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How can I improve my practice if I am (always in a process of becoming) my practice? Thinking with my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality.

Submitted to the University of Cumbria in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in substantially the same form for the award of a higher degree elsewhere.

Sonia Hutchison

The Front Step - ~~Abstract~~

My thesis is written as a tour of my home, through which I create an alternative epistemological pathway using post-living-theory - a development and line-of-flight out of living theory. I grapple with the ethico-onto-epistemological issues of humanistic and qualitative approaches, and then shift to a posthumanistic and post-qualitative inquiry. I move from reflection and reflexivity to diffraction, producing something different and more ethical. I wrestle with a variety of assemblages of caring that I began developing as a child in care, and continued developing as a charity leader supporting carers as well as in my relationships.

My post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality emerges as a creative-relational response that embraces the multiplicities of those in the relationship. I draw on my values of love, hope, justice and participation and the concepts of the crucial Cs (capability, connect, count, courage) which are; growth mindset, single successes, and meaning and purpose.

I identify times when I worked in the ruins of my values and found myself to be a post-living-contradiction. In these times, assemblages of caring-with-resilience, resistance, authority and rescuing emerge. These concepts perform differently and, I argue, less usefully than caring-with-mutuality, however they may be the best assemblage at that moment and therefore necessary to understand. Rather than creating a fixed clarified explanation, I map what caring assemblages do to my practices of being and becoming, exploring the effects and affects of the difference my actions make personally and professionally.

My tour of my thesis home is intentionally performative. The metaphor holds the traditional idea of a thesis, as a search for generalisable truth, under erasure

(sous rature). Using three voices; a storyteller; host and meta-host, I continually problematise the idea of a singular, separate self.

Acknowledgements

"Even when you think you're writing on your own, you're always doing it with someone else you can't always name" (Deleuze, 1990, p.141).

Thanks to all the people, places, teddies and things along the way that are in a constant process of becoming with me.

Thank you to all of my supervisors throughout my time living in my thesis home. Jamie McPhie, thank you for your kindness, support and incredible conversations that liberated me and made my thesis what it is. David Murphy for your unfailing support and standing by my huge shifts in thinking and writing and ensuring I got all the paperwork done over the years. Jack Whitehead for your inspiring idea of Living Theory that has influenced my post-living-theory, thank you for the many, many hours of conversations without which I would have no thesis. Marie Huxtable for all the time you spent trying to get on the inside of my ideas and help me get there too. Zoe O'Riordan, it was short but sweet.

Thank you to all my research friends along the way who have made the journey an amazing adventure and have kept me going when I didn't know where else to turn. Robyn Pound, I don't know where I would be without you, you have been unfailingly generous and encouraging. Margaret and Rosemary for your thought provoking and encouraging conversation and suggestions. Arianna and Guilia for helping me smile however, tough the journey got. Joan for challenging my views. Conversation Café and the Sunday Skype Group for the years of wonderful conversations. To all those I met at Summer School; Courses and Conferences.

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Entrance Hall – ~~Introduction~~

Welcome

Host

Welcome to my thesis home, I will take you on a tour of my time living here and creating assemblages[1] of caring. These assemblages are developed using a concept I call post-living-theory, which I use to *think with*. I build on what Jackson and Mazzei (2012) call 'thinking with theory' and creating a posthuman/post-qualitative[2] shift from Living Theory (Whitehead, 2021)[3]. My thesis home is written for a posthuman/post-qualitative scholarly audience. Post-living-theory can influence improvement in practice and theory as they can't be separated from their entanglement, they are making one another (Jackson and Mazzei, 2013).

As you are here, the front step may have invited you in, or perhaps it enraged or intrigued you. Whatever your reasons for being here, in the Entrance Hall, I will introduce you to the tour of my thesis home, so you can decide if there are some rooms of interest to you. Perhaps you might like to take a walk in the self-care garden (take care, it may take you for a walk – see McPhie, 2019, p.94). However, there are a few formalities to explain to help you understand how the tour will operate, the form of guide I am providing and where the tour is taking place, so you can decide how (or if you wish) to progress.

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[1] An assemblage is the coming together of humans, animals, things and/or concepts (humans and non-humans) constantly changing and shifting to become different assemblages (Kuby,2017).

[2] I use a forward slash between posthuman and post-qualitative to show there is a close relationship with their ethico-onto-epistemological approaches. However, there are also differences and sometimes they may be used independently throughout the thesis. I explore these differences in the Kitchen. I have used a forward slash rather than a hyphen, as a hyphen which would indicate I had created a new form of research which I am not claiming to do (Kuby, 2019). My claim is to have created a new *concept* to think with which I call post-living-theory.

[3] The term Living Theory research with capital letters is a form of educational research that enables practitioners to contribute to their area of practice. There is a full discussion of Living Theory in The Kitchen.

Before I talk about the research question, I will explain how the thesis is presented as it's different to a traditional dissertation and to avoid you, the reader, getting lost before we have even begun. The tour will use story and metaphor throughout. I decided to split my voice into three voices for different purposes.

Sous Rature

McPhie (2016) used a Brechtian play to place his whole thesis under erasure (sous rature),

> My way out was to place the entire PhD under erasure, not by placing a line through it, as that would make it a little too difficult to consume, but by constructing the skeletal structure of it as a play (p.161).

I borrowed McPhie's (2016) idea of putting my thesis under erasure by taking a performative approach of creating a guided tour of my thesis home, to alter the entire structure. Heidegger (1996) introduced the idea of holding words under erasure, by crossing a line through them which Derrida (2016) borrowed. Rolfe, (2009) explains that "we are at the same time recognising the need to carry on using the word in the absence of anything better or more precise, but also keeping alive the several different and contradictory meanings that it simultaneously signifies" (p.146). By striking a line through a word, it reminds you, the reader, of the problems associated with the word or concept and asks you, the reader, to pay attention to how they perform. Rather than remove them or use different words, the tour is a reminder that words are "inadequate, yet necessary" (McPhie and Clarke, 2015, p.235).

However, I crossed out some words in my question and the tour agenda. I specifically chose the words 'I' and 'my', as my thesis is a self-inquiry. I wanted to highlight the different concepts of self and how some are problematic. The Cartesian, egotistic concept of self - of being a separate entity to everyone and everything else (Zembylas and Bozalek, 2014) - that privileges being human at the top of the hierarchy of matter is problematic (Barad, 2007). It has led to wielding power over others (Ramsey, 2017). Instead, throughout the tour, I move toward "posthumanism (which) rejects the hierarchical dualisms articulated by Cartesian objectivism, which differentiates mind from body or matter, human from nature, and views these as continuums" (Zembylas and Bozalek, 2014, p.39).

However, I continue to use the words 'I' and 'my' throughout the thesis and acknowledge when I am using the concept egotistically and try to challenge myself to be more posthuman. The posthuman 'I' is a "delightful, liberating poststructural view of the fragmented, de-centred subject" (Wyatt, 2013, p.8) and yet is a difficult concept to remain in when writing a self-study. Wyatt (2013) acknowledges the challenge of being de-centred when describing the thoughts, feelings and bodily responses to situations, which feel contained within the flesh and bones 'self' having the experience. I use three voices to help express the conflicting and contradictory concepts of self, wrestling with the posthumanistic and humanistic perspectives.

I also render the usual words used to describe a thesis structure sous rature, by crossing them out; ~~Contents; Abstract; Introduction; Methodology; Literature Review; Conclusion; References~~. I do this to recognise there is a usual and accepted structure to a thesis (Gould, 2016) and that my thesis home can be traced back to them. They are included to help guide you, the reader, so you can relate what I am writing back into a familiar structure. However, they are

crossed out to emphasise that I am writing a thesis differently (Honan and Bright, 2016). Although all theses perform, I embraced the performative nature of my thesis recognising it "has the potential to produce evocative, ethical, and failed practices that result in a telling with the potential to open the gaps and produce different knowings" (Jackson and Mazzei, 2008, p.314). I undertook a nomadic inquiry - it's always on the move, it does not move in a linear direction, "this story has no beginning and no end but has always been" (St. Pierre, 2000, p.276) and as such we are in the middle (Deleuze and Parnet, 2007).

When I came to think which words to put a line through, I began to feel almost every word could be crossed through. However, by holding my entire thesis under erasure, I am acknowledging that to go through this process of having my knowledge approved by the academy, the writing of a thesis is necessary. To be read beyond my immediate circle, writing my knowledge down is necessary (whether the thesis format in particular was necessary is debatable). "Derrida, maintains that words, refer only to other words, not to things or thoughts or feelings" (Mendie and Udofia, 2021, p.44). Therefore, I am aware that the writing is an inadequate form to communicate the knowledge and affect of what I created during the research process. I provide video to get closer to the affect, as it's both the same and different to the written word (a nod to Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*, 1994). However, Derrida argued, "both speech and writing are signs; they are useful because, they can be used over and over again; we never come close to an original presence or meaning" (Mendie and Udofia, 2021, p.47). Video provides a moving image of my embodied expressions which add to what is communicated due to my "gestes", a word that Jousse (2016) used to mean "something that comes alive in a human compound" (p.16). I am aware that the video is only a representation of

my performance and by using language I am still being confined by the norms and his-story[4] of the English language (Derrida, 1988).

I agree with Plato (1991), who asserted that there is no way to represent anything accurately. I try to find the most appropriate presentations, that highlight how different mediums perform. "Embodiment is akin to articulation, in that it is inherently performative, subject to individual enactments, and therefore always to some extent improvisational" (Hayles, 1999, p.197). I accept that whatever I present, you, the reader/viewer, may add your own meaning. Rather than contain such shifts from my original purpose, I encourage you to make your own connections and take the ideas to different places I couldn't have possibly imagined.

Three Voices

My three voices hold different perspectives and contradictions. I question the ontological and epistemological approaches of humanism and qualitative research, by queering them with a posthuman and post-qualitative inquiry. I say queering, as I aim to avoid a binary of oppositionalism of one being right and the other being wrong. Rather, I show them as a continuum of positions. I aim to respond to Barad (2014), who shows how posthuman/post-qualitative approaches "queers binaries and calls out for a rethinking of the notions of identity and difference" (p.171). Therefore, I show what it does when I use such approaches, and the ethico-onto-epistemological (Barad, 2007) affects that I felt throughout my time living in my thesis home. As McPhie explains,

> there are problems … at the ontological level—the nature of reality/the study of existence—and the epistemological level—the nature of

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[4] I hyphenate his-story to highlight history is a 'discourse that … favoured expansionism, colonialism and possessive annexation of woman' (Conley, 1992, p.39).

knowledge (how do we think we know what we know?). It also leads to questions about ethics and/or morality—what 'should' we do or what 'can' we do? In agreement with quantum physicist/social scientist Karen Barad, I don't think these concepts can be categorically separated, hence her term 'ethico-onto-epistemology' (Barad, 2007, p.381) to order to denote the intertwining of ethics, knowing and being (McPhie, 2019, p.3).

