individuals and volunteers in the community. Victims of serious and violent crime who found healing through restorative justice also have contributed to

⁶⁵ The Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) is provincial legislation governing youth justice matters. Since 2003, it has allowed for judges, police or other justice professionals to initiate conferences (informal or formal) to resolve the incidents of harm involving youth and their victims. Youth probation officers called Conferencing Specialists employed by the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development usually facilitate these processes that are referred by the court.

⁶⁶ The Sentencing Principles contained in the Criminal Code and the Supreme Court case *R. v. Gladue* (1999) mean that when determining sentencing, judges must consider the unique and systemic factors that may have brought the Indigenous person in front of the court. If these factors are present, they mitigate or reduce culpability; therefore, judges must consider all reasonable alternatives to jail. The *Gladue* decision recognized restorative justice as a legitimate approach to sentencing and it is hoped that this will increase opportunities for a restorative approach for victims, offenders, and communities (Roach & Rudin, 2000).

⁶⁷ Reports commissioned by both the Government of British Columbia (2012; 2015) and Government of Canada (2012) demonstrated strong support of the increased use of restorative justice.

public education and the RJC. Katy Hutchison⁶⁸ and Shannon Moroney⁶⁹ have written books and shared their stories with hundreds of thousands of people. Suman and Manjit Virk have also written a book⁷⁰ and created a film directed at young people about their journey with restorative justice and forgiveness.⁷¹ Having these stories in the public domain and tertiary classrooms provide an alternative vision of justice and potential for individual and social transformation. The impact of similar stories on RJC students is a testament to the powerful nature of storytelling.

Public education about restorative justice is a difficult task; however, storytellers and community volunteers provide examples of what is possible. The RJC has added to this pool of courageous restorative justice promoters. A key finding of this research indicates that students who experience a perspective transformation from the RJC are more likely to engage in public discourse about restorative justice. These individual transformations and conversations create immeasurable ripples that advance the philosophy and practice of restorative justice at the micro and meso levels. These are true examples of turning the lens on ourselves to transform the wider world (Van Ness & Strong, 2010, p. 180).

With regard to the RJC, the lens must also be turned inward to focus on how restorative justice might grow within SFU. Although this institution is home to the longest-standing restorative justice course at the undergraduate level, SFU does not offer restorative justice as an approach to harm and conflict. Dalhousie University, The University of Alberta, and The University of Victoria are examples of environments that both offer restorative justice courses and provide options for restorative responses. There are many opportunities for restorative justice to move outside the classroom to the way that decisions are made and harm is responded to within educational institutions. Before a more robust discussion of restorative justice and tertiary education occurs, this chapter

⁶⁸ For more on Katy's story see <http://www.katyhutchisonpresents.com/>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wcLuVeHlrSs> or read her book, *Walking After Midnight: One Woman's Journey Through Murder, Justice and Forgiveness* (2006).

⁶⁹ For more on Shannon's story see <http://www.shannonmoroney.com/> or read her memoir *Through the Glass* (2011).

⁷⁰ Virk, M. (2008). *Reena: A Father's story*.

⁷¹ To view the DVD *Reena's Story* created by Heartspeak Productions see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oX0pjKkZaOQ>

concludes with a discussion of findings related to the RJC and personal healing. These stories emerged from the interviews and capture the essence of personal transformation through restorative justice education.

7.7. Restorative Justice Education & Healing

Four RJC students disclosed their experience as a victim of violent crime during the data collection process. The depth of their sharing highlights the importance of researchers bringing awareness and skills to in-depth interviewing. As Lewis (2003) notes, interviewers must be alert to signs of discomfort and be prepared to offer to stop the interview, stay after it is concluded, and provide information about relevant support services (p. 69). Although none of the interviewees required such interventions, I was prepared for sensitive disclosures and had resources available should a referral be required (see Appendix E).

The following exemplifies the powerful impact of perspective transformation experienced through restorative justice education. It serves as a beacon to what is possible when a safe learning environment aligns with one's personal healing journey. During an interview, Susie disclosed that eight years ago her 16-year-old sister was shot in the stomach by an ex-boyfriend. After fleeing the scene, a Canada-wide warrant was issued and it was some time before the former boyfriend was arrested. He continued to threaten his victim and denied responsibility in court. He was ultimately sentenced to 14 years in prison. Susie had put the incident aside until the transformative experience she had in the RJC compelled her to apply to the Parole Board of Canada to obtain information about the person who caused her family harm. She explained:

I certainly was not at that place where I would have ever conceived that at all [before the RJC]. So the people that came in and [the instructor's] passion for RJ and the way that [the instructor] taught it was very meaningful for me.

Other participants said the transformative experience helped them find a way to cope with the trauma of being a victim of crime. Opal took the opportunity to write her final

letter assignment to her late father. She said: “It was about healing. It was actually helping me heal. I think that is why this course is special to me.”

Moore (2003) explains that it is possible that the healing process will be submerged if one perceives threat or fear, and if basic human needs are not met. Also, healing may be blocked as one expends energy carrying the burden of suffering and expensive emotions (Moore, 2003, p. 307). For these students, the RJC was a place where they could process some of their pain through journaling and having the experience of non-judgement from the instructor and peers. Taylor (2007) found that writing journals where students can bring in their own personal reflections and stories was significant in promoting transformative learning. Van der Kolk (2014) alleged that persons who experience trauma recover in the context of relationships with families, professionals, and groups. He explained:

These relationships provide physical and emotional safety, including safety from feeling shamed, admonished, or judged and to bolster the courage to tolerate, face, and process the reality of what has happened. (p. 210)

Throughout the RJC students are invited to share, through writing and in person, some of their personal experiences related to justice. Through guest speakers, they are exposed to stories of serious and violent crime that could trigger traumatic memories. While these approaches to restorative justice education have been found to be transformative and, for some, healing, instructors and TAs have an ethical obligation to ensure they have the skills to manage what might surface for students. The literature from transformative learning cautions that disorienting dilemmas can produce feelings of distress, including shame and fear (Cranton, 2006). Although research participants did not report these negative emotions, their personal stories underscore the importance of restorative justice educators being prepared for the possibility of intense emotional responses.

7.8. Summary

This chapter weaves together findings with restorative justice and transformative learning literature to answer the research questions guiding this study. Students’

experiences of perspective transformation and how it affected their beliefs, actions, relationships, and values have been thoroughly discussed. It is apparent that the perspective transformations that occurred for RJC students were enduring and had impact beyond their vocation and academic lives.

A critical examination of the role the TA, instructor, and others play in perspective transformation was provided through analyzing the results from three groups of students: those who experienced transformation, those who had their perspective affirmed or broadened, and those who did not experience transformation and/or had a negative experience in the course. These results highlight the importance of safe and respectful places for restorative justice education. Instructors bringing a commitment to self-reflection, empathy, and listening can create spaces where students can be supported through learning that challenges their core assumptions and beliefs. As learners critically reflect and engage with dialogue with others, transformation occurs.

The following chapter describes the strengths and limits of this study and offers recommendations for restorative justice in tertiary education and future research in this area.

Chapter 8.

Moving Forward: A Holistic, Transformative Vision for Restorative Justice Education

Go forward with courage.

When you are in doubt, be still, and wait; when doubt no longer exists for you, then go forward with courage. So long as mists envelope you, be still; be still until the sunlight pours through as dispels the mists – as it surely will. Then act with courage.

- Ponca Chief White Eagle⁷²

8.1. Introduction

This data reveal that although RJC instructors did not intentionally utilize transformative learning techniques, the RJC's experiential andragogy (circles, dialogue, storytelling) was transformative for many students. These perspective transformations resulted in tangible and sustained behavioural changes. Other students who came to the RJC with restorative perspectives had their views broadened and affirmed. For almost the entire sample, the RJC was very well received, enjoyable, and unique. Given these findings, how can the RJC contribute to the advancement of restorative justice philosophy and practice in our communities and social institutions?

This chapter revisits this overarching question and includes a discussion of the opportunities and barriers with respect to restorative justice education in a tertiary environment. There are recommendations offered surrounding the RJC at SFU as well as ideas for future research. In addition, the strengths and limits of this study are presented.

⁷² White Eagle was the hereditary chief of the Poncas in 1877 in the Dakota territory and what is now Nebraska. Read more at <http://amertribes.proboards.com/thread/583/white-eagle#ixzz4CFV67MxS>

8.2. Transformational Education

In determining what role restorative justice education might play in advancing the restorative justice movement, it is useful to reconsider the concept of perspective transformation and the purpose of education more broadly. Perspective transformation from retributive to restorative may be the outcome for many RJC students but should transformation be the goal of such courses? To address this question in the context of tertiary education, I am compelled by the purpose of education articulated by Freire and Giroux. Freire (2000) saw education as a vehicle encouraging one's ontological vocation – to act upon and transform the world and, in doing so, move toward new possibilities of fuller and richer life both individually and collectively (Shaul, 2000, p. 32). For Giroux (2007), education should cultivate a “culture of curiosity and questioning, the imperatives of social responsibility, and at the same time recognizing that political agency does not reduce the citizen to a mere consumer” (p. 35-36). It is my conviction that restorative justice education should aim towards such individual and collective well-being while upholding the values of voluntariness, respect, and empowerment inherent in the restorative justice philosophy. Therefore, the andragogy undertaken must not be one of coercion or “filling an empty vessel” (Freire, 2000) but an approach that encourages critical reflection, dialogue, praxis, and relationship. Considering critical pedagogy and restorative justice together means that students are active agents of their education, supported by instructors and each other to enhance awareness of themselves and their relationship to the social world.