The voice speaking now is my host voice that will guide you around my thesis home. I am joined by my two other voices and we all have our own agendas. My host voice's agenda is to try to make sense, to find the thread that runs through and guide you to my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality.

Living Theory and living-theory are discussed more in the Kitchen

My post-living-theory has emerged as my original contribution to knowledge as I found ethico-onto-epistemological issues with trying to create my living-theory[5]. Therefore, I critique Whitehead's idea of Living Theory and create my post-living-theory as a response. When I only wrote in one voice, I found it difficult to critically engage with my writing. In response, I introduced a meta-host who takes a posthuman/post-qualitative perspective (St. Pierre 2014; Hayles, 1999), questions my host, problematises the sense that I make (Foucault, 2012) and diffracts (Barad, 2007) the reflective and reflexive approach to which my host has a habit of reverting. My meta-host

These approaches are explored more in bathroom and as you progress through the tour.

works during this tour to take account of the more than human to consider the varied assemblages of human and non-humans in different scenarios, and considering what difference the various assemblages make to practice (Gale, 2014). Even in my attempts to take a more post-qualitative approach in my

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[5] The hyphenated lower case term living-theory is an individual's unique explanation of their educational influence in their own, others and social formations' learning.

paper for ALARJ, my peer reviewers critiqued my paper for only focusing on what works, saying 'examples given are a little too prone to success stories' (Bradley, 2020). My meta-host, during the tour of my thesis home, ensures that I research in the ruins (Lather, 2012), rather than my host voice which left alone is prone to 'providing convenience, compartmentalisation and a basis for organised study' (Gale, 2014, p.675). My meta-host voice is emphasised by using italics.

My host voice may at times seem to be superficial or descriptive, however, I have done this deliberately as the meta-host questions the host and creates a complex dialogue that moves the thinking of the host on. In the playroom and the office, my meta-host juxtaposes my host voice to question. and queers the humanistic and qualitative approach my host takes. For example, in the playroom my host voice describes my experience of love. However, my meta-host questions the humanistic perspective my host is taking. This provides opportunity to think differently and consider love as becoming rather than fixed or hierarchical. In the office my host voice describes my successes in fundraising, purchasing premises and resources. My meta-host's questioning challenges me to think about distributed-agency (Barad, 2007) where non-human agents are on an immanent plane as a posthuman assemblage of my leadership. This changes from a hierarchical power structure of myself as the most important agent to a flatter ontology[6] where money, premises and resources may perform more interchangeably, depending on context and informed by ethics rather than hierarchically bounded structures.

I found my host voice was in a process of becoming during the tour and by the garden and bedroom my host voice begins riffing off my meta-host voice. Riffing

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[6] A flatter ontology is a different philosophy of being from the hierarchical humanistic ontology that privileges humans to one where the more than human is considered to be on the same plane as humans (Elton, 2019).

means "embracing becomings, interrupting hegemony and recognizing nonhuman agency" (Wainwright and Stevens, 2020, p.53). In the garden my meta-host voice riffs off my host voice keeping Freebording[7] on the move and questioning what it does in becoming with me and non-humans whilst rejecting societal norms. In the bedroom my meta-host voice suggests additional concepts for my host voice to think with. Whilst my tour is not intended to be linear, the bedroom and office are built from the ruins of my previous thesis draft and so have the remnants of the humanistic/qualitative \approach I wrote with at that time. Whereas, the garden and bedroom were written after developing my post-living-theory and are written thinking with posthuman/post-qualitative concepts.

Finally, I have a storyteller voice that will be expressed via bold text. My storyteller's voice tells the story with no analysis, explanation or questioning, just the story as I remember it. Influenced by Rea (2008),

> it is presumptuous to believe that one can analyse a …story (Clough in Goodley, Lawthorn, Clough and Moore, 2004, pp.121-122). I see the writing of a narrative as an analysis of data. In this analytical process meaning is made from the data and it is rendered intelligible to the reader (Rea, 2008, p.49).

The story is there for you, the reader, to "render intelligible", you are free to interpret the story differently from my host voice and pose different questions to my meta-host voice.

The different font styles are to help you, the reader, keep track of which of my voices are speaking. I had feedback from critical friends that it was difficult to follow without a reminder through the text of which voice was speaking at any

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[7] Freebording is a sport that uses a long skateboard with centre wheels to simulate a snowboard.

given point. I tried putting them in boxes. However, ontologically I felt it didn't work, as it acted as a separation from the text of my host. The use of italics and bold text is an emphasis of difference rather than a separation, which is the aim of the different voices. Each voice analyses the data in their own way and combined they provide creative and critical engagement during this tour of my thesis home.

About the Tour

The whole thesis is held within a metaphor of my home and I am inviting you on a guided tour. Metaphor can be useful "to engage aesthetically as well as rationally; and to see relational dynamics within situations, allows for the generation of different ways of thinking and acting" (Vince and Reynolds, 2010, p.4). Therefore, a guided tour of a museum or gallery would perform differently, those metaphors are less personal as they are public spaces, although the aesthetics would have allowed a different interaction. I am inviting a more personal interaction. Not to empathise with, rather to encourage nomadic thinking (St. Pierre, 2000), as "empathy only gets constructed in relation to sameness, it can't get constructed in relation to difference" (Crimp cited in Caruth *et.al*, 1991, p.547) and this tour is attempting to create something new and different. I am attempting to be nomadic in my thinking and writing, by always being on the move and moving in many directions. As Jacobs (2008) says, metaphor "create(s) an aesthetic experience that fundamentally changes the writer's perspective on the world" (p.108).

Aberasturi-Apraiz *et al.* (2020) used a similar metaphor where the authors had their own rooms and a shared living room. I feel I inhabited my research, that there has been no delineated line where my research began and ended, as the affects of my research are felt in all aspects of my life as an assemblage. My

life and research are an assemblage that is in an affective relationship with each other, changing my research and my actions in a continuous process (Fox, 2015).

The idea of providing a tour of my thesis home began as a floorplan of a house. However, I realised when discussing with my supervisors that the metaphor of a house, is not the same as a home.

> A room is still a room, even when there's nothin' there but gloom
> But a room is not a house and a house is not a home
> When the two of us are far apart
> And one of us has a broken heart
> (Dionne Warwick - A House Is Not Home Live 1964, 2011)

I came to realise that this thesis has been my home for the last seven years. My original question in my PhD proposal was "How does my lived experience, from being 'a child in care[8]' to being a leader of a carers' charity, sustain the hope that we can be the change we want to see in the world?" (Hutchison, 2013). My question contained within it a desire to understand why I came through being in care with the hope to make a change in the world, not just for myself, but for other people, in line with my values aiming to continually improve my practice. However, I decorated and redecorated several times, as I grappled with making my thesis home presentable to you, the reader, and yet remain true to myself.

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[8] 'Child in care' is a legal term where children are subject to a care order, an emergency protection order or are compulsorily accommodated. I was subject to a care order. The term 'looked after child' is also used, however this includes all these categories, as well as those who are accommodated voluntarily (with the agreement of the family or young person themselves), which I was not (Children Act, 1989).

There have been shifts that are more than a lick of paint, and at times it has felt like M.C. Escher's picture called [Relativity](#) (1953). The picture is both impossible and yet somehow leading to new previously unimagined possibilities. In an imagining of living in Escher's house, Malin James gives several solutions, her daughter just loves it and "spends hours running around and around her favourite staircase, like a little feedback loop – wears herself out she does" (James, 2017). Her husband is an artist so he loves it. She gets frustrated by not being able to work out where she is, and so she tries breadcrumbs, but in the end, stays in one room and allows the house to move around her. I feel like I had each of these responses to living in my thesis home. I had loved trying to create my living-theory; however, I became very lost after four years when trying to write my living-theory up and discovering, I had not written what my supervisors felt was a thesis. After that I felt like the woman Malin James writes about, who couldn't make sense of my thesis home, it suddenly lost all order and I just felt like I couldn't map where I was. I sometimes had to leave, as the process had "broken my heart" (Dionne Warrick, 1964) and it has just been a house at times. I needed to get away and find new perspectives, generate new ideas and there have been several challenging discussions that have taken place. I am going to try to present the struggle I experienced in preparing my thesis as a home for this tour, as honestly as possible.

Finding the posts (St. Pierre, 2013) was like discovering that where I previously felt lost was actually like running around my favourite staircase. Instead of being disheartened at my lack of understanding, I embraced the new perspectives. I started to appreciate my thesis home, like an artist appreciating the design, rather than being concerned about my exact location at all times. This appreciation enabled me to relax in each room and allow my thesis home to shift around me, to settle to the location as it's presented here. I drew some of the shifts and my attempts to map my thesis home shown on pages 17 and 19.

However, my thesis home has moved itself during the building process and I can now appreciate those shifts as a mutual process of becoming[9].

Meta-host

Now I've been introduced, I feel I need to interrupt to question the use of metaphor. Longson (2010) makes the point, "Foucault's writings have been subject to heavy criticism for his confusing language and winding metaphors. Philp described Foucault not only as difficult to understand, 'but deliberately so'"(p.2). Turning the entire thesis into a metaphor of a home seems like a winding metaphor - could that be more confusing? None of this is sounding very academic.

Host

All of these are useful critical comments and questions which is why I have my meta-host voice as part of the tour. The comments and questions make me realise I made it sound as though I intended to use the metaphor of a house right from the beginning and then amended that to a home. I was forgetting to show the struggle in coming to my position - as the host, I can find myself telling "smooth stories of self" (MacLure, 1996, p.283). The reality was much more challenging. In 2018, I wrote a smooth story of my PhD (Hutchison, 2018) which has been painfully abandoned. After four and a half years of research, I thought I had something close to submission. I was unprepared to hear that all three of my supervisors felt I was far from that point. I had written what I had thought my thesis was meant to look like, whilst attempting to respond critically and creatively to their advice and the ideas I was being influenced by in the literature. So, the idea of using any metaphor for the thesis, and the use of my different

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[9] Becoming is a relational transformation with humans and non-humans that creates something different and is always on the move (Kumm *et al., 2019).*

voices, took two years of struggle in my attempt to find a solution to contain all the parts of my research in the thesis that I had not achieved in 2018.