The RJC provides an example of a post-secondary experience that is more than objectified learning (Bai et al., 2013) or learning *about* restorative justice. The andragogy based on praxis allowed students to reflect upon the content within the context of their lived experiences and encouraged them to act. The results were sustained cognitive and behavioural shifts often associated with enhanced emotional literacy, compassion, and self-awareness. This is not to say that providing restorative justice content is not important. Several authors have highlighted how essential understanding this alternative justice framework is for future criminal justice professionals (Britto & Reimund, 2013; Geske, 2005; Glibert et al., 2013) and citizens as it expands our patterns of thinking and provides us with choices (Van Ness & Strong, 2015). However, my research and other

studies (Calaway et al., 2016; George et al., 2015; Helfgott et al., 2000; Vigorita, 2002) suggest that it is the experiential approach regardless of content that shifts perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours. This highlights the importance of drawing from the field of critical pedagogy including transformative learning theory and practice to enhance the experience of students studying all kinds of subjects in criminology.

This research indicates that some participants left the RJC with a *transformative* conception of restorative justice. Students were able to appreciate what Sullivan and Tifft (2005) denote as the applicability of restorative practices everywhere and anytime we engage in social relationships with others (p. 169). This more fulsome understanding concerns how we see ourselves and others, how we feel, and how we behave. The cognitive and corresponding emotive shifts produced experiences that could be described as visceral. Although some student's recollections of the transformation experience had become foggy over time, the feelings remained strong. This discrepancy is not surprising given the link Dirkx (2001) assumes between learning and emotions. He describes learning as an imaginative, emotional act and argues that significant learning is impossible without emotion. The sustainability of students' perspective transformation through the RJC underscores the importance of engaging andragogy that imitates everyday life in which all four dimensions—cognitive, physical, affective, and spiritual—coexist and interact, governing all human action (Papastamatis & Panitsides, 2014, p. 79). Such educational approaches also embody restorative justice as more “emotionally intelligent justice” that heightens awareness and management of emotions that affect criminal justice professionals, victims, and offenders (Sherman, 2003). The holistic impacts of the RJC align with Indigenous teachings of the medicine wheel whereby educational processes involve the integrated whole: psychological, spiritual, emotional, and physical (Graveline, 1998; Monchalin, 2016). This finding is significant given the Calls to Action made with respect to education following the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015). Specifically, provincial, territorial, and federal governments are to work with Indigenous peoples to develop culturally appropriate curricula at primary, intermediate, and post-secondary levels.

This research demonstrates that students' perspective transformation inspired a greater consideration of their place in the world. This increased self-awareness relates to

what Bai et al. (2013) consider self-knowledge: how one sees, understands, and feels about one's self in dimensions of mind, heart, soul, spirit, and body (p. 4). This self-to-self relationship is how one sees oneself as "growing and becoming increasingly integrated, whole, full, and fulfilled" (Bai et al., 2013 p. 4). This fulfillment is an area that is worthy of greater consideration as Bai et al. (2013) reported that this type of learning does not feature prominently in the pedagogy or research in higher education (p. 6). Lederach (2003) notes that identity is lodged in narratives of how people see themselves and who they are in relation to others. Therefore, transformation of people and relationships is inherently connected to understanding and defining identity through interaction and inner action (p. 58). The RJC provided the opportunity for students to engage in learning that asked them to reflect on who they are and who they want to be; these reflections are carried out as students increasingly realize they are contextually situated and related to others. These considerations move students beyond a purely cognitive realm to the spiritual and relational domains of learning.

Given the university structure, it may be tempting for institutions to focus solely the cognitive aspects of learning. However, changes in post-secondary education are becoming increasingly evident as awareness grows about the importance of holistic approaches based around praxis.

8.3. Restorative Justice Education in Tertiary Environments

In attending to the cognitive, spiritual, emotional, relational, and pragmatic aspects of learning, restorative justice education can continue to inspire transformation that has ripple effects beyond the student and into the social world. Renner (2009) offers three tactics to encourage classrooms that resist injustice and move towards solidarity and a more active, participatory democracy (p. 71). These strategies are instructive as they align with the transformative, conception of restorative justice inherent to the RJC. It is Elliott's (2011) assertion that restorative justice might help build a more robust, participatory democracy and we all play a part in 'declaring ourselves' to do what we can to connect with and act from the values of our best selves.

Renner's (2009) first strategy involves *community*: finding ways to connect students' lives together, connecting curriculum with the world outside of school, and connecting students with real lives/stories/faces (p. 73). The second is a focus on *praxis*: when instructors encourage community activity in the form of service learning (service, reflection, and academic context/rigor) compared to mere volunteerism (often, simply, service), such that their experiences lead them to ask questions about why such service may even be necessary (Renner, 2009, p. 73). Finally, Renner (2009) highlights the importance of *courage* to challenge the socially reproductive tendencies of injustice. These elements of community, praxis, and courage call students and educators to the highest form of transformative education. While the RJC contains evidence of these strategies in its andragogy and learning outcomes, it is important to consider a more global focus. Restorative justice education should include attention beyond the provincial and even national stage while encouraging local action. Some of this action could take the form of resistance to the very institutions in which one is situated. Universities themselves can be and are easily swayed by corporate interests and have been critiqued for reproducing the status quo of social injustice through encouraging competition and overreliance on knowing *about* something rather than embodying and living knowledge (Bai et al., 2013). Therefore, the barriers to advancing a transformative, restorative justice within a university setting require careful consideration.

Universities can be the place for radical transformation or the reproduction of the status quo. Adamson and Bailie (2012) argue that by breaking free of the constraining grasp of rigid educational models, innovative learning environments can emerge. Systems and institutions can develop from a new paradigm rather than an industrial perspective (Adamson & Bailie, 2012, p. 146). However, there are obstacles to transformative learning approaches to restorative justice education. This research and other studies (Britto & Reimund, 2013; Gilbert et al., 2013; Toews, 2013; Vaandering, 2014) have highlighted the importance of aligning the andragogy with restorative justice, although there are institutional realities that must be taken into account. For example, Britto and Reimund (2013) identify the lack of support from criminal justice and criminology faculty members as an impediment to bringing restorative justice into the curriculum in some universities. Although SFU has overcome this initial resistance, there are still various obstacles to bringing restorative justice into the university culture. These barriers

include practical considerations, the nature of university culture, and the traditional role of the instructor.

8.3.1. Practical Considerations

Criminology departments in universities can be structured around objectified learning: large lecture halls, fixed seating, and raised podiums for the instructor. Signs saying “Do not move the desks,” are commonplace and discourage any restructuring of hierarchy. These arrangements often impede instructor’s ability to align restorative justice education with the values and processes of the philosophy. Gilbert et al. (2013) note that physical features of the classroom are important factors in creating an open, trusting environment suitable for deep reflection and sensitive interpersonal communication. A room with fixed seating or tiered floors is not conducive to restorative justice courses that require space for circles and other experiential activities (Gilbert et al., 2013, p. 55). While special room requests may be made, institutional growth and financial considerations often translate into getting as many students into a course as possible.

While large lectures afford opportunities for a greater numbers of students to learn about restorative justice and hear stories from guests, some RJC students who did not experience transformation raised a critique about large, impersonal lectures. This critique highlights the importance of continuing to run small tutorial groups of 15 to 20 students in addition to the lecture. These intimate groupings were important places to process new information learned in lecture and provided an experience of communication, community, and safety. Participants found these tutorial aspects to be unique to the RJC in the context of their experience in university thus far. These findings demonstrate the importance of considering the role of university culture in the context of restorative justice education.

8.3.2. University Culture

Kilgore and Bloom (2002) note that conventional university settings mean that transformative learning must occur within a limited time frame with pre-defined, measurable learning outcomes (p. 130). This context is challenging if educational endeavours aim to address the unique needs of learners while recognizing the diversity

of their backgrounds and experiences. This challenge is not unique to teaching about restorative justice. However, within university cultures that emphasize rote learning, examination, grading, and competition, restorative justice education that focuses on the whole person can pose particular challenges. According to Fetherston and Kelly (2007), “academia is, more than anything, a rational and rationalized environment where emotions are only studied (they are not felt, lived through, and certainly not revealed)” (p. 2,77) which makes implementing transformative pedagogy challenging. However, university instructors enjoy relative autonomy over how they teach. While each course has specified learning objectives, how these are achieved is in the hands of the instructor. This situation may benefit students, but limits more systemic change.

The RJC provides a concrete example of how instructors and TAs can bring restorative justice andragogy into the university culture with great success. Storytelling and circle practices have been identified through this research as having tremendous impact and facilitating perspective transformation. Morrison and Vaandering (2012) argue that the deeper social and emotional foundation of relational ecologies moves the application of restorative justice away from a disciplinary measure of control to an andragogy and praxis of engagement, development, and integrity at both individual and institutional levels (p. 141). Instructors and TAs can nurture these relational ecologies from the first moments in the classroom. By modelling respectful, inclusive language in person and in the course outline, a different tone is set within the larger university structure. Elliott’s (2009) *Tutorial Guide* highlights the importance of “walking the talk:”

In each tutorial, have the students assemble the chairs in a circle in the middle of the classroom. The circle is an essential tool in breaking down hierarchies and offering inclusion to all participants. The task of the facilitator (TA) is to oversee the *process* of the tutorial in all of its aspects, and ensuring that the circle is a safe place in which to draw out the wisdom of the participants. To this end, it is also important that the facilitator *model* the peacemaking behaviours that restorative justice ideally strives for. In other words, we seek to “be the change we want to see in the world.” Given the criminal justice fields our students are destined for, this is a very important lesson. (p. 3)

Several RJC students mentioned the accessibility of their instructor and the safety of the tutorial as facilitating factors for their perspective transformation. Alternatively, those who did not experience perspective transformation felt their instructor was closed to

any critique of restorative justice. While these findings must be further evaluated alongside future research documenting instructor and TAs perspectives, the data are reminders of the importance of moving away from traditional hierarchical power structures where teachers dominate students through limiting and structuring participation. The experience of learners in traditional higher education has been one of being seen rather than heard, where their opinions and experiences are marginalized, and where the professor's voice is the one most worth hearing (Gilbert et al., 2013, p. 49). Restorative justice and transformative learning both challenge these contemporary arrangements and offer strategies that redefine the roles of student and teacher in ways that challenge established university culture.