My experience of struggling in the process of developing a thesis is not unique. Tracey Hayes, (2018) also struggled to create her thesis. She describes her feeling at an academic conference, "Tracy, why, oh why, haven't you opted to do something 'normal', something safe? Something like the other presenters have done. They will think you're childish, not a proper academic…" (Hayes, 2018a, p.463). My experience feels something like a reversal of her feeling, in that my imposter syndrome played out by my having, what I thought was expected and still had not achieved what was needed to be 'an academic'. I'd pinned everything down on the page like a butterfly collector until there was no life in my precious butterfly's ideas anymore. I needed to go through two years of struggle and pain before I'd allow my creative wings to unfurl and bring the creativity of my unashamed use of metaphor and sense of play into my writing and allow my thesis home to be drawn onto the page. As I did that, I came much closer to Tracy's nervousness, wondering whether I went too far? It was only with the encouragement of my new supervisory team that I felt confident enough to play and push boundaries.

I have at the heart of me a struggle that was there from the beginning of my PhD adventure, that I want my thesis to be accessible and yet meet the academic requirements that are expected from a thesis. Therefore, in my creative and untraditional approach to a thesis, I try to stick within my academic brief of a thesis, "to demonstrate the candidate's ability to conduct independent research on a novel concept and to communicate the results in an accessible way" (Gould, 2016, p.27). I bring in some complex and long words, that at the beginning of my PhD adventure were not accessible to me, and hope with the help of my creativity that I guide you, the reader, to understanding. I use

footnotes and my meta-host voice picks me up when I slip in words and concepts with no guidance.

You are welcome to tour the whole of my thesis home, however, you are also welcome to tour the rooms that interest you and to curate your own tour and do it in the order that interests you. The idea of not reading a book linearly is a concept introduced by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) and is present in some post-qualitative literature (Jacobs, 2008; McPhie, 2016). Writing non-linearly is "performative writing (which) provides a critically, aesthetically appropriate and generative method for analyzing and representing stories" (Fitzpatrick and Longley, 2020, p.115). As the host, I chose an order that makes sense to me and that has changed many times in the writing process. Therefore, it may not necessarily be the order that will make sense to you, the reader. This thesis is not a search for an *a priori* truth, nor does this thesis suggest that my original contribution to knowledge is even right. My thesis questions many of these more standard assumptions of a thesis and finds them to be problematic (Honan and Bright, 2016). Therefore, be aware that if you choose to tour my thesis home, at that moment, "the birth of the reader must be ransomed by the death of the Author" (Barthes, 1977, pp.147-148). I, as the host, have tried my hardest to make sense, direct and influence you, however, ultimately, I realise that every reader will make their own sense, regardless. I would encourage every reader to release themselves from the idea that they have to complete the tour or agree with every point made in the tour. You have been birthed as the reader to take, or leave, whatever is helpful or problematic to you. You don't have to agree with everything, it's unlikely you will, as I deliberately leave the inconsistencies, ambiguities and contradictions. However, that does not, I believe, prevent what I am presenting from being useful or from influencing you (Hayes, 2018). Analogous with the experience of de Oliveira Andreotti, I am aware that readers will read it differently, selectively

and even abusively. Some will be offended by it, some will be triggered by it, others will domesticate it and make it fit whatever it is that they are for or against. Just hold your response in front of you and let it be your teacher. There is no use asking me what I intended with this text: this text wrote itself into being, so my relationship with it is the same as that of a reader – what it did to me will be different from what it does to you (de Oliveira Andreotti, 2016, p.80).

Deleuze and Guattari realised when writing *Anti-Oedipus*, 'Since each of us was several, there was already quite a crowd' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2000, p.3). I also realise I am a multiplicity[10]. By splitting my voice into three, I can represent some of the multiplicity with my voices whilst recognising that they don't represent all of the multiplicity that makes up me, yet at the same time is my becoming self (Warfield, 2020). I was in a process of becoming as I wrote in my three voices, which I changed as I wrote and they have changed me as they were written. Equally, as you are born as the reader, I invite you to take any influence from this thesis into your multiplicity - your process of becoming.

My thesis will use many creative techniques to encourage you, the reader, to pay attention and to question. My meta-host will ask the questions that I, and others, posed as I wrote. However, as the reader you will add your questions and ideas to the multiplicity that makes up my thesis home. The multiplicity includes the three voices, writing – both my own and others, my supervisors, where I am writing and reading, my laptop, the theory I am thinking with and so on.

My Curated Tour

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[10] Multiplicities are the 'multiple ways being becomes' (Rae, 2014, p.121) and are all about difference; thinking differently; becoming differently.

Now the formalities are over, I can tell you about the tour, which rooms we will visit and what we will find inside of them. The tour has changed as my thesis home has changed shape. My original floorplan went to the Playroom first.
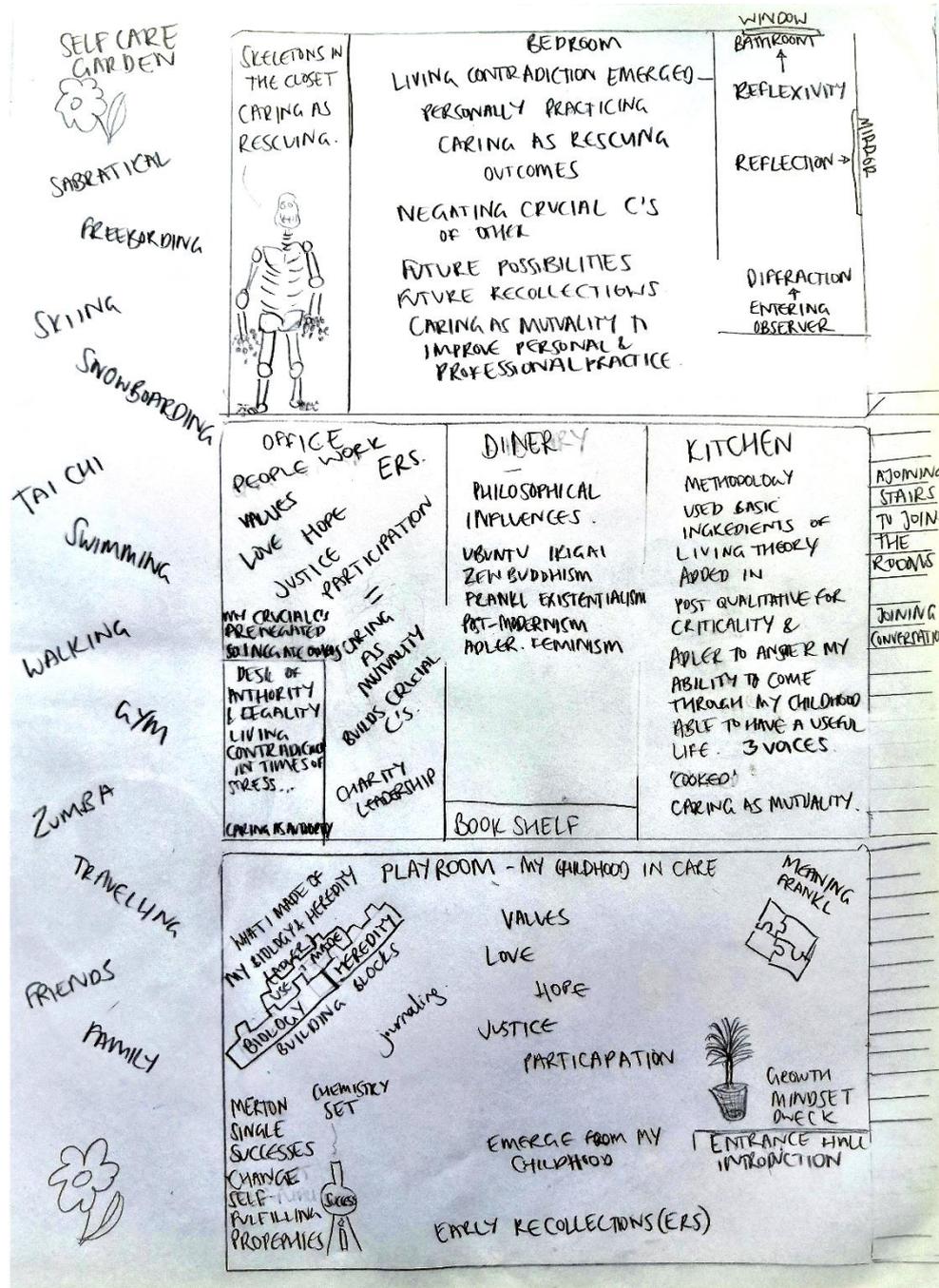
Image 1 First Floorplan of my Thesis Home

Then the bathroom moved to the ground floor, as my thesis home moved around, making it clear to me that the concepts of reflection (Alvesson and

Willmott, 1992) reflexivity (Attia and Edge, 2017) and diffraction (Barad, 2007) I was using to think with were needed at the beginning of the tour. Letting you see each concept at the end of the tour felt unhelpful and uncomfortable. Rather, I want you, the reader, who is taking this thesis tour to understand what theory I was thinking with (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012), to help you appreciate my thesis home.

Image 2 Final Floorplan of my Thesis Home

In the order of the tour that my curation has now evolved into, we will enter the bathroom, where I set out some of the optical metaphors that I used to view myself in my thesis home. I will look at what it does when I reflect on myself in

the mirror and how that is different from being reflexive. I will use the metaphor for reflexivity of gazing out the window, to act as a reminder of the context of my research. I will also take a moment to consider what is diffracted by being the observer on this thesis tour. I introduce a play I wrote and performed, exploring the metaphor of Plato's cave, to consider what it does when I use each of these ways of viewing my life.

I introduced an extra perspective by taking the whole tour out into the street. I realised none of the rooms was enabling a bigger picture perspective, as they were too contained within the story of building my thesis home. The view from the street locates my thesis within intersecting debates. The first debate is around caring (Noddings, 2015; Rolfe, 2009; Gaut, 1983; Mayeroff, 1971; Bailey, 2009; Ray, 2001; Boykin and Schoenhofer, 2000; Swanson, 1991). Rather than trying to define caring, I recognise the varied meanings of caring and the problems associated with them (Rolfe, 2009). I instead look at the assemblages of caring that have emerged in my research. I look at the debate between quantitative, qualitative, and post-qualitative approaches (Le Grange, 2018). I also look at the philosophical debates of humanism and posthumanism (Brinkman, 2017; St. Pierre, 2014) and being[11] and becoming (Rae, 2014).