Gilbert et al. (2013) noted that traditional university pedagogy has resulted in students becoming comfortable in their role as passive learners. They have acquiesced to Freire's (2000) banking model, content to act as receptacles of information that is then memorized and regurgitated. Therefore, to fully engage in restorative justice education, students "must 'unlearn' their traditional higher education expectations and experiences" (Gilbert et al., 2013, p. 49). Just as restorative justice requires a re-visioning of the role of participants in the justice process, restorative justice education demands revising the roles of student and teacher. While the university setting imposes certain requirements on instructors in terms of submitting grades and upholding learning outcomes, educators do enjoy relative autonomy around how these are fulfilled.

Britto and Reimund (2013) have recommended internship opportunities in restorative justice programs and having alumni and community stakeholders who work with students on university or community projects as ways to infuse restorative justice into criminology and criminal justice departments (p. 153). These strategies require restorative justice educators to be tapped into existing community programs and resources. Tomporowski (2014) also promotes collaborative research between universities and communities. This approach can be a challenge given the layered expectations on instructors to supervise graduate students, teach undergraduates, support their TAs, engage in service work, and publish research. Despite these pressures, past and current RJC instructors have maintained such connections and provide varied opportunities for students to participate in restorative justice practice, research, education, and advocacy.

For example, SFU students are can take other restorative justice courses, participate in circle trainings offered once a year, complete a practicum for the Centre for Restorative Justice, join the student-driven Restorative Justice Club,⁷³ participate in research initiatives, and connect with the instructor for more specific referrals to community programs.⁷⁴ These are all concrete ways that RJC students can live out their new perspective and advance restorative justice.

The instructor plays a vital role in cultivating a meaningful experience for students during and after the RJC. In addition to providing more educational and practical opportunities for students, Britto and Reimund (2013) would encourage faculty who teach restorative justice to advocate for including restorative justice as a part of departmental/program governance. This integration involves a radical shift in how faculty disputes are dealt with and decisions are made. It would encourage faculty members to literally have to walk the talk, which can benefit department cohesiveness (Britto & Reimund, 2013, p. 153). This recommendation is part of an infusion/integration model of bringing restorative justice to post-secondary education. This approach differs from inoculation where students receive a single dose of restorative justice through a specific course or part of a course which gives them the basic content, skills, and competencies to utilize this material in other courses and in a professional setting (p. 152). SFU currently offers three restorative justice courses, an on-line Diploma in Restorative Justice, and some training and research opportunities. However, the lack of systemic initiatives like those at Dalhousie and other Canadian schools means SFU's Criminology Department is currently an example of the inoculation model of restorative justice education.

Restorative justice has been adopted by at least 22 North American universities as a way to address non-academic, student misconduct (Karp, 2013). Unfortunately, SFU is not yet one of these. However, greater interest in such initiatives may be on the horizon given the high profile nature of Dalhousie's sexual harassment where the university opted for a restorative justice response rather than a punitive sanction. While Kara and

⁷³ This Club was formed in 2014 by several RJC students. It currently has 80 student members from diverse faculties.

⁷⁴ SFU offered a supervised semester-long practicum placement in selected criminal justice agencies. Several former RJC students have been placed in community-based restorative justice programs.

McAllister (2010) have also advocated for the use of restorative justice for plagiarism, this recommendation that has not gained traction at SFU or elsewhere in the province of British Columbia. Given the large numbers of students who have completed the RJC and see value in the restorative justice philosophy, such practices may be well supported by many of those enrolled in the criminology program.

The infusion/integration model requires a higher level of consensus among faculty, and greater coordination of faculty and resources to implement (Britto & Reimund, 2013, p. 153). This aligns with the whole-school approach advocated by Morrison (2007), which aims to change the culture of schools based on the principles of restorative justice. Changing culture is difficult and requires time, patience, and tremendous commitment. These qualities have been demonstrated by the Directors for the Centre for Restorative Justice since its inception in 2002. In addition to establishing different courses in restorative justice, there have been many graduate projects, international conferences, training, and events that raise awareness and contribute to the scholarship of restorative justice. This study is one such contribution and supports McDowell et al.'s (2014) assertion that "by exploring the perspectives of individuals within an educational setting, including students, a better working knowledge of the likelihood of effective implementation of future restorative justice processes may develop" (p. 348). It is recommended the SFU's School of Criminology work with the Centre for Restorative Justice and the Office of Aboriginal peoples at the university to build on what has been learned from other Canadian schools that have infused restorative justice beyond course offerings. This strategy would also be useful in responding to recommendations made following the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that aim for educational institutions to work more collaboratively with Indigenous peoples to increase access to and enhance cultural appropriateness of curricula and services. Integrating restorative justice approaches into the university could provide more culturally meaningful and flexible processes for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and faculty experiencing harm and conflict.

While SFU's School of Criminology has a way to go in realizing a whole school or infusion model of restorative justice, the work that students and instructors have done to provide opportunities for restorative justice education beyond the RJC has been

formidable. The energy of SFU's Restorative Justice Club in organizing training and events and the tireless efforts of the current Director, Dr. Brenda Morrison, have provided research, educational, and practical opportunities for restorative justice to advance inside and outside the university. Much of the passion for these developments has been ignited and sustained by the shared experience of the RJC. The following section provides some recommendations to further enhance undergraduate, restorative justice education.

8.4. Implementing Transformative, Restorative Justice Education

While there is the potential for a wide range of restorative justice applications in university settings, most efforts in the post-secondary realm have been towards educating undergraduate students. The proliferation of courses that include restorative justice content has sparked several restorative justice educators to share their experiences in the classroom (Carson & Bussler, 2013; Helfgott et al., 2000; Smith-Cunniën & Parilla, 2001; Toews, 2013). These accounts, along with the findings from this research and the established field of transformative learning, provide useful recommendations for restorative justice education. To enhance the experience for students, careful consideration of voluntariness, accessibility, instructor role and skills, andragogy, content, and evaluation are required in light of the barriers present in post-secondary environments.

8.4.1. Voluntariness & Accessibility

While several participants felt that the RJC should be mandatory for all criminology students, forced participation does not honour the voluntariness of restorative justice or transformative learning. Therefore, it is recommended that restorative justice education remain voluntary rather than being a required course. Given the powerful impact this course had on non-criminology majors, the RJC should also remain accessible to all students. While it is particularly important for criminal justice majors to learn about restorative justice given its growing prominence in the system and how the concept encourages critical thinking (Smith-Cunniën & Parilla, 2001), justice matters affect all

citizens. Given the need for community support for restorative justice to advance (V. Braithwaite, et al., 2013), the widest exposure these ideas get, the better.

While there is some value to students learning about restorative justice in the context of other criminology courses such as law enforcement, corrections, policy, and youth justice, there is tremendous benefit to a stand-alone course. Courses like the RJC are what Britto and Reimund (2013) call the inoculation model where students receive a single dose of restorative justice (p. 152). This approach provides the luxury of time for both students and instructors to explore the history and assumptions of the perspective, critique the concept, and develop related skills. A specific course also provides an opportunity for students to truly experience restorative justice through participating in these processes in the classroom (Smith-Cunnien & Parilla, 2001, p. 394-395). It is recommended that while other Criminology courses should not ignore restorative justice content or andragogy, the RJC should continue to be available to Criminology and non-Criminology students as a stand-alone course.

8.4.2. Restorative Justice Educators

The participatory nature of the RJC was the highlight for most students and something restorative justice educators should be comfortable and equipped to facilitate. Toews (2013) suggests that the restorative justice instructor serves as a facilitator of a process or experience (p. 20). Reflecting on her experience teaching restorative justice in prison she states:

As a ‘facilitator,’ not ‘teacher,’ the educator also carries the identity of a student, practitioner, theorist, and educator. The facilitator brings just one perspective of what restorative justice is and what it can be and stands to learn from the incarcerated students who bring another perspective. (p. 20)

Nesbitt and Clarke (2004) consider a “restorative educator” one who “recognizes the uniqueness of individuals, and the power of collective bodies, specifically communities for the purpose of working together to bring about change that will result in a betterment of both individuals and the larger community” (p. 5). Similarly, Cranton and Wright (2008) suggest that those engaging transformative learning techniques could consider themselves “learning companions” (p. 34). Redefining the educator’s role also requires

revising the role of the student. Toews (2013) recommends moving away from labels like “student” to “participant,” noting the latter suggests an active and interactive relationship with the material and others involved in the learning experience (p. 23).

Instructors and TAs play a vital role in encouraging and supporting the students’ transition from a passive learner to an active participant. This process begins by being clear about the values and worldview one brings to being an educator, reflection that is essential to praxis. Vaandering (2014) offers questions that can assist in in this endeavour. She found that, to sustain commitment to restorative justice, educators need to see others as worthy and relational, despite living in systems that often view others as deficient individuals, independently responsible for their own success or survival (Vaandering, 2014, p. 517). This guidance is particularly valuable for educators in post-secondary institutions characterized by individualism and hierarchy. Her questions: “Am I honouring? Am I measuring someone in light of my own values or do I accept and relate to them as worthy? What message am I sending?” (p. 515) are helpful reminders for restorative justice educators to “walk the talk.”

The importance of self-awareness for restorative justice educators cannot be understated. To support students with a perspective transformation, instructors and TAs themselves must stay open to the potential for personal transformation. They must be willing to be vulnerable, take risks, and be ever mindful of the power, privilege, and experiential and cultural baggage they carry into the classroom. As Toews (2013) notes,

Teaching restorative justice invites the instructor to embark on her own journey of individual transformation in which she examines what she believes about the philosophy and its practices as well as crime, violence and structural injustices and then evaluates and revises those beliefs based on the collaboration with her incarcerated students. (p. 20)

On-going, critical reflection is essential for bringing one’s best self to teaching. Educators must be able to challenge, support students through disorienting dilemmas, and encourage safe and respectful dialogue. They must also be up to the task of findings ways to support students to take action following their perspective transformation. This means being connected to community and educational opportunities. Instructors and TAs must work with students to reintegrate and navigate their new perspective into daily life.

To truly embrace a transformative, restorative approach to teaching, self-awareness and self-care are vital. Toews (2013) suggests self and course evaluations, writing a teaching statement, and identity memos as methods to enhance self-reflection thereby facilitating and modelling restorative justice values.

While this research has not focused on the perspective of the instructor or TAs, the course developers and Elliott's writing promotes a vision of teaching that encourages "walking the talk" of restorative justice. In doing so, how instructors relate to students in the class and support their learning outside of the university is important. Instructors should actively connect with the restorative justice community and beyond, modelling inclusion and collaboration. Students reported changes of actions in their workplaces, course selection, volunteerism, career and relationships and Cranton (2006) outlines some specific strategies that instructors can employ to further support such on-going activity. She suggests setting a goal or creating a vision, inviting learners to think about what they could do both long- and short-term, considering the resources required to carry out action, offering suggestions for concrete action, and considering how they might impact others (Cranton, 2006, p. 172-173). These recommendations from the field of transformative learning may provide additional avenues for personal transformation to translate into action that advances restorative justice philosophy and practice.

Given that most university instructors have not received formal teacher training, it would be useful that educators engage in on-going professional development. As a starting point, Mezirow (2003) suggests that instructors develop interpersonal skills, social relationships, and emotional intelligence. To this end, there are several "how to" guides written about how to become a more transformative educator (Brookfield & Preskill, 1999; Cranton, 2006; Mezirow & Taylor, 2009). Cranton's (2006) guide, *Understanding and promoting transformative learning: A guide for educators of adults*, offers suggestions for enhancing self-awareness as a building block of good teaching. She believes that cultivating communication and relationship with students are founded upon authenticity, bringing one's sense of self into teaching practice (Cranton, 2006, p. 183). She recommends keeping a teaching journal, setting up discussion groups with colleagues, taking a workshop or reading about reflective teaching, and completing an inventory about

physical preferences and/or learning style to increase self-awareness. Clearly, being a transformative, restorative educator requires commitment to oneself as well as students.

In addition to reading and seeking out professional development opportunities, restorative justice educators may also benefit from mentoring. According to Hudson (2016), “mentoring allows preservice teachers (mentees) in the formative stages of learning how to teach to engage productively with a more experienced teacher” (p. 31). In particular, working with an experienced teacher showed mentees how to develop positive relationships, which were modeled and facilitated by the mentor. While this process is formalized within elementary and high school teaching programs, such practices are rare within tertiary education. Given that some instructors enter the university or college environment with teaching and life experience, a *collaborative* mentoring relationship is recommended for the RJC. The benefits of such a relationship include opportunities to develop dispositions and abilities that strengthen instructors’ capacities to grow personally and professionally (Kochan & Trimble, 2000, p. 20). Collaborative mentorship provides support and increases sensitivity, reflective skills, and communication skills, which can enhance educators’ abilities to create and nurture collaborative work cultures. These cultures could help facilitate a shift for SFU’s School of Criminology towards a more integrative approach to restorative justice. Kochan and Trimble (2000) found that collaborative, on-going commitments to growth as a person and as an educator benefit students tremendously. Not only does collaborative mentorship model the values of restorative justice, it reflects a commitment to praxis that could provide support for restorative justice to expand more broadly within the university culture.

Given the benefits of mentoring and the importance of an on-going commitment to professional and personal development, it is recommended that restorative justice instructors and TAs at SFU and beyond engage in on-going collaboration, support, and communication. Such exchanges can be used in addition to specific transformative learning activities to enhance restorative justice education. These strategies are outlined below along with other recommended approaches from this study and the literature.

8.4.3. Andragogy

The importance of aligning restorative justice values and processes with andragogy has been highlighted throughout this dissertation and beyond (Gilbert et al., 2013; Toews, 2013; Vaandering, 2014; Zellerer, 2003). This research indicates that some students perceive a lack of integrity between these aspects. These students have reported a negative experience with the RJC, which is a disservice to the restorative justice movement. In the effort to bring restorative justice education into alignment with its values, useful recommendations from various educators in North America have been offered (Carson & Bussler, 2013; Gilbert et al., 2013; Smith-Cunnien & Parilla, 2001; Toews, 2013; Vaandering, 2014). Reflections made by the course developers reveal that the RJC is premised upon integrating restorative justice values within the learning experiences; however, the instructor and TAs must be vigilant about maintaining this connection between values and practice.

Cranton (2006) describes several strategies, which encourage transformative learning. These strategies include: journaling, critical incidents (asking students to describe an incident especially positive or negative that stands out in their memory and relates to a specific topic or theme), conscious-raising experiences (exposing new information, knowledge, insights, or values especially those that are discrepant for currently held points of view), art-based activities, and experiential learning (p. 135-154). Most of these strategies can be found in the RJC curriculum. Conscious-raising is achieved through tutorial activities, lecture and readings and critical incidents are often discussed through the circle topics posed in tutorial. Journaling and critical essays are assignments and tutorial activities are experiential in nature. In addition to these approaches, Cranton (2006) suggests incorporating art-based activities around fiction, music, and art could engage learners in intuitive, imaginative processes that may enhance the RJC. Having several options that cater to individual unique learning needs is something that could create more meaningful experiences for a greater number students.

For restorative justice education, it is important to consider Dirkx's (in Dirkx et al., 2006) assertion that

learning is multifaceted and complex. What is derived from such experiences reflects a whole host of factors, including the nature of the instructor, fellow participants, the physical setting itself, the content covered, the instructional methods. (p. 131)

Therefore, educators must attend to all aspects of the course, not just alter assignments or lectures. Educators must be also be aware of Synder's (2008) caution that

[c]urricula designed to facilitate transformative learning tend to be very cognitive in orientation. Increased attention to the emotional needs and orientations of participants in the transformative learning process might result in more successful learning experiences. (p. 171)

Toews (2013) provides a list of values and associated methods to guide restorative justice education. These values of respect, accountability, participation, self-determination, interconnectedness, particularity (recognizing the uniqueness of each student), nonviolence, humility, trust and transparency, and transformation are essential to consider for curriculum and pedagogy (p. 15-16). Toews' (2013) recommendations align with what RJC students who experienced perspective transformation found to be most meaningful in terms of the classroom structure and content. Toews (2013) also provides practical educational strategies for teaching, which overlap with the RJC, including the use of real life examples, participatory and experiential learning, circle processes, co-creation of guidelines and values,⁷⁵ sharing personal experiences of the content, and inviting students to connect their lives to the ideas from the course. Other tactics she recommends include considering using labels other than "teacher" and "student" to define roles and asking participants what they need for a respectful and transformative learning environment (Toews, 2013, p. 24). These strategies could easily be brought to the RJC and other courses should educators be open to such suggestions.

Cunnilen and Parilla (2000) found the film, case studies, and role plays useful for students to experience restorative justice and reflect critically. Vaandering's (2014) restorative justice professional development project involved similar strategies such as circle, personal time for reflection about values, role-play, dialogue, and inquiry, which knit

⁷⁵ During the first tutorial, students are invited to participate in an activity called Doing Family Business where guidelines for participation are co-created and agreed upon.

participants into a group that offered one another respect, concern, and dignity. Equally important is the educators' personal commitment to self-awareness and maintaining a role as a facilitator that assists participants in feeling worthy and interconnected (Vaandering, 2014, p. 522-523). These strategies could be implemented with a collaborative mentoring model amongst current and former RJC instructors.

Much of what has been recommended by transformative learning and restorative justice education is already a part of the RJC content and andragogy. My research and similar findings from Holsinger (2008) and Kitchen (2013) highlight the utility of the non-traditional format in creating meaningful experiences for students that inspire perspective transformation and subsequent action. While not all students had a positive experience, continued responsiveness to feedback and a commitment to bringing a restorative justice perspective to teaching can enhance the RJC. Although a restorative approach to teaching would seek to meet the needs of all, the university setting requires specific criteria against which all students are measured. The following section discusses the role of evaluation in restorative justice education.

8.4.4. Evaluation

With regard to evaluation, Elliott's (2011) *Course Outline* for the RJC states:

Evaluating students' performances in a course is a difficult task, particularly when there is a need to be attentive to the values of restorative justice. To assign marks is to judge your work, and the university requires grades that reflect the kind of criteria described in the grading rubric at the end of this syllabus. In the spirit of restorative justice, I will endeavor to ensure that the comments I provide in assessing your work are necessary, truthful and kind. I have also attempted to be as clear as possible in stating the evaluation criteria for each assignment that, if followed, will help you to improve your writing, researching and critical thinking skills. However, it is hoped that you will concentrate less on "getting a high grade" in the course, and more on immersing yourselves in the material. Understanding the depth of restorative justice as a paradigm shift rather than a program requires your full participation in the course. (p. 14)

This explanation highlights some of the tensions between the university context and the values of restorative justice. Carson and Bussler (2013) argue that as restorative justice education places an emphasis on self-reflection and personal growth, traditional

approaches to grading can seem meaningless (p. 144). The RJC relies on TAs and instructors to evaluate students' assignments according to how they make use of course resources and other resources (students' ideas, lectures, guests), how well they are synthesizing these sources, utilizing critical thinking, and composing their work (spelling, grammar, use of language, etc.) (Elliott, 2011). The final assignment takes the form of a letter written to someone who has influenced their understanding of justice through the RJC. This assignment is evaluated based on how students address eight guiding questions they are provided in advance. Given a couple of participants' concerns about how this letter is evaluated, perhaps a "pass/fail" or non-graded option for this learning activity might be considered.