The kitchen/diner changed and moved. Initially, it had made sense to cook up the meal and then eat it straight away and that the cooking could come after the tour of the playroom. However, I realised that the antimethodology (Nordstrom, 2017) needed to come before entering each of the rooms, to provide an understanding of how the thesis home has been built and the philosophical, theoretical and praxis, that has brought these ideas together. Antimethodology does not know where it is going, like Nordstrom (2017) said, "I have to trust in

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[11] 'Being becomes through difference' (Rae, 2014, p.121) - we are only in the present moment (Kabat Zinn, 1996) which is always different.

the surprises, the research events, that radically alter how I do and think" (p.223). When I moved from methodological inventiveness (Dadds and Hart, 2001) to antimethodology I had no idea where I was going. I called it going down the rabbit-hole (Carroll, 2015), as just like Alice, I had no idea where I would come out and the experience has been a paradigm shift. I went from being unquestioningly humanistic to becoming questioningly posthuman. I went from thinking qualitative approaches are the best way to research, to unlearning many of my ideas of research through taking a post-qualitative approach. The cooking process acknowledges the contradictions and clashes and queers them (Barad, 2014) in the experimental fusion (Waterhouse, 2011) that comes together. This tries to problematise, question, re-think, and keep the ingredients moving in the unholy (Nordstrom, 2017) dish I cooked up.

I was unable to be contained by the cooking styles of any approaches I was influenced by. In the end, I didn't want to and felt liberated by being able to create my post-living-theory that pushes beyond any of the normative processes. I didn't follow any specific recipe that others can use, except to encourage others to be creative in their experimental fusions. I originally chose Living Theory as an approach for research, because I thought it would enable me to hold together all the ingredients I wanted to research. However, I was unable to be contained, even by this inventive approach. Instead, I feel I corrupted the methodology (Briganti, 2020) by washing it and preparing it with posthuman/post-qualitative approaches. I was not constrained to only research educational influence, instead stubbornly researching the whys of my life through early recollections (Maniacci, *et al.*, 1998). Rather than letting go of Living Theory, I dragged it along with me corrupting it as I go. By corruption I mean that I haven't maintained the purity of the approach or the paradigm,

rather I moved it to new lines of flight[12] with various approaches which have added complexity and at times contradiction. By corrupting the methodology, I created something new. I found myself caring-with-resistance to be able to develop my ideas. The assemblage was not comfortable however, so it became necessary to pursue the cooking style I was creating and to decorate my thesis home as best fitted my inquiry. I show how I was able to plug into the caring-with-mutuality assemblage once I found posthuman/post-qualitative approaches, and new chefs began helping me create my post-living-theory. I worked regularly with Skype groups and critical friends who have helped me develop my ideas dialogically. Waterhouse (2011) says, "borrowing Deleuze's (1990/1995) words "Even when you think you're writing (theorising, thinking, researching) on your own, you're always doing it with someone else you can't always name" (p.141)" (p.62).

In my curated tour, we will go to the Playroom next, where I will explore my childhood in care through the metaphor of playing with my toys. My values of love, hope, justice and participation will be played with as they emerge throughout, as well as some specific toy metaphors that I chose to represent ideas that have influenced my understanding of the literature. Although my toy metaphors are based on humanistic ideas, I will move the thinking on through posthuman/post-qualitative approaches so they do something different.

The toys have also had their own lines of flight, where they opened shifts in my understanding (Winslade, 2011) by moving into new rooms and following me around on the tour. I had thought they might remain in the playroom, however they have had their own ideas and appeared in many rooms. This fits well with the posthuman ideas that the objects and concepts would move in and out of

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[12] Lines of flight is a concept created by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) that refers to the moment a change happens. The moment of escape from a bounded system as though water is escaping from a box, at times it might seep out at others, when under pressure, it might burst out in a jet.

the rooms and not stay fixed or static, but rather the writing itself has been a performative process (Fitzpatrick and Longley, 2020). The objects in the rooms have performed differently than I expected, as the process of writing has unfolded.

I will show how I developed caring-with-resilience to help me get through my childhood, and that whilst successful in helping me get through care without the usual poor outcomes experienced by the majority of children in care, there are limitations. I will show that my values developed early attempts at caring-with-mutuality. I was able to go beyond my ability to overcome and share my concern for others ability to tackle the challenges they had in their lives. From a posthuman/post-qualitative perspective I have realised my values are in a constant process of becoming. They become in my thesis creating the assemblage of my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality. "An assemblage isn't a thing—it is the process of making and unmaking the Thing" (Jackson and Mazzei, 2013). I show this process of making and unmaking throughout the tour.
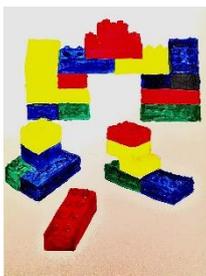
Image 3 Adler's Building Blocks

My building blocks are a metaphor for Alfred Adler's ideas about individual psychology (Adler, 1956), which suggest that it's neither heredity nor environment that defines people, but the use they make of both. Therefore, I will show the use I made of my building blocks to move beyond the usual expectations for children in care, to find different lines of flight as I grew up in care.

I will go back to my early recollections, not to use them as therapy of a disorder (Ansbacher, 1973), rather to understand where my values of love, hope, justice and participation came from, which emerged at a young age. My values have affected me, as I aim to do things differently to the expectations of someone

who grew up in care. My values plug into the assemblage of caring-with-resilience that enabled me to live a fulfilling and useful life.

Next, we will play with my chemistry set that I will use as my metaphor for Robert Merton's idea (1948) that social science would do well to learn from chemistry, where it's not the many failures that are focused on but the single success. I will play with how my story has been used to influence improvements for a child in care and has the potential to encourage further successes, rather than social science focusing on the larger number of children who are

Image 4 Merton's Chemistry Set

failed by the care system. "Telling stories in postmodern times, and perhaps in all times, attempts to change one's own life by affecting the lives of others" (Frank, 1995, p.17). By focussing on all those the care system fails, children are in danger of experiencing self-fulfilling prophecies - creating further failure. I recognise the danger of a self-referential 'I' and recognise by taking a creative-relational approach (Wyatt, 2019) I can see my process of becoming-other (Deleuze, 1989). I won't create a generalisable model, but rather encourage professionals working with children in care and the foster care system to think with post-living-theory to create new lines of flight in their work.

Image 5 Dweck's Plant

Next, we will get our green fingers working as we help my plant to grow, as we use this as a metaphor for Carol Dweck's ideas on growth mindset (2006) and how I grew and helped others to grow. I will look at how I came to believe that if I worked hard, I could have a different life and not become a self-fulfilling prophecy of the child in care.

Viktor Frankl's idea of logotherapy (1992) about meaning being fundamentally important for people to survive, is represented by my metaphor of a puzzle. The idea of a puzzle is that it transforms its meaning, as it's built into a picture from the many pieces. I will look at how I created meaning for myself from the pieces of my life, as I put them together and how that has helped me in my process of becoming. I will look at how I set my own goals that have created meaning

Image 6 Frankl's Puzzle

and purpose for my life. The metaphor holds the idea of meaning under erasure, as I recognise that I am a multiplicity and my meaning and purpose for my life are an assemblage with the people I know, where I grew up, my culture and, and, and … (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987).
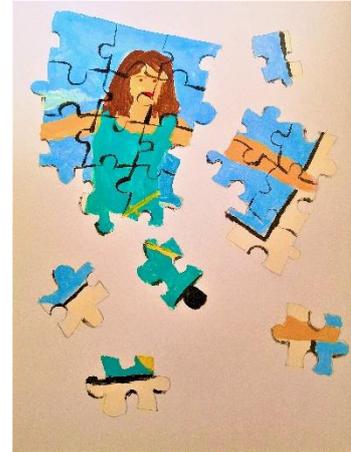
In my thesis home, I have a home office, where the tour will go next to see what my research turned up in my work as a charity leader, most predominantly with carers. We take a tour of the problems with the idea of leadership (MacKillop, 2018; Bendell *et al.* 2016; Little and Bendell 2015) and how reconstructing leadership as something more inclusive and sustainable could inform a more ethical and generative way of leading (Pound and Grant, 2021; Little and Bendell, 2015).

My toys and teddies turn up in my office as they are entangled with the way I work and caring-with-mutuality emerges. I will look at the benefits of caring-with-mutuality as a process of becoming. I will explore how my values come together in my work with carers and leading charities. I will show how I encouraged my own and others Crucial Cs (capability, counting, connection and courage (Lew and Bettner, 1996); success stories (Merton, 1948); growth mindset (Dweck, 2006) and meaning and purpose (Frankl, 1992). However, we will visit the desk

of authority as I explain myself as a post-living-contradiction[13], finding myself at times allured by caring-with-authority in my leadership. I will introduce the problems of different types of caring in my leadership. This isn't about inventing a new type of leader, but rather looking at different ways of being and becoming when in a leadership position and what is useful and what is not.

We will take an interlude as we go out into the garden to see how leisure is important as a process of becoming (Stalker, 2019) when considering improving practice. The self-care garden will explain how I expressed self-care specifically using the example of Freebording (Freebord, 2021) and what this has done to develop caring-with-mutuality and prevent burnout (Schaufeli, *et al.,* 1993). I found that it's not possible to do caring-with-mutuality without self-care. I am not separate from the humans and non-humans I intra-act with. Therefore, caring is entangled as there is no self without others or others without self. My values are not something separate, rather they are an assemblage that affects how I treat self-humans-nonhumans.

We will have a tour of the bedroom, as a personal, private space, I am going to tell you a few stories about the skeletons in my closet, as they have become central to understanding my research and I felt I had to include them. I called my skeletons in my closet caring-with-rescuing, as I found myself a post-living-contradiction in my most intimate relationship. I realised how caring-with-rescuing might have been making me feel better, but that it was not mutual and it didn't encourage my partner's feelings of capability, connection, counting and

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[13] Living contradiction is when an individual's values are denied in their practice (Whitehead 1989). I developed the term post-living-contraction to recognise that there is no separate self with values being denied rather there are different lines of flight when we respond to situations that create different assemblages in response to the different contexts. These lead to different responses that whilst they may not be in line with our values, they none-the-less perform in a way that may be necessary in the moment or may lead to finding a new response that is more in line with our values and create practice improvement.

courage (referring to Bettner and Lew's Crucial Cs, (2005)). I will admit that whilst I recognise that I am always in a process of becoming, it can be exhausting and that I also need time to just be, as I acknowledge my need for times of being and becoming.

As my tour comes to an end, we will finally be ready to sit down and eat, as I gather together the key thinkers to eat with me as we talk over food. I will invite you to sit down at the table and join in the discussion on my philosophical influences. These influences have been added to throughout my PhD and are not fully consistent, rather they each speak to me and have influenced my way of thinking as I developed my research. I spent many a late evening putting the world to rights over the table eating food. Due to word limits, this discussion shall be kept succinct. However, I will invite these thinkers to join the table and bring their voices as we agree and disagree. I had thought to leaf through some books from a bookcase, but instead have pulled them down and brought them to life in the conversation around the table. An interactive ~~literature review,~~ not as a review of all the relevant literature on the subject, which is not really possible on any subject and certainly not possible in my lifetime. Instead, I will look at how the literature that these thinkers have written has influenced me, what I resonated with or felt strongly opposed to and some, where these positions and views changed through the research. I was unsure how to let the voices speak and after searching Google scholar and not finding the conversation flowing, I realised they had already spoken to me in my quotes book. As I talked to the quotes, that had spoken to me during my stay in my thesis home, the conversation began to flow.