Attendance and participation are graded each week according to the following:

- 2 out of 2 = student actively participates in group discussion in a manner that is respectful of others; demonstrates a sound awareness of the content of the week's lecture and readings and/or can tie this understanding to the workshop activity (when applicable) in their active participation in the group debriefing; and uses critical thinking skills.
- 1 ½ out of 2 = student respects others; participates in the discussions with an adequate awareness of the week's lecture and readings and attempts to tie this understanding to the workshop activity (when applicable) in their tentative participation in the group debriefing; and makes tentative efforts to use critical thinking.
- 1 out of 2 = student is in attendance, but is not engaged with others in the group; occasionally participates in the group discussion and demonstrates some awareness of the lecture and readings; hesitant attempts to link the lecture/reading materials to workshop activities where applicable; some evidence of critical thinking.
- ½ out of 2 = student attends but does not participate; demonstrates little to no awareness of lecture/reading materials; does not deploy critical thinking skills.
- 0 out of 2 = student is absent without reasonable excuse. (Elliott, 2011, p. 18)

These evaluation criteria seem to fare well for student performance. Survey results indicated that 43% of students who responded were in the A range, 23% fell into the B

range, 4% in C and less than 1% reported a D or F.⁷⁶ Carson and Bussler's (2013) reported that all of their restorative justice students received an A or a B. During the interviews for this project, students were not asked specifically about grading although those who reported a partially negative experience in the RJC shared concerns about how their assignments were evaluated. Namely, they feared they would not receive a decent grade if they were critical of restorative justice.

One way to address these concerns may be to consider Carson and Bussler's (2013) approach to contracting with students about grades. Through this collaborative process, students told the instructor what grade they were working towards based on the amount of work they wanted to put into the course. As long as each assignment was evaluated as 'satisfactory' by the instructor, it counted towards the contracted grade (Carson & Bussler, 2013, p. 144). These educators reported that this process also required discussion with students about evaluating attendance and participation. This technique, although challenging with a large number of students, could help to align the evaluation of student performance with the values of restorative justice.

How students are evaluated speaks volumes about how instructors and institutions perceive the purpose of education. Carson and Bussler (2013) note that the

practice of restorative justice is easily transferred into the school setting, since the principles are transferable; listening, speaking, making decisions. These principles are also at the heart of democracy and at the heart of John Dewey's belief that a major role of the school is to develop democratic citizens. (p. 141)

Restorative justice education must align with this vision of education. However, movement away from rote learning and the banking model of education requires instructors to be self-aware, open, courageous, supportive, creative, and innovative. These qualities can translate into education that cultivates self-awareness, relationships, dialogue, and critical thinking. It is these aspects of tertiary education that will support the advancement of restorative justice in institutions and communities. It is recommended

⁷⁶ These results must be considered with caution as 29% of the sample either did not reply or could not recall the grade they received.

that all SFU instructors continue to expand the use of experiential learning and other techniques that truly reflect the vision of “the engaged university.”

8.5. Strengths

This research is a unique contribution to the field of restorative justice and transformative learning. Despite the argument that restorative justice education is essential to criminology and criminal justice students (Geske, 2005; Gilbert et al., 2013), this study provides the most in-depth empirical examination of this phenomenon to date. The willingness of former RJC students to complete the survey and dedicate time to interviews was a strength of this project. The use of these two sources and the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods provided for a trustworthy and robust analysis. The participants' generous replies to the open-ended survey questions combined with the interview data provided a richer analysis of the essence of transformation than would have been possible using one method. Given that King's (2009) survey did not adequately gauge the complex phenomenon of perspective transformation, the interviews were essential in drawing out participants' stories. These storytellers came from varied backgrounds in terms of age, culture, and life experiences, which added diversity to the data. Their stories flowed freely and without hesitation. This speaks to the value of the transformative inquiry paradigm where the researcher is travelling with participants. All interviewees expressed gratitude for the opportunity to share their experience and what it meant to them. Several asked to be informed when the study was completed so they could learn about the results. The on-going interest of restorative justice education was further evidence of the sustainability of students' perspective transformation.

Following one interview, a research participant started to volunteer within the restorative justice community. Three others have stayed in regular contact with me, enthusiastic to attend the doctoral defence. This interest highlights the possibility of research to be meaningful to participants and inspire social action. For all interviewees who experienced transformation, restorative justice continues to play an active role in their lives. This engagement along with a positive experience in the RJC likely motivated the large numbers of former students willing to be interviewed. While saturation was attained

through 21 interviews, many others would have been happy to participate. This degree of willingness increases the possibility for future research on this topic.

As a former SFU sessional instructor and current graduate student, my access to the course developers and students proved to be another strength. Also, given my background with the RJC, I was familiar with the terminology and activities participants referenced. This familiarity allowed me to focus more on participants' experiences, rather than using the time to explain what was meant when discussing a specific aspect of the RJC.

A further strength of this study was the inclusion of participants who did not experience transformation and those who had their perspective affirmed or broadened. The transformative learning literature is silent with respect to these groups and previous research on restorative justice post-secondary education reports a bias towards people favourable to the course (Adamson, 2012). Participants who had a negative experience and did not experience transformation provided a better understanding of the phenomenon under study. These data can be used to inform the future of restorative justice education at SFU and beyond.

Finally, this research provides the first attempt to empirically gauge perspective transformation or "changing lenses" which is central to the restorative justice movement, according to Van Ness and Strong (2010) and Zehr (1990). Although theoretical intersections between transformative learning and restorative justice have been made by Adamson (2012) and Toews (2013), utilizing instruments from the field of transformative learning was an innovative methodology to contribute to both areas of study. While there seems to be consensus in the restorative justice field that restorative justice education requires unique andragogy, this research was seminal to this presupposition. The results strongly support assertions from Gilbert et al. (2013) and Geske (2005) that when restorative justice education has integrity with the values and processes, it can produce meaningful learning outcomes for those who will be working inside and outside of the criminal justice system.

8.6. Limits

There are several limitations to this research. The sample size achieved from the electronic survey comprised only 16% of all students who completed the RJC between Spring, 1999 and Fall, 2014. Those interviewed represented less than 1%. While saturation was achieved with respect to the phenomenon of perspective transformation, there were many other experiences students had with the RJC that were not explored in this thesis. For example, those students who had a benign or neutral experience with the RJC were not discussed.

This research was limited in its ability to clearly distinguish the impact of the RJC from other aspects of the participants' life. According to Cranton (2006), the transformative process can be provoked by a single event, a series of almost unnoticed cumulative events, the deliberate effort to make change in one's life, or by the natural developmental progression of becoming more mature (p. 57). The time we attend post-secondary school is often one of change, growth, and enhanced self-awareness. Although participants identified the RJC was unique during their time at SFU, this study did not specifically explore how other classes and university experiences may have contributed to their perspective transformation. Relatedly, some participants mentioned outside factors such as moving, getting older, and illness in the family co-occurred with the RJC, but these factors were not acutely discussed in this dissertation.

Although there were strengths related to my proximity and familiarity to the research site, this closeness also created the potential for perceived and actual researcher bias. A favourable bias was clearly evident in the very purpose of this study which aimed to understand how to advance restorative justice. As a long-time, passionate, and active restorative justice advocate and educator, my background provided motivation for this study. However, the potential for tunnel vision must be acknowledged. Despite attempts to clearly acknowledge and manage my perspective through reflexivity and transparency, there is always a potential for bias when one is so close to the topic.

8.7. Future Research

The generous number of willing interviewees exemplifies the interest former RJC students have in continuing their connection with restorative justice. While their stories were woven together to describe the essence of the phenomenon of perspective transformation, each of these could form the basis for a rich case study. Similar to Adamson's (2012) recommendation, I suggest future research compare classrooms utilizing circle processes to those that do not. Given that so many students reported the RJC being unique to their university experience, deeper exploration into this finding would be of interest to many educators.

Britto and Reimund (2013) have identified two models of restorative justice education: inoculation, where students are exposed to a section in a course or a single course that focuses on the content of interest, and infusion/integration, which tries to incorporate content and skill building related to the content of interest into multiple courses and the philosophy of a program (p. 152). The infusion/integration model includes courses, internship opportunities, service-learning opportunities, and student research. This model would also mean restorative justice is present in institutional/departmental decision-making and how harm and conflict is responded to. While this dissertation focused on inoculation of one particular course, there is value in exploring how SFU's School of Criminology could move towards an infusion/integration model of restorative justice. Future research could examine how students' engagement in other restorative justice initiatives at SFU affects their perspective and behaviour. Courses like *Restorative Justice in Educational Settings* and the Restorative Justice Club involve direct interaction between students and community⁷⁷ and, therefore, relate to understanding the broader impact of restorative justice education. It may be useful to look at what Dalhousie and other institutions are learning as they expand the use of restorative justice to non-academic student misconduct and how this might apply to SFU. Future research might also examine how restorative justice could be integrated into the RJC and beyond to deal with issues such as plagiarism, conflict, and evaluation.

⁷⁷ For example, in March of 2016 the Restorative Justice Club organized a community event during Child and Youth Awareness week aimed at stopping sexual exploitation.

This study was limited to RJC students who completed a face-to-face version of the course. However, many students have taken the RJC on-line as a stand-alone or part of a two-year restorative justice diploma. King (2009) has conducted several studies from on-line learning environments that show the potential for perspective transformation with this andragogy. Glibert et al. (2013) also offer recommendations for bringing restorative justice andragogy to on-line learning that could be explored in future research.

As one of the limits of this study is the inability to confirm students' beliefs and values upon entering the RJC, future researchers might consider conducting pre- and post-tests. This approach could more accurately assess perspective transformation compared to asking students to reflect on something that has already happen. It could be done simply with a short pre and post survey. It could also include a content analysis of students' reflective journals, which were a rich source of data in Adamson's (2012) study. This approach provides another point of data triangulation and could look more closely at students' values entering the course and experiences outside of the RJC that affected their learning. Given that adult learners must intentionally act to experience perspective transformation (Snyder, 2008, p. 166), it would be interesting to probe what makes someone more likely to absorb new information and critically reflect upon it. In other words, what qualities and experiences make someone more open to transformation?

In addition to pre- and post-tests, future research with RJC students may be more useful if conducted shortly after the course has been completed. Snyder (2008) has critiqued the use of King's (2009) LAS stating researchers should turn their attention to the process of transformation rather than transformation as an evaluation of success or endpoint (p. 169), towards which the survey tends. Given that the nature of the transformative process itself could not often be clearly recounted by some participants, more timely research could elucidate more layered descriptions. A longitudinal study where these students are contacted a few years later to enquire about the lasting effects of the RJC would provide a more robust examination of the enduring nature of perspective transformation.

Finally, it could be beneficial if forthcoming research were conducted with people in relationship with former RJC students. Many participants reflected on how others

noticed the change in them and these perceptions would be instructive in gauging the impact of the perspective transformation both for the individual and their relationships.

8.8. Summary

This chapter revisited the phenomenon of perspective transformation in light of the findings and challenges and opportunities present in tertiary education. It is clear that RJC students not only experienced shifts in cognition but also transformed how they viewed themselves, their relationships, and how they work and behave in community. These holistic transformations speak to the opportunities tertiary education provides to citizens and future criminal justice professionals. As students are encouraged to take restorative justice values and practices beyond the university classroom, instructors and institutions can also explore how restorative justice values and principles can enhance policy, andragogy, and personal development. This chapter included recommendations to SFU, RJC instructors, and the School of Criminology which are:

The RJC should continue to be available to Criminology and non-Criminology students as a stand-alone course.

Restorative justice instructors and TAs at SFU and beyond engage in ongoing personal and professional development through collaboration, mentorship, and communication.

SFU's School of Criminology work with the Centre for Restorative Justice and the Office of Aboriginal peoples at the university to build on what has been learned from other Canadian schools that have infused restorative justice beyond course offerings.

SFU instructors continue to expand the use of experiential learning and other techniques that truly reflect the vision of "the engaged university."

Chapter 9 concludes with an overview of the strengths and limits of this study along with recommendations for future research. Ongoing research efforts around restorative justice, transformative learning, praxis, and tertiary education will enhance these approaches to education and justice.

Chapter 9.

Conclusion

When reflecting on my personal goals – what motivates me to do this project – I identify the fact that it is my experience with my students that motivates me. I feel compelled to share the stories of their transformative experiences. I feel that this can help both educators and other students who are feeling rather hopeless about the utility of post-secondary education find energy to keep engaging. The road through academia can be bumpy and even unenjoyable for both educators and students and I believe that finding ways to truly engage students' hearts and minds, finding ways that they can apply what they learn in meaningful ways, can keep us moving forward.

- Alana Abramson, Reflective journal entry (April 1, 2014)

9.1. Introduction

This dissertation was the direct result of my personal experience of transformation fifteen years ago. I wanted to understand how other students were affected by the RJC that I had taken and now teach. The RJC is the longest running restorative justice course and 2,935 students completed it between Fall 1999 and Spring 2014. Many of these students have and will enter the justice field; therefore, it is critical to understand how learning about restorative justice impacted their perspective.

This course is part of the legacy of a pioneer in the restorative justice field, Dr. Liz Elliott who passed away in 2011. Prior to contacting former RJC students, a circle was held with six of the course developers who worked with Liz. What was shared provided the context from which the RJC emerged. Utilizing established methods from the field of transformative learning, an electronic survey was disseminated to all students who completed the course from its inception to Spring 2014. Four hundred and eighty one surveys were returned and 21 in-depth interviews were conducted with a diverse group of participants. The data included stories of perspective transformations and rich descriptions of how these shifts have affected students' lives.

This research addressed four research questions that relate to the experience, impact, facilitating factors, and sustainability of perspective transformation through an experience of restorative justice education. The results provide valuable insight towards the overarching question of how restorative justice education might advance the practice and philosophy in our communities and institutions. This chapter summarizes key findings related to the research questions.

9.2. Key findings

9.2.1. Students reported a perspective transformation that they attributed to the RJC

The vast majority of survey respondents indicated a perspective transformation from retributive to restorative. These findings were confirmed by interviews. For many students, the perspective transformation affected beliefs beyond the criminal justice system to include how they saw themselves and their relationships with others. The shift that students described was demonstrative of transformative learning as conceptualized by Mezirow (1997). Students provided evidence of disorienting dilemma, critical reflection, dialogue, and behavioural changes indicative of this phenomenon. For those students who did not report a perspective transformation, they had their perspectives affirmed or had no change. The latter group often attributed their lack of transformation to a partially negative experience with the RJC. These results were useful in providing recommendations about how restorative justice education might be more satisfying for all students.

9.2.2. Integrity between the RJC andragogy and restorative justice matters

All respondents reported learning something about restorative justice through the RJC. Most came to the course with little or no knowledge of the concept and left seeing the value of restorative justice, especially in criminal matters. Most found the course memorable, unique, and enjoyable and attributed this positive experience to their instructors, TA, and other students. However, a small number of students reported

negative aspects of the RJC. When students perceived that the instructor was not open to their critique of restorative justice, they described this shortcoming as a lack of integrity between the values of restorative justice and the educational approach. This finding highlights the importance of aligning values and processes with restorative justice education and has implications with respect to the level of self-awareness and skill that educators bring to the RJC.

9.2.3. Storytelling and the opportunity to share and hear from each other in a safe environment were the most important factors facilitating students perspective transformation

Students found guests who shared their stories of participating in restorative justice to be transformative. Many discussed how these real-life examples concretized their learning and gave them hope for restorative justice. Students also found the tutorial experience of being in a circle with their peers to be very meaningful. They highlighted the importance and power of the safe, non-judgemental, and respectful environment that was created. Students' appreciated being able to hear other students' stories and share their own. They reported these aspects as being unique to their university experience.

9.2.4. Students' perspective transformation affected their beliefs, feelings, relationships, and actions

Participants' perspective transformation affected their beliefs about crime and justice, but also the world more broadly. As a result of the RJC, participants reported being much more empathic, compassionate, open-minded, and trying to understand the experience of others, rather than rushing to judgement. This shift in perspective changed how participants felt, interacted with others at work and in their personal lives, and made choices about future academic, vocational, and volunteer pursuits. Further, these perspective transformations made students more critical in consuming media reports about crime and gave them confidence them to speak to others about restorative justice. Many participants reported bringing restorative practices like circles into their workplaces following their experience with the RJC.

9.2.5. Perspective transformations endured over time

All students who reported perspective transformation said it had been sustained over time. No matter if they took the course ten years or ten months ago, their restorative perspective endured far beyond the end of the semester. The restorative mindset they operate from today continues to influence their beliefs, relationships, and actions. They reported that maintaining a restorative perspective allows them to operate from the values that are important to them. Whether these values existed before and were uncovered through the RJC or not, they provide a strong framework to see and act in the world. The experience from the RJC remains one of the more memorable experiences from their time as an undergraduate. While the memories of exact learning activities had faded for some, the feelings associated with their experience remain tangible.

9.3. Closing Comments

Restorative justice education is essential to mobilizing future leaders, citizens, and criminal justice actors to bring restorative justice from the margins to the mainstream in Canada. Despite various challenges future generations face, education must foster critical thinking and hope, not apathy. Education must be more than learning *about* restorative justice, but a participatory process that fosters connection and a sense of worthiness of oneself and others. Changing lenses from retributive to restorative justice can inspire critical, innovative ideas and action; however, individual perspective transformations are not enough. As Stauffer (2013) noted, for those who believe restorative justice can radically replace or enhance the current system, a shift of this dramatic scope would require a series of “tipping points.” These points, he argues, have historically occurred only when advocates of change on the inside and agents of provocation on the outside have collaborated to reinforce the transformation of a system. In advancing restorative justice, tipping points can occur as individuals focus their collective energy towards changes inside and outside the justice system. The impact of personal, relational, and local transformations cannot be understated. These create ripple effects of changed people changing other people and this process can have global significance (Eisenstein, 2013, p. 63).

The experiences of perspective transformation facilitated by the RJC are equivalent to stones thrown into water that cause positive ripples across a pond. This research followed the ripples made by hundreds of stones. Studying these personal transformations has allowed us to learn and appreciate the possibilities for restorative justice education. This work aims to inform and inspire future educators to “walk the talk” as they interact with their students. When restorative justice is taught in a way that mirrors the process and values, transformation is a genuine possibility.

The experience of restorative justice education is one where difficult stories are shared. Through speaking and listening with one another, we catch a glimpse of our common humanity, cultivate empathy, and practice compassion. Offering support to each other as existing frames of reference are challenged creates relationships and a sense of community. The resulting changes to feelings, beliefs, and relationships create new ways of interacting in the world. For restorative justice to move beyond the margins, post-secondary classrooms must be safe, respectful, and non-judgemental places to inspire a vision of justice beyond the current retributive paradigm. Students must also be provided opportunities and supported to act on their new perspectives. These are the ways in which restorative justice education can create ripples that affect communities and social institutions.

This dissertation was the direct result of a personal transformation I experienced as an RJC student. It is evidence that an individual perspective transformation leads to action that can advance the restorative justice movement. So who am I now? Who have I become through this journey? The researcher as traveller, the educator, the student, the survivor, the volunteer. These are only a few aspects of my life where restorative justice resonates. I have been transformed again by hearing students’ stories. I now look differently upon my own teaching practice in the context of tertiary education and will make changes based on what I have learned. I will dialogue with others, building on the important work that has been done by Dalhousie, the University of Victoria, and other schools who are bringing restorative justice to campus.

As I give voice to others through this research, I can weave my own story back with theirs. I found experiences similar to my own, and others I did not recognize.

Whether or not students reported transformation, the findings demonstrate the tremendous opportunity restorative justice educators have in the classroom. Restorative justice education can provide a place for students and instructors to come together in a different way. Utilizing restorative justice and transformative learning values and practices, educators can facilitate learning opportunities that cultivate our common humanity, instill a sense of worthiness, and promote a more holistic vision for justice in our everyday lives and communities. These are the places I have the honour to be in and I know this is where I belong. Despite obstacles within these institutional spaces, I hope this research inspires restorative justice educators to know that the struggle is worth it. By making a commitment to on-going personal reflection, feedback and critique, learning from one another, and “walking the talk” we can encourage students to be critically reflective, empathic, and self-aware. We can all take these values into our relationships, workplaces, communities, and social institutions; and these ripples create waves that can change the tide of justice.