As we make the eternal return, back here to the entrance hall to make our exit, I will draw together what it has done, living in my thesis home, as I prepare to say goodbye and end my tour. Rather than a traditional ~~conclusion,~~ that tries to

make a tidy, smooth and tied up ending, it will maintain the messiness (McPhie, 2014), contradictions and ruins (Lather, 1997) that have permeated the experience of living in my thesis home. There will be no finality, rather I will highlight what my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality does, what my post-living contradictions do and, and, and … recognising there is no final, right answer, rather there is a multiplicity (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987). And with that, I will prepare to leave with you, as I must find myself a new home.

Now you know what you will see on this tour, it's time to show you where the bathroom is and to understand what the metaphors within it do to my thesis home. We will look at what reflection, reflexivity and diffraction do.

Bathroom

Host

Welcome to the bathroom where I will introduce the posthuman/post-qualitative metaphor of diffraction, which explores the effects of the patterns of difference (rather than the humanistic/qualitative metaphors of reflection and reflexivity which focus on sameness).

I wanted to let you know where the bathroom is on the tour of my home. There is nothing more annoying than being uncomfortable because you don't know where the bathroom is. It's important in this tour, as a point of reference to introduce some metaphors for how things are being looked at throughout the thesis home. Without introducing them early on, they may leave you feeling uncomfortable with the reflective, reflexive and diffractive ways that I am viewing my thesis home. Each metaphor changes what my writing does when I use each one, and illuminates problems with engaging in self-study.

I am unable to remove all discomfort, as through my research I came to understand that the view I had of reality at the beginning of my PhD studies has been deconstructed. I think Steve Hagen (2012) puts it well when he says,

> Our thinking - no matter how or what we think - is out of step with how things actually are. Once you see this for yourself, you will stop endlessly frustrating yourself by trying to figure out what's going on. It will be obvious that whatever conceptual answer you come up with will be dualistic, while Reality is not. It will also be obvious that what is needed is not an answer or explanation but only direct seeing (p.55).

This is a problem when the entire purpose of a PhD is to come up with an original contribution to knowledge (Graduate School, 2020-21). A positivistic

approach seeks to find an answer through generalisable methods (Pithouse-Morgan and Samaras, 2015). I reject seeking a generalisable answer. However, even with my attempt at the metaphor of my thesis home to illuminate my ideas in a way that allows you to make your interpretation, I am unable to present the reality of what my research found. Every attempt is merely to bring back to my thoughts the reality of my findings, and put them into words which become separate from the reality of my findings. This returns to the problems of dualistic thinking. However, as Deleuze and Guattari (1987) said, sometimes it's nice just to use words to feel normal.

What Self?

Then there is the issue, as I highlighted previously, of what I mean by self in my self-study. This didn't feel so problematic when I first moved into my thesis home. I moved in quite comfortably, thinking of myself as the one who had taken the action to move into my thesis home. By observing my actions, I was acting out in the world to study and write up. When I moved into my thesis home, I was aware of wanting to make a distinction that the self I was interested in was not from a narcissistic perspective of ego (Coffey, 1999), but rather my ontological self, which seemed simple – I was observing myself at the level of being. I became aware, as I delved further into post-modern, spiritual and contemplative understandings of being (Wilber, *et al.,* 2008), that being and action are not the same thing. I came to realise the Cartesian logic of "I think therefore I am" has led to an idea of separation that is problematic. When I think of the other as separate from me, I can justify doing all sorts of things that I would not be able to justify if I saw them as one with everything - on an immanent plane where 'there is no longer a conscious-unconscious dualism machine" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.284). I can do all sorts of things to myself that I can justify

because my thoughts tell me to or distract me from understanding what is really happening. To understand these problems in more depth, let me draw on some Zen Buddhist insight, "Instead we go on thinking we are something separate and well defined – something with a name, an identity. If we'd only let such thoughts pass through, we'd realise we're already the host within the host" (Hagen, 2012, p.90). What does it mean to be the host within the host? Zen Buddhism is referring to the actual experience of each moment and that there is only ever *this moment.* In *this moment,* there is nothing for us to be separate from. Our thoughts are not the host. Eckhart Tolle (2004) says, before we are conscious, our thoughts (within which he includes our feelings) are running us. However, we can stop and observe the thoughts with practice - that observer is our being. My thesis house was very much built with and decorated over and over again with my thoughts and feelings, however as time has gone on, I stripped back the décor to reveal my observing self, through contemplation, which has allowed new insights to emerge. This is not to suggest that Buddhism is 'the' answer or is without problems (Morrison, 2019), rather that the ideas have disrupted my thinking to move to new ways of thinking and doing (MacLure, 2010).

Johnathon Wyatt suggests employing irony when approaching first-person writing,

> I write about 'my' experience while I purport to disrupt the unified subject. How can a poststructuralist writing about personal experience be anything but ironic …? It is 'my' body that sits – that sat – with clients and registered their rage and pain; 'my' stomach that growled indelicately. The 'I' that will die and be mourned and missed (or not) is not just some postmodern blob of subjectivity; it has palpable edges, a perimeter of permeable skin within which this writing happens (Wyatt, 2013, p.132).

I too have found the challenge of writing a self-study when trying to grapple with the concept of the posthuman self. The Allegory of the Cave (Plato, 1991) shows how our perception is limited, based on what we think is the extent of reality. Plato told the story of prisoners, who were born chained up in a cave and believed the shadows from the fire were reality. One prisoner escapes and painfully comes to terms with the fact there is a reality beyond the cave, where objects are creating the shadows. When he returns to his fellow prisoners to explain the 'truth', they are so angry they want to kill him. My attempt to bring the reality of my experience of living in my thesis home may be met by some in the academy in the same way when I come to submit. However, I am unable to contemplate any other way than to present my experience and learning as fully as possible.

Metaphors of Reflection, Reflexivity and Diffraction

After a course on Reflection, Reflexivity and Diffraction at the University of Cumbria with Jamie McPhie, I was inspired by an experiential learning event in a cave to explore the significance of The Allegory of the Cave. I wrote and performed the play CAVES, which I will now use to explain the three metaphors for viewing my research; reflection, reflexivity and diffraction. In the play they have their own voice. The play was also videoed, watching the play acts as a "diffractive process" (Wyatt, 2019, p.11) which performs differently to reading the play.

I provide the play here in its entirety and unpack and explore the lines of flight (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) that seep out of the writing and the video. I provide analysis and critiques that arise and explain how these ideas are used throughout my thesis home.

CAVES

> Written and Performed at University of Cumbria by Sonia Hutchison, December 2019.
>
> I will use three props for this play, my mirror glasses for my reflection voice signifying I am reflecting myself. My glasses for my reflexive voice, signifying the lenses I am looking through the world with and my diffractive voice, through my phone signifying the connections and co-creation that changes my voice.
>
> (Reflection – talk into sunglasses)
>
> As I look in the mirror and reflect on what I will take from this course, I was able to see I came from more than one cave, due to my experience of living for three and a half years with my birth family who could be

described as hippies, but who suffered from schizophrenia and were drug addicts. I moved to my foster family, who were strong Christians attending a Baptist church and were very conventional. I may not have called them caves as a child, but I knew early on that they were very different ways of being.

(Reflexivity – talk with glasses on)

I realise my reflection holds a number of cultural lenses that potentially have problems. I called my biological parents (parents-b) hippies, what does this mean to people here?

A quick Google identifies hippies as a counter-culture movement. One that rejected the mores of the time, that they gained their name from being 'hip' or aware of what was going on in the world around them. I know I held that romanticised view of my parents-b as hippies growing up and yet an alternative view of hippies is that they are dirty, lazy and a general insult. I also used the label schizophrenia and the word suffer to describe their experience. This comes from a medical model that wants to categorise ill health and reduce people to a label. I also used the term drug addiction, which is also a label and has a level of judgement attached to it, as does drug addict, potentially suggesting the problem lies with them for having an addiction, rather than the drugs for their chemically addictive qualities. On the other hand, due to the taboos surrounding mental illness and drug use, I feel naming those characteristics important to open the discourse. Rather than shy away from them because they are generally seen as socially unacceptable and a difficult subject to discuss.

I gave my foster parents (parents-f) more socially acceptable labels, and yet, they are labels nonetheless. I generally accepted their cave until I was 18 and saw myself as a born-again Christian of an immanent and yet personal God, that was omnipresent. On one level this cave provided

me with a value-base that had protective qualities, in that I didn't follow the potentially more damaging path my parents-b who took drugs, nor for example, did I get pregnant as a teenager, as did several of my peers. These pathways could have limited or harmed me. However, the Christian worldview is far from lacking problems, as so many wars have been fought in the name of Christianity and much of the world was colonised and converted to Christianity, at the cost of their own beliefs and ways of seeing the world. Indeed, I came to lose my faith, as contradictions became clear to me.

Conventional is also more socially acceptable, as neoliberalism that is the dominating world view requires conformity to uphold the power structures that perpetuate it. To question too much, or stray too far, is potentially threatening.

(Diffraction – play recording through phone)

As diffraction is always in motion and in a constant state of becoming. ~~I~~ recognise that the very nature of trying to limit what ~~I~~ gained is problematic as it's always on the move and the very use of the words '~~I~~' and '~~my~~' are problematic. In that way the words are under erasure for there is no '~~I~~' or '~~my~~', but the many Intra-actions[14] experienced. Meaning that '~~I~~' materialises through intra-actions and the ability to act emerges from within the relationships co-created through this course, and that ~~I~~ don't sit outside of it as ~~my~~ reflection and reflexive voices have done. So now '~~I~~' and '~~my~~' are under erasure they can be used just for kicks.

Re-seeing my childhood in a diffractive process of intra-actions with both families and the many other families, both human and non-human, of animals, trees, plants, hills, rocks, sea, that co-created relationships in a continual process of becoming. I realise how I cannot revisit my

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[14] Intra-action refers to the entangled relationship of humans and non-humans – that we cannot be separated (Barad, 2007).

childhood because those intra-relationships are not severed by a form of linear time, but spatially are continually co-creating who I am. A new understanding emerges - that I am more than my reflections on myself or the reflexivity of my understanding of my socio, historical, cultural lenses, that keep me separate. I realise there is a different relationship that dualistic language doesn't enable me to explain.

(Reflection - talk into sunglasses)

I think that understanding there are different ways of being, has helped me to understand that other people have caves. That has made me be aware and interested in them and be more accepting of them.