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Appendix A

Profiles of Pilot Interviewees

ID	PT-Index (Survey)	PT-Index (Interview)	Gender	Major	Age Now	Age RJC	Relationship	Occupation
Stacy	1 – No	3 – Yes	F	Crim	50-59	50-59	Married	Student
Ivan	1 – No	3 – Yes	M	Crim	25-29	Below 21	Single	Institutional corrections
Preet	3 – Yes	3 – Yes	F	Science	21-24	21-24	Single	Student
Rufus	3 – Yes	2 – Yes	M	Crim	21-24	21-24	In a relationship	Construction
Lillie	3 – Yes	3 – Yes	F	Crim	21-24	21-24	In a relationship	Community Corrections
Lois	1 – No	3 – Yes	F	Crim	30-39	25-29	In a relationship	Student
Susie	3 – Yes	3 – Yes	F	Sociology	24-29	21-24	In a relationship	Student
Troy	1 – No	3 – Yes	M	Crim	30-39	30-39	Single	Loss Prevention
Pedro	3 – Yes	3 – Yes	M	Crim	24-29	21-29	In a relationship	Law enforcement

Appendix B

Profile of Main Study Interviewees

Pair 1

ID	PT-Index (Survey)	PT-Index (Interview)	Gender	Major	Age Now	Age RJC	Relationship	Occupation
Tracy	1 – No	1 – No	F	Indigenous studies	30-39	30-39	Married	Education, behaviour therapy
Opal	3 – Yes	3 – Yes	F	Business	30-39	21-24	Divorced/separated	Vocational counselling

Pair 2

ID	PT-Index (Survey)	PT-Index (Interview)	Gender	Major	Age Now	Age RJC	Relationship	Occupation
Lance	1 – No	1 – No	M	Crim	25-29	21-24	Married	Law
Malcolm	3 – Yes	1 – No	M	Crim	30-39	21-24	In a relationship	Law

Pair 3

ID	PT-Index (Survey)	PT-Index (Interview)	Gender	Major	Age Now	Age RJC	Relationship	Occupation
Gerry	1 – No	1 – No	M	Crim	25-29	25-29	In a relationship	Income tax
Max	3 – Yes	2 – Yes	M	Psych	25-29	21-24	In a relationship	Group disability

Pair 4

ID	PT-Index (Survey)	PT-Index (Interview)	Gender	Major	Age Now	Age RJC	Relationship	Occupation
Vivian	1 – No	1 – No	F	Crim	21-24	21-24	In a relationship	Not Specified
Lula	3 – Yes	3 – Yes	F	Crim	21-24	21-24	Single	Not Specified

To increase diversity

ID	PT-Index (Survey)	PT-Index (Interview)	Gender	Major	Age Now	Age RJC	Relationship	Occupation
Mandy	3 – Yes	3 – Yes	Trans	Crim	60-69	60-69	Divorced	Student
Grant	1 – No	1 – No	M	Crim	25-29	25-29	Single	Sawmill
Luz	3 – Yes	2 – No	M	Crim	30-39	30-39	In a relationship	Corrections – no equivalent in No PT

Appendix C.

Consent Form for Survey Participants

Title of Study: The Possibility of Transformation: Educating for Restorative Justice at the Post-Secondary Level in British Columbia

Name of Principal Investigator: Alana Abramson

Department, School or Faculty: School of Criminology

Dear former 315 Student:

My name is Alana Abramson and I am a PhD student in the School of Criminology at Simon Fraser University (SFU). I am conducting research with students from SFU who have completed the Criminology 315 course in Restorative Justice. The results of this study will be reported in a graduate thesis and may also be published in journal articles and books.

Why should you take part in this study?

My hope is to have a greater understanding of your experiences with this Restorative Justice course and how it affected the field of restorative justice more broadly. Understanding how this course has affected students' perspectives is important and may assist those who teach this course.

Your participation is voluntary

You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to participate, you may still choose to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences to the education you are entitled or are currently receiving.

What happens if you say "yes" to participating in the study?

If you say yes to this study, you will be provided access to an online survey. This survey contains questions about you and your experience in the Restorative Justice course. This survey will take about 20 minutes to complete. A draw will be held after the survey closes. There will be two prizes of \$50 each and two prizes of \$100 each. If you wish to enter the draw, you will have the opportunity to provide your name and email address at the end of the survey.

Is there any way the study could be bad for you?

There are no foreseeable risks to you participating in this study.

What are the benefits of participating?

No one knows whether or not you will benefit directly from this study. However, in future, others may benefit from what I learn in this study.

How will your privacy be protected?

Your confidentiality will be respected. The online survey will be administered through fluidsurveys.com. All data will be fully de-identified prior to presentation of the results as fluidsurveys.com sends the survey data in confidential format. The only identifying information I receive will be from those who submit email addresses for the prize draw. This information will not be linked to your surveys, which are received separately.

Fluidsurveys.com does not use or share any data or information uploaded in any way. Their server is protected by up-to-date firewalls and data encryption methods designed to prevent access by unauthorized parties. This website is owned by Chide.it. Inc., which operates out of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, and all data are stored on servers in Canada to comply with Canadian privacy standards. All survey data will be removed from the server upon survey completion.

All survey data will be kept electronically on external hard drives in a locked filing cabinet until August 2016, after which they will be destroyed. You may also request a copy of the results after the analysis of the data is complete, which should be in 2014.

What if I decide to withdraw my consent to participate?

You may withdraw from this study at any time without giving reasons and with no effects on your grades or academic standing. You can skip questions or end participation at any time by simply exiting the survey.

Will I be contacted in the future?

The second part of this study involves 1.5-2 hour, face-to-face interview. At the end of this survey you will be given the option to participate in this interview. If you indicate that you are willing to participate in an interview, I may contact you over the next few months. Not everyone who indicates willingness to participate will be contacted for this phase.

Who can you contact if you have questions about the study?

If you have any questions about the procedures in this study or would like to obtain the research results, you can contact me at 250-879-0998 or by e-mail aabramso@sfu.ca, or my senior supervisor Dr. Brenda Morrison, brendam@sfu.ca

Who can you contact if you have complaints or concerns about the study?

If you have any concerns about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, you may contact Dr. Jeffrey Toward, Director, Office of Research Ethics at SFU: jtoward@sfu.ca, (778) 782-6593.

If you are willing to participate in this survey, please indicate your consent in the box provided below and you will be automatically linked to the online survey.

Sincerely, Alana Abramson

Taking part in this study is entirely up to you. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to take part, you may choose to pull out of the study at any time without giving a reason and without any negative impact on your life (for example class standing). Your name will not appear in any of the materials or reports of the research, nor will you be identified in any way.

Do you agree to participate in the research study described above?

Yes

No

Appendix D.

Student On-Line Survey Revised from Pilot

Thinking about your experience in taking Criminology 315 - Restorative Justice, please click on any statements that apply to you.

- a. I had an experience that caused me to question the way I normally act.
- b. I had an experience that caused me to question my ideas about social roles.
(Examples of social roles include a mother, father, student, teacher, justice professional)
- c. As I questioned my ideas, I realized I no longer agreed with my previous beliefs or role expectations.
- d. Or instead, as I questioned my ideas, I realized I still agreed with my beliefs or role expectations.
- e. I realized that other people also questioned their beliefs.
- f. I thought about acting in a different way from my usual beliefs and roles.
- g. I felt uncomfortable with traditional social expectations.
- h. I tried out new roles so that I would become more comfortable or confident in them.
- i. I tried to figure out a way to adopt these new ways of acting.
- j. I gathered the information I needed to adopt these new ways of acting.
- k. I began to think about the reactions and feedback from my new behaviour.
- l. I took action and adopted these new ways of acting.
- m. I do not identify with any of the statements above.

As a result of Criminology 315 – Restorative Justice, do you believe you experienced a time, either during the course or after, that your values, beliefs, opinions or expectations had changed? (Click YES or NO)

Yes. If "Yes," please go to question #3 and continue the survey.

No. If "No," please go to question #6 to continue the survey

3. Briefly describe the change in your values, beliefs, opinions, or expectations.

4. Was it a person who influenced this change?

Yes No

4a. If yes, who was it? Check all that apply

Another student's support

Your RJ teacher's support

A challenge from your RJ teacher

Other: _____

A person did not influence the change

4b. Was it part of a class activity that influenced the change?

Yes No

4c. If yes, what was it? (Check all that apply)

- Non-traditional structure of the course
- Deep, concentrated thought
- In-class/tutorial activity – please be specific about which activity influenced the change _____
- Circles in tutorial/class – please be specific about what aspect of circle influenced the change
- Guest speaker – please explain
- Class discussion
- Reflective listening/journaling
- Assigned reading
- Assigned DVD viewing
- Writing journal assignments
- Writing critical essays
- Class lecture(s) by instructor
- Tutorial discussions
- Talking with family about topics raised in Crim 315

- Talking with friends about topics raised in Crim 315
- Talking with work colleagues about topics raised in Crim 315
- Personal reflection
- Writing a letter
- Telling my own story
- Other, please specify _____
- It was not a class activity that influenced the change

4d. Was it a significant change in your life, outside of the classroom, that influenced the change?

- Yes No

4e. If "Yes," what was it? (circle all that apply)

- Marriage
- Change of job
- Birth/adoption of a child
- Loss of job
- Moving
- Retirement
- Divorce/separation/relationship break-up

- Death of a loved one
- Serious health/medical concern
- Troubling family concern
- Other, please specify: _____
- A significant life change outside the classroom did not influence the change

5. Thinking back to when you first realized that your views or perspective had changed, what did your being in school have to do with the change?

6. Please describe your experience in Crim 315 and how it affected you in any way.

7. Would you characterize yourself as one who usually thinks back over previous decisions or past behaviour?

Yes

No

8. Would you say that you frequently reflect upon the meaning of your studies for yourself, personally?

Yes

No

8. Besides Criminology 315, which of the following have been a part of your overall experience as a student at Simon Fraser University?

Another student's support

A challenge from a teacher

A teacher's support

Your advisor's support

Class/group projects

Guest speaker

Writing journals

Non-traditional structure

In-class/tutorial exercise

Deep, concentrated thought

Personal reflection

Assigned DVD viewings

Assigned readings

Writing critical essays

Reflective listening/journaling

- Participating in a circle process
- Telling your own story
- Writing a letter
- Talking about the topics raised in a class with friends
- Talking about the topics raised in a class with family
- Talking about the topics raised in a class with work colleagues

9. Which of the following has occurred during your time as a student at Simon Fraser University?

- Change of job
- Birth/adoption of a child
- Loss of job
- Moving
- Retirement
- Divorce/separation/relationship break-up
- Death of a loved one
- Serious health/medical concerns
- Troubling family concern

10. Johnstone and Van Ness (2007) have put forward three conceptual definitions of restorative justice: encounter, reparative, and transformative⁷⁸. Please place the numbers 1, 2 & 3 next to each one and rank how it corresponds with your personal definition of restorative justice.

1 = This definition is the most like mine

2 = This definition is close to mine

3 = This definition is least like mine

_____ Encounter: "that victims, offenders and other 'stakeholders' ... should be allowed to encounter one another outside highly formal, professional-dominated settings."

_____ Reparative: "the harm which the crime (or wrongdoing) has caused to people and relationships needs to be repaired."

_____ Transformative: "to transform the way in which we understand ourselves and relate to others in our everyday life."

⁷⁸ Johnstone, G., & Van Ness, D. (2007). The meaning of restorative justice. In G. Johnstone, & D. Van Ness (Eds.), *The handbook of restorative justice* (pp. 5-23). London, UK: Willan Publishing.

11. Please identify the THREE values that are the most important to you.

- economic prosperity (being financially well off)
- authority (having power to influence others and control decisions)
- ambitious (being eager to do well)
- competition (always trying to do better than others)
- politeness (being well mannered)
- neatness (being tidy)
- reliability (being dependable)
- the pursuit of knowledge (always trying to find out new things about the world we live in)
- inner harmony (feeling free of conflict within yourself)
- tolerance (accepting others even if they are different from you)
- helpful (always ready to assist others)
- trusting (having faith in others)

12. Please indicate the gender you identify with:

- Male
- Female
- Transgendered

Other _____

13. Marital Status:

Single

Married

In a relationship

Divorced/separated

Widowed

Other _____

14. What was your major at the time you took Criminology 315 Restorative Justice:

15. How old are you today?

Below 21

21–24

25–29

30–39

40–49

50–59

60–69

Over 70

16. How old were you when you took the Criminology 315 Restorative Justice course?

Below 21

21–24

25–29

30–39

40–49

50–59

60–69

Over 70

17. What, if any, is your current place/field of employment?

18. Do you currently volunteer?

Yes

No

18a. If you currently volunteer, please indicate where/in what field you volunteer?.

19. Did your experience in Criminology 315 Restorative Justice influence your decision to volunteer?

Yes

No

19a. If yes, how?

20. Did your experience in Criminology 315 Restorative Justice influence your future course selection?

Yes

No

20a. If Yes, how?

21. Did your experience in Criminology 315 Restorative Justice influence your future career choices?

Yes

No

21a. If Yes, how?

22. What grade did you receive in Criminology 315-Restorative Justice?

A -/+

B -/+

C -/+

D

F

I don't remember the grade I received

23. Would you be willing to participate in a one and one half to two hour, confidential interview about your responses here?

Yes - please contact me at _____
(Email/phone)

No

24. A prize draw will be held after the survey closes. There will be one prize of \$100 and two prizes of \$50 each. If you wish to enter the draw, please provide your email address here. If you do not wish to participate, you may skip this option and submit your survey.

If you decide to participate in the prize draw, this information will be stored separately from your survey data and will be destroyed once the draw has been conducted.

Appendix E.

Statement to Obtain Oral Consent for Interview Participation

The title of this study is *The Possibility of Transformation: Educating for Restorative Justice at the Post-Secondary Level in British Columbia*. My name is Alana Abramson. I am PhD student in the School of Criminology and I am the Principal Investigator of this Research. With your permission, I would like to audiotape this consent process and the subsequent interview. Do you agree to have this captured on audio tape? (*If not, a journal entry will be made of the consent process*).

This interview is a follow up to the online survey you took. The research is about the experiences of students, like you, who have taken the Criminology 315 Restorative Justice course at SFU. My hope is to gain a deeper understanding of your experiences with this Restorative Justice course and how it affected the field of restorative justice more broadly. Understanding how this course has affected students' perspectives is important and may assist those who teach this course. The results of this study will be reported in a graduate thesis and may also be published in journal articles and books.

The interview should only take from one and one half to two hours to complete and is meant to be conversational in nature. Questions posed to participants will not pose a risk to your physical or psychological well-being.

With your permission, your responses will be tape recorded and transcribed as soon as possible (within 96 hours). Once transcripts have been made of the audio recordings, the audio recordings will be destroyed. All transcripts will be kept electronically on external hard drives in a locked filing cabinet until August 2016, after which they will be destroyed along with any handwritten notes.

Some important points for you to understand:

This research project has been approved by the Simon Fraser University Ethics Review Board.

You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to participate, you may still choose to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences to your life, including the education you are entitled or are currently receiving.

If you choose to enter the study and then decide to withdraw at a later time, all the data collected from you during your enrolment in the study will be destroyed.

There are no foreseeable risks to you in participating in this study.

Your real name will not be used or published in the final paper.

You will be assigned a pseudonym and the data that are collected will be presented in a way that maintains confidentiality.

Upon completion of the interview you will be provided a transcript of the interview and will have the opportunity to review and/or revise it, upon request.

If you feel that emotional stress has been encountered as a result of this interview, you can obtain advice with respect to counselling or additional support services from me.

If you have any questions about the procedures in this study or would like to obtain the research results, you can contact me at XXX-XXX-XXXX or by e-mail XXX@sfu.ca, or my senior supervisor Dr. Brenda Morrison, XXXXX@sfu.ca. I can provide this information in a written format, at your request.

If the interview is conducted through Skype, telephone, or Gmail phone calls – participant will be advised that full confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. I am in a private room to make sure that there will be no risk of anyone else overhearing the interview, and I would like to advise you to also be in a private room during this interview.

If you have any concerns about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, you may contact Dr. Jeffrey Toward, Director, Office of Research Ethics at SFU: XXXXX@sfu.ca, (778) 782-XXXX. I can provide this information in a written format, at your request.

In hearing this statement, do you agree to participate?

Appendix F

Interview Schedule

Becoming a 315 Student

1. What do you remember to be the reasons that led to your decision to take the course?
2. Coming into the course, how would you describe your view about justice?

Probe for retributive/punitive view, neutral, restorative justice

Restorative Justice Definition

3. What did you know about restorative justice prior to the course?
4. How do you define restorative justice today?
5. How, if at all, have you noticed that your definition has changed over time?

Possible probes – ask about what restorative justice means to them in contexts beyond criminal justice (community, professional, relationships)

Experiences as a 315 Student

6. Tell me about your memorable experiences from the restorative justice course.
 - a. What makes them memorable/meaningful to you?

Transformational Experiences & Impacts from Criminology 315

7. Thinking back to Criminology 315 Restorative Justice, did you experience a time where you realized your **beliefs** or **perspective** had changed or were changing? Please describe that experience.

Encourage the story to unfold - Probe for what they attribute to the change - content of the course, pedagogy, learning activities (i.e. journal writing, DVD, guest speakers), students values/beliefs upon entering the course, demographics, other experiences outside the classroom, relationships with students, TA or instructor, probe what the tutorials meant to the student.

8. Thinking back to when you first realized your beliefs had changed:

a. When did you first realize this was happening?

Possible probes - Was it while it was happening, mid-change, or once it had entirely happened (retrospectively)?

b. What made you aware that this change had happened?

c. What, if anything, did you do about it?

d. How did you/do you feel about the change?

e. How, if at all, did this change affect your life?

Possible probes – ideas about justice (probe victims, offenders, community, government), actions/behaviours, closest relationships (family,

intimate partner, friends), academic life (future course selection, program you are in, experience in other classes), professional life (career choices, interaction with co-workers/clients), your volunteer life (choices, interaction with co-volunteers/clients), how you view yourself

f. Are there other ways this experience has affected you, besides those we have discussed already?

Sustainability of Transformation

9. How long has it been since you completed the course?

10. What comes up for you when you think of this change today?

Possible probe - How, if at all, does this change affect your life today?

11. What do you think has contributed to these changes still existing, or not still existing, in your life?

12. Are there particular people or relationships that contribute to sustaining this change?

13. Can you tell me more about what you feel helps to sustain the change?

14. Are there particular settings/places that contribute to sustaining this change?

15. If so, where are these places?

16. We have talked about what helps you sustain this change, what do you feel makes this change more difficult to sustain?

Possible probes – Who or in what settings make the change difficult to sustain?

Transformational Life Experiences

17. How would you define personal transformation?
18. Can you think of a time in your life where you experienced personal transformation?
19. If yes, can you describe the experience and what it meant to you?
20. One definition of transformation from the literature is a radical shift from one state of being to another, seeing things in such a new way that you cannot go back to what you thought before. It can feel like “everything in my life is different now” (Poutiatine, 2009, p. 196). According to this definition, does your example(s) mesh with this definition? Do you have other examples that do (invite experiences outside and inside the course)?
21. If yes, can you describe the experience and what it meant to you?

Relationships & Values in the Classroom

22. Thinking back to your experience with the restorative justice course, how would you describe your relationship with the instructor?
23. Thinking back to your experience with the restorative justice course, how would you describe your relationship with the TA?
24. Thinking back to your experience with the course, how would you describe your relationship to other students?
25. Looking back now, what other relationships seemed important to you during the time you were taking this course? Why?

Looking Ahead

29. Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience in the restorative justice course?

30. What, if anything, would you have changed about the course to enhance your experience?

31. What is your hope for restorative justice in the future? What role, if any, do you think post-secondary education has to play in this?

Possible probe for transformation of persons, perspectives and structures.