(Reflexivity – talk with glasses on)

However, I realise my world views were a bit of both of my caves and I found the unconventional and conventional both troubling and useful as I went on to understand the insights they gave me, as I work with people with their own caves.

(Diffraction – play recording through phone)

In my research, I described my way of being that came out of my childhood experiences as caring as mutuality[15]. However, I struggled to explain what I meant as the dualisms of caring one for another and mutuality as being a giving and taking or sharing, or co-operation still anticipates a dualism. With dualisms come hierarchies and they are what I was trying to remove.

What would caring as mutuality be in a diffractive sense? Perhaps co-created relationships with a multiplicity of ways, lines of flight even, that are always moving and changing? What does that do? It frees me to re-imagine my ways of working in a different paradigm that is based on

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[15] Caring as mutuality was an early name I gave as my research developed, I discuss how this changed to caring-with-mutuality in the kitchen.

multiplicities, has no hierarchies, is in motion and is co-created, to name just a few benefits, whilst recognising it's still another cave.

Conclusion

That is my play, I will end with my poetic story, created from the animistic storytelling activity.

Wondering along went the sprint river, tumbling in a hurry across the sleeping bed, reminding me to consider my motion as I travelled along a parallel path. I find my way comes together with chickens, pleased to meet their reflected friends, mirroring my own processes back to me. On I go, to be reminded of the lenses that shade my world. My thoughts and feeling merged in motion, as I came to settle my gaze on the concentration camp children's art, left lonely, in false pretence, holding the memory of their creators, so those who look at them may never forget their betrayal.

Three Voices

The reflective voice takes an anthropocentric, dualistic view (Barad, 2007), that there is an 'I' to reflect on my contained and separate life of living in care and the linear learning that influenced my practice. This does not make it wrong or untrue, as this takes us back into a dualistic view of the world. Rather the reflective voice does something different to the other two voices. On this tour, you will see in my bathroom, I have a mirror reflecting back at myself, as I look at my life from specific points increasing my understanding from a fixed perspective. I used a reflective diary to capture many of these reflections, as well as going back to old diaries from my teenage years. I reflected dialogically

I explore our paper more in the Office.

with critical friends, in groups, in person and via Skype, to develop my ideas. These were useful to move my thinking

on and helped me make realisations I had not made before, such as my paper with Amy Dyke (Dyke and Hutchison, 2017), a young adult carer I previously mentored. Amy and I used reflective dialogue to write the paper and led me to many insights that shaped my thesis home.

I explore my reflective practice more in the Office.

Initially, I agreed with Alvesson and Willmott (1992) that reflection provides a way of questioning the power and control in organisations, that it prevents doing things because that is the way they have always been done. In my working life, I welcomed the process of reflection to look at what worked, what didn't work and what could be improved. I wanted my power and control to be questioned, to ensure that the organisation was run effectively for those we were there to benefit and not for my self-interest. I encouraged my staff to do the same and to facilitate change based on reflection. However, I am also aware that reflection is a mirroring of what already exists and have noticed in the process that often over time the same ideas are replayed over and over again. For example, several times staff have wanted to have more variety to their roles to make them more interesting and then requested that their roles are more specialised, so they can be more of an expert in one area, rather than a generalist. I notice that we have changed roles from one to the other several times. Neither is right or wrong, they have different benefits and problems. However, reflection is only coming up with the same options being tried again. As Barad (2007) says, "reflection is about mirroring and sameness" (p.29). It looks like there is change happening that the power and control are being distributed, however, in reality, the same options are being regurgitated and no real change is happening. This is despite my openness to "risk taking, not connecting with past behaviours of incremental change, surrendering control and creating irreversible positive behavioral trends" (p.67), which Lee (2009) suggests will lead to deep change.

We'll see my post-living-contradictions of caring-with-resistance in the kitchen to protect my thesis home to include everything I wanted it to contain.

In the office, we'll see me being allured by caring-with-authority, as I tried to force through ways of working that are not in line with my values.

Therefore, I used reflexivity to try to address the issue of only reflecting on the same options. The reflexive voice is one that not only mirrors but is also aware of the other influences that have affected my responses, recognising that I am not responding in a vacuum. Reflexivity recognises that researchers are "embedded in and emerging from their contexts" (Attia and

In the bedroom, we'll see me caring-with-rescuing, as I came to realise, I was taking control through rescuing which has unhelpful aspects, particularly for my partner.

Edge, 2017, p.26). This process of being aware of the lenses through which I am seeing myself, which are represented in the play by my glasses, are as Attia and Edge (2017) argue, developing myself and the research. By this, I mean that I am gaining greater self-awareness and that I am not acting in a way that is unaffected by the culture and systems I am living and working in. These thoughts help me to question and become more conscious of how I act. However, this way of researching still left me with blind spots, that I will highlight during the tour, that reflexivity had not identified.

In the bathroom of my thesis home, I have a window to represent the lens I look through the world, which colours everything I look at from the perspective of the cultures I was brought up in. These were not straightforward, as I had more than one cave due to being fostered and from experiencing some of my close friends' caves as I grew up. However, I am aware that growing up in rural Britain has still provided a specific cultural lens, that is different from others growing up in other cultures. I recognise that although growing up in care makes me part of a

disadvantaged minoritarian[16] group, and being female, I am affected by the patriarchal constructs of our society. However, I am still privileged due to the white, western skin I was born in and that despite having black ancestry, I have never been the recipient of racism (Harris, 2019). My disadvantages of being in care and experiencing sexism are not the single-story, rather there are complexities of the privilege of being white, western and having access to higher education. Reflexivity goes some way to identifying these complexities, however, viewing everything through cultural lenses may lead to an oversimplification with an insinuation of cause and effect.

Diffraction is a post-qualitative metaphor that rather than focusing on congruence where everything comes together, as reflection and reflexivity does, diffraction is focussed on difference. Diffraction is in opposition to reflection and reflexivity (Barad, 2007) which maintain binary thinking (Waterhouse, 2011). 'Scientifically, "Diffraction does not produce 'the same' displaced, as reflection and refraction do. Diffraction is a mapping of interference, not of replication, reflection, or reproduction" (Fairbairn, 2017, II. Position 2).

Unlike reflection and reflexivity, where researchers are keen to create a fixed meaning that practitioners can use, diffraction is always on the move. Diffraction is not a methodological position, as by being on the move (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012, p.i) means it cannot have the characteristics that a research methodology has - "the specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyze information about a topic" (LibGuides, 2021). There are no fixed procedures or techniques, the researcher instead is taken where the research leads. McPhie (2016), in his thesis, says of using a diffractive approach,

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[16] Minoritarian is a process of becoming for Deleuze and Guattari (1987), one where those who are minority address the power and domination of the majority.

"eventually, I found myself letting go of that academic tension. I relaxed, limbered up, threw away my parachute and … let the empirical materials take me for a walk (p.156).

This is very different to traditional research[17] where the methodology section allows you, the reader, to critically evaluate a study's overall validity and reliability. Instead, I am drawing on ideas such as a Deleuzian ontology (Mazzei, 2016; St. Pierre, 2019); Contemplative Inquiry (Sable, 2014; Simmer-Brown, 2016) and Compassionate Inquiry (Maté, 2011). These take different reference points to mainstream inquiries and instead start with the premise that inquiry is immanent, meaning I am never separate from the inquiry. That there is no *a priori* truth out there to be found, but rather being curious and accepting of what the inquiry leads to and accepting that there is no right answer.

In my CAVES play, I used the prop of playing my voice through my phone as an active form of diffraction, to show the very nature of playing my voice through my phone made a difference. It was both my voice and not my voice, as it was me that recorded my voice which was playing, but the phone was playing a digital recording that sounded like my voice, but was in that instance the digital replication of my voice. I am using the metaphor of you, the reader, entering as the observer to represent diffraction. Diffraction is a phenomenon that shows how matter responds in a different way than expected in the two-slit experiment, which found that light can be both a wave and a particle. In traditional physics, matter should be one or the other, not both. The experiment,

> measure(s) the effects of difference, even more profoundly they
> highlight, exhibit, and make evident the entangled structure of the

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[17] By Traditional Research I mean "studying someone else's practice" (Pithouse-Morgan and Samaras, 2015, p.118), the humanistic and normative practices of research, ways of knowing and representing research (St. Pierre and Pillow, 2000).

changing and contingent ontology of the world, including the ontology of

knowing. In fact, diffraction not only brings the reality of entanglements

to light, it is itself an entangled phenomenon (Barad, 2007, p.73).

I have a video of my Caves play to show how the video changes the text. Being able to see the props, hear my tone of voice and see my embodied expressions change the meaning of the words as they are represented in the text format. At the simplest level, the use of the props provides a visual reminder to the viewer of the voice I am speaking in and brings the metaphor alive in a way that manipulating the text is unable to do. "Clearly the efficacy of spoken words is fastened to the simultaneous movements of the speakers' bodies, tone of voice" (Gergen and Hersted, 2016, p.182). In the written word, neither moving the body nor the tone of voice is possible to convey meaning, thus the video performs differently than the written text. You, the viewer, will take a new understanding of the text from watching me perform it through how I am using my tone of voice to convey my meaning.

Jousse (2016) calls the body movement gestes, however, he explains his meaning goes beyond the mere movement of the body, he says,

Geste is what the human makes from the outside world that came in him: how he received it, through one or more of his senses; how he let it permeate his whole being; how he organized it, stored it, and kept it at the ready for possible future expression and communication (Jousse, 2016, pp.15-16)."

Jousse believes that as humans we cannot be separated into our mind, body and soul. Rather as humans, we are a compound of all three, therefore we are our embodied movements, our thoughts and ideas which cannot be separated without changing the meanings. The video enables me to provide a different representation of the ideas I am describing, as in the video I am not removing the body from the ideas of my mind. Tolle (2004) says we cannot be separated

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from anything because we are all one – as Barad (2007) says we are entangled. Although a video is just another presentation, it diffracts to gain a different, embodied experience of my whole being as I am expressing it.

The video acts differently, getting closer to 'reality' by my embodiment of the words and yet still not being 'reality'. Yet the video does something the written words don't do. As my critical friend Robyn Pound said, a paper I wrote (Hutchison, 2019) made more sense when she saw the video of my presentation where I acted out the paper I wrote at the ALARA and CARN conference in 2019 and was published in 2020 (Hutchison, 2020). I had not changed the words, but my embodiment helped her make sense of what I had written in a way the words had not. The video performed differently to the text, as speaking of a self is ironic, there is also an ironic validity to the text, "The text is resituated as a representation of its "failure to represent what it points toward but can never reach" (Hayles 1990, p.261)" (Lather, 1993, p.677). The video can also not be the reality, the difference illuminates new understandings and thus performs differently from the text.

Therefore, the use of video throughout the thesis acts as a diffractive lens on the text to provide different meanings that you, as the viewer and reader, can compare. With that in mind, it's time to leave, before we explore the rest of the rooms, I would like to step outside for a moment. However, hold on to the metaphors of the mirror, window and you as the observer, as they will be used throughout the tour.

View from the Street

Host

Before we look around the rest of the thesis home, I would like to take a moment to step outside and show you where my thesis home is situated. Rae (2014) says, "when Deleuze talks about the ground of philosophy, he means the literal ground on which the philosopher lives and thinks" (p.180). The view from the street shows how my thesis home is positioned on intersections of different streets. I present this as a satellite view to recognise the geography has shifted and changed (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) during the time of living in my thesis home. The view I am presenting has co-emerged over the time my thesis home has occupied this space.
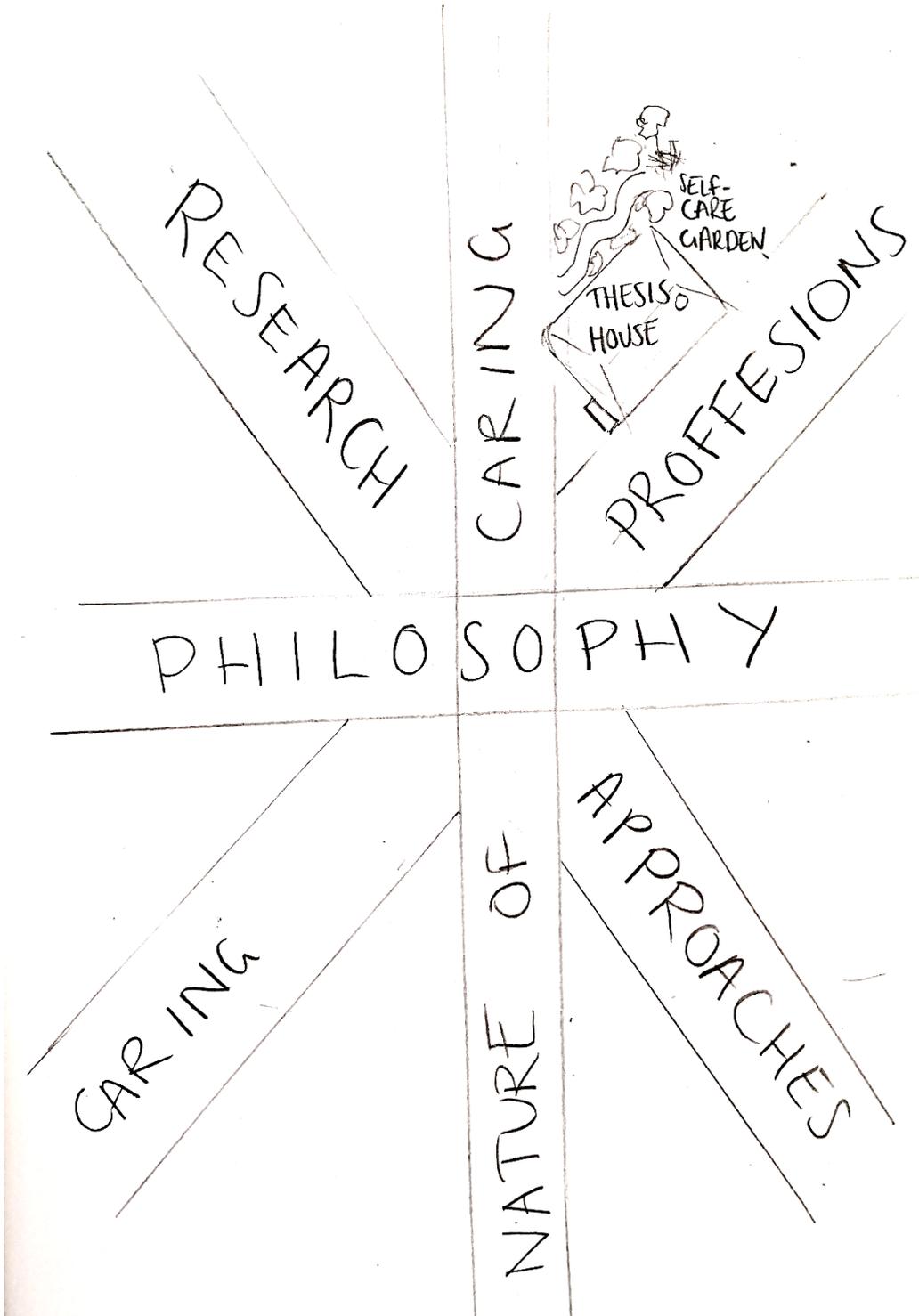
Image 7 Intersecting Streets

The first street is a debate around the caring professions and where the power should sit in the relationships of caring professionals and those in their care, whether these are called patients, clients, service users, or beneficiaries. These words all do something in terms of positioning the power and are part of the debate (Casey, 2016). Caring professions can be positioned within a medical model (Shah and Mountain, 2018) – where the caring professional knows best. A stereotypical relationship in this model is the all-knowing doctor and the patient who needs healing. Foucault (2003) identified this as a power relationship where "a doctor supported and justified by an institution, that of a doctor endowed with the power of decision and intervention" (p.89). Some medical procedures fit well into this model. A surgeon fixing my broken bone knows how to re-set it and I as the patient might not be best placed to add any useful knowledge in that surgical room. I would, in the example of resetting my bones, be unconscious under anaesthetic and unable to add any information to the procedure. At that moment, I want someone who can decide what to do and intervene quickly, so my bones reset correctly.

However, it's not just doctors that can fall into a medical model of delivery of care; social workers, psychologists, even charity support workers can set themselves up as the one who knows, and do 'to' people rather than 'with' them. The term beneficiary suggests that the person receiving support is in a passive role of receiving benefit from the service or professional. Whereas a service user or client is seen as being in an active position of making use of a service or professional. The concept of 'client' has a neoliberal suggestion of being a consumer of individualised services, even though in most situations there is no payment directly from the person receiving the services.

The intention of shifting to terms such as service user and client has been to move the power to those receiving the services (Morgan, 2010). This has led to what, in the UK, is called the personalisation agenda (Department of Health, 2007) across health and social care. Personalisation is a person-centred approach, giving greater choice, control (Community Care, 2008) and information to the person to make their own decisions about their treatment and care (Skills for Health, 2021). For some professionals, greater choice and control by service users has been experienced as a threat to their professional expertise (Morgan, 2010). Others have seen personalisation as a government vehicle to mask the political agenda of cutting costs (Community Care, 2014). There is a danger with these two models that a binary is set up, where either the professional is all-knowing or the person experiencing the need is all-knowing. There is a move towards co-creation and co-production, which aims to share the power, where everyone is valued in services, treatments, and solutions (SCIE, 2015), which resonates with my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality.

Meta-host

All these concepts can end up focusing only on the human actors in the situation. Cluley and Radnor, (2020) propose a way of thinking about co-creation, which moves beyond two humans in relation to each other and broadens to considering the human and non-human.

> *The 'co' in co-creation does not have to be a dual relationship and it does not have to be a singularly human exchange (service user—service provider), rather, co can be and necessarily should be multiple and heterogeneous depending on circumstance. For this reason, we describe value co-creation as an assemblage of fluid and varying elements. In positioning co-creation as an assemblage, we shift the focus*

of the co-creation debate from a service logic, which has an anthropomorphic focus, to a focus on multiplicity and difference whereby value co-creation is a process and experience that is subjective, multifactorial, and will be different for all involved (p.4).

Would it change the focus of the debate if co-creation is considered as a posthuman assemblage and recognises the difference of experience and needs of all involved?

Host

I feel the inclusion of more than human factors widens the recognition that caring-with-mutuality is relational beyond the humans involved. The concepts, language, and resources used in that relational assemblage shift the experience of caring.

Nature of Caring Streets

My thesis home is positioned within the debate of the nature of caring and the caring professions (Noddings, 2015; Rolfe, 2009; Gaut, 1983; Mayeroff, 1971; Bailey, 2009; Ray, 2001; Boykin and Schoenhofer, 2000; Swanson, 1991). There are many potential meanings of caring and no shared definition, agreeing on a definition is "unlikely and perhaps even undesirable" (Rolfe, 2009, p.146). Therefore, I am not trying to define caring in my thesis, rather I am interested in the wide-ranging meanings and uses that are different depending on the situation – the intention and the affect – and can be both being and becoming in nature. In other words, I can experience the feeling of caring just by being and not doing anything. There are many things I care deeply about and yet don't act upon. Caring is also a doing or a striving to do something to improve something or someone's situation. When I act, I am changed, and others are

changed, making it a process of becoming. This thesis home is situated in many types of caring.

- Caring as in the experience of being 'in care' as I experienced by being in the state system of foster care and the personal experience of living with my foster family.

- Caring as in the role of a carer who is 'unpaid, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems' (Carers Trust, 2021).

- Caring as a professional in my leadership roles within charities. Caring for my friends, family, and partner.

- Caring about injustice and, and, and… (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987).

I agree with Rolfe (2009), that we can, like with the rest of my thesis put the word 'caring' under erasure (sous rature). However, I haven't done this by crossing a line through it, as that would make my thesis unreadable. Instead, I placed the word caring in my thesis home to hold it under erasure, "recognising the need to carry on using the word in the absence of anything better or more precise, but also keeping alive the several different and contradictory meanings that it simultaneously signifies" (Rolfe, 2009, p.146).
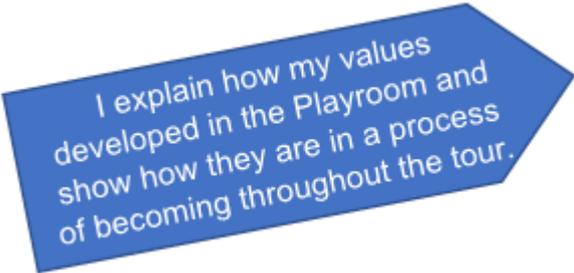
I explain how my values developed in the Playroom and show how they are in a process of becoming throughout the tour.

My post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality is an assemblage with my values; love; hope; justice; participation. However, as I continued researching, I realised my values were not enough to explain caring-with-mutuality, the Crucial Cs joined the assemblage; connect; count; capable; courage (Bettner and Lew, 2005). They have helped me to explain how caring-with-mutuality encourages thriving. Finally, I realised that the concepts (growth mindset (Dweck, 2006); meaning and purpose (Frankl, 1949); avoiding harmful self-fulfilling prophecies

(Merton, 1948); the use we make of our heredity and environment (Adler, 2005)) that I play with in the Playroom are also part of the assemblage. Everything in the assemblage is related to both humans and non-humans and levelling the power between all involved. There is no all-knowing professional, service user or single treatment or theory to fix everything. Rather there are unique relational intra-actions that are within the assemblage of caring-with-mutuality and whilst there is repetition or recognisability, they are different in each moment.

Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) idea of assemblage, can be thought of as the plugging in of different entities providing potential for new possibilities. I like to think of assemblages as LEGO®. All the potential is there, however putting different LEGO® pieces together does something different. A LEGO® car is different from a LEGO® helicopter or LEGO® house. Another way of thinking about assemblages is the process of cooking an egg is different if boiled, poached, fried, or baked in a cake. The assemblage is not just other ingredients, but the type of pan the egg is cooked in, the method of cooking and the cook. Caring also becomes something different when it comes together with different concepts and is experienced differently every time in practice. I show this by joining the words with hyphens. Kuby (2019) explains that "Hyphens and slashes that join more than one word are theoretically intentional to show an entanglement or togetherness of concepts and/or bodies" (p.130). I join several words together with the word caring using a hyphen to show "a relational, material-discursive coming to be, a wholeness" (Kuby, 2019, p.130). Each time caring is changed to be something new in relation to the word that I join caring with – caring does something different and has a different affect.

I identified caring-with-mutuality as having the most beneficial lines of flight (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) for caring for myself, other humans, and non-humans. I think of lines of flight like the lines on a map, there are many possible

routes and destinations and each assemblage will take a different path to a different destination. I will show that I found many different pathways of caring in my thesis home, some took me to more favourable destinations whilst others took me on more challenging routes, physically or mentally. I found, when caring-with-mutuality, both the route and the destination tended to be the most favourable. I found the affect of caring-with-mutuality makes me and the others involved feel as if we are thriving.

I identify several other assemblages of caring. Each usage changes caring and whilst I found the other assemblages less favourable than caring-with-mutuality, they still provide ways of caring that at times may be necessary. However, they can have some harmful side effects. Caring-with-resilience is a form of caring I identified and developed to help me overcome the harmful outcomes that are statistically more usual for children in care (Department of Education, 2011). I will explore the limitations of caring-with-resilience - that it can be more concerned with my wellbeing and less concerned with the wellbeing of human and non-human others. I show in the playroom how I sometimes had to put on metaphorical armour to protect myself and shut out friends, family and leave my room in a mess, as I was unable to look after human and non-human others as I needed to use all my energy to process the difficult events in my life. This is similar to the limitation of client-centred approaches - there can be such a focus on the client's needs that there is a lack of recognition of the benefits of connection. The focus can be so individualistic that the affect can lead to disconnection and loneliness, which is a feeling I often experienced as a child.

I explore caring-with-resilience in the Playroom.

Caring-with-resistance may hold space open for what I want, however that may be at the expense of others. The affect can be getting what I care about at the expense of others – leading me to feel sad and disconnected.

Caring-with-authority is similar to the medical model and positions the carer as the one that knows, or needs to look as if I know, and tell others what to do. The affect can also lead to disconnection as the human and non-human others are seen as needing to be controlled and constrained rather than seen as collaborators. This can lead to abuses of power. Caring-with-rescuing is another side of the medical model where there is an all-knowing, all capable person, who can fix everything. The affect can lead to the rescuer feeling all-powerful and may in the short-term be enjoyable or necessary for the person being rescued to have someone else fix things if they are not able to. However, in the long-term, it can lead to unwanted solutions, learned helplessness and disempowerment, not to mention burnout on the part of the rescuer.

I will explore caring-with-resistance in the Kitchen.

I will explore caring-with-authority in the Office.

I will explore caring-with-rescuing in the Bedroom.

The affective turn calls for theory "that is full, not theory that ignores the emotive dimension to living, loving, working, engaging, experiencing, deciding, suffering, and enjoying" (Guy and Mastracci, 2018, p.282). Therefore, I sought not just to focus on what my assemblages of caring do but also how they make myself and others feel. What we do and what we feel are intra-active – "To intervene in affect, therefore, is to attempt to control or regulate how intensity becomes expectation, action, and decision" (Ducey, 2007, p.192).

My thesis home is positioned on another intersectional street - the debate between quantitative, qualitative, and post-qualitative approaches (Le Grange, 2018). Quantitative approaches in the caring profession are useful to understand where statistically show that there is greater deprivation, needs or disparity. I use quantitative data regularly in funding bids to secure funding for the charities I work with. Funders require an argument for why the charity I am requesting funding for needs it more than the hundreds of others that are requesting funding. Usually, there is a limited number of words to communicate that need. I am grateful for the researchers who have gathered the statistics to help me communicate succinctly the needs of the community I am advocating for. However, I found statistics can leave the community they are measuring worried and hopeless. As a child of two parents-b with schizophrenia the statistic that I had a 36.6% chance of also getting schizophrenia (Slater and Cowie, 1971) was something I was concerned about. I was relieved to get to my 30th birthday with no symptoms, as I knew that statistically, the chance of having a first schizophrenic episode older than 30 was extremely unlikely. The general population has a 1% chance (Slater and Cowie, 1971) and from speaking with other people who don't have parents with schizophrenia, it's not a concern for them.

Meta-host

Okay, but what else does this type of 'data' 'do'? What else does/might it produce that might not be as healthy? For example, my worry about 'getting it'? People's perceptions of schizophrenia as a 'mental' label rather than as something physical, real and performative? Deleuze and Guattari (2000) say "capitalism, through its process of production, produces an awesome

schizophrenic accumulation of energy or charge, against which it brings all its vast powers of repression to bear" (p.34). They take the view that, rather than schizophrenia being the problem, it's capitalism and the physicians who take the view that schizophrenics need fixing, rather than the system. Capitalistic societies favour "positivist research paradigms and privileged quantitative science" (Carlson, et al., 2021, p.151). What do numbers do (remembering they are abstract phenomena and have been invented to 'represent' reality)?

Host

Quantitative data can be reductive and make the issues it deals with seem simplistic. Like with my worry about getting schizophrenia, as if it's a binary, whereas mental health can be seen as a spectrum (Adam, 2013). I spend a lot of my time reassuring my biological mum (mum-b) that I have many of the same worries and thoughts as she does even though she is deemed 'insane'. The pressure of living in a society that expects conformity and production of capital (Deleuze and Guattari, 2000), means I often feel like I am going mad too. I ended up feeling like the numbers are the reality that had power over me and that I had to be responsible for avoiding the statistics for my life. However, I also felt the system is responsible and hope this thesis home and my personal and professional work will influence change.

At the beginning of my thesis, I had seen qualitative approaches and particularly first-person accounts as providing greater hope and, by representing the narratives of lesser-heard populations, creating greater equity and justice. However due to relying on qualitative approaches, when I turned to post-qualitative approaches to address an impasse I had come to, I found myself in the middle of a new debate. Post-qualitative theorists argue qualitative approaches continue to replicate positivism by using the same language of data, reliability and validity. Qualitative approaches can fall into the trap of

upholding the very power structures they are seeking to question and improve (St. Pierre, 2014). Others suggest that the current power structures need total deconstruction and only a radically different ontology, epistemology and ethics can be just or equitable. Barad (2007) argues that these are intra-acting as an ethico-onto-epistemology – values and theories of be(com)ing[18] and knowledge are all one and cannot be separated.

Philosophy Streets

This has led to my thesis home being positioned on the intersecting and overlaid streets of the philosophical debates of humanism and posthumanism (Brinkman, 2017; St. Pierre, 2014) and being and becoming (Rae, 2014). Ironically setting these out as opposing sides creates a dualism that is rejected by post-qualitative approaches. Therefore, I haven't fully accepted or fully rejected any approach or philosophy. Instead, I positioned my thesis home on the intersectionality of the approaches and philosophies. Rather than seeking a unified, logical argument or sought an *a priori* truth (Kant, 2007), I embraced the contradictions and differences that have arisen and followed them to see what they do differently (Deleuze,1994). I tried to recognise the strengths and limitations and moved humanistic ideas on, by taking a posthuman approach – to think with theory (Jackson and Mazzei, 2017) – acknowledging and addressing the inequities created by humanism and seeking ways to do things differently in my thesis home. I questioned rather than rejected, and sought "to think from that encounter and to create anew" (Rae, 2014, p.11), shifting to think with post-living-theory.

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[18] I add the brackets to show that traditionally ontology is the theory of being, however, Barad (2007) argues there is no such thing as being rather everything is in a process of becoming in every moment.

I continued to use words such as 'I' and 'my' with the recognition that these words are insufficient to communicate the complexities of such a concept (Wyatt, 2019). If I am my body, am I also the billions of bacteria that are hosted by my flesh? If I am my thoughts, how can I differentiate what are my thoughts and what are there because of the time and space I was born in? What thoughts are from the books I read or the conversations I had or the television programmes I watched? If I am my soul, where is it that I can point to and say, "there is my soul"? The more I try to pin down what is me, the more it slips away and yet my thesis home is a self-study regardless of the challenges. I continued to use my own experiences and relationships to research, recognising that these are not separate from anyone or anything else, and yet they are recognisable and help explain the knowledge I created and has simultaneously created me. I recognise the problems of using personal pronouns and yet I had and still have a burning need to tell my story and the stories of those I work with – "they need telling" (Wyatt, 2019, p.129).

The experience of creating my thesis home has certainly been a process of becoming. I am not the same person I was on entering my thesis home and what I discovered during my time here has not been what I expected. However, I also discovered my need for being, where I put down seeking new learning, experiences and understanding, and allow my thoughts and feelings to pass over me, allowing the observer within to observe (Tolle, 2004). Through Contemplative Inquiry (Haynes, 2005), this non-doing has allowed a different type of knowledge to emerge. One that cannot be explained, but just is – it's being not doing. I realise from living in my thesis home, that practice overlays both being and becoming and has therefore led me to realise that practice is not my professional paid work, but rather I am always undertaking a form of practice. Even being is expressed as a practice, as our nature is to be thinking and doing and to stop and observe and be, takes practice. Hence, I practice

meditation, yoga, tai chi, and other forms of contemplative practice to help me be mindful (Kabat Zinn, 1994) and allow myself to be. Becoming takes practice and I moved on Living Theory to be not just a research practice and a way of life as Whitehead (2018a) defines it, but rather to move it on to facilitate my becoming in the creation of my post-living-theory.

Intersectionality

My thesis home sits at the intersections of these debates and does not attempt to provide a solution to them. I recognise the concepts of different assemblages of caring; quantitative; qualitative; post-qualitative; humanism; posthumanism; being and becoming, all do something different and each has brought something important to my thesis home. Sometimes understanding the shortcomings has been as or even more useful than the benefits. Rather than offer what I have to say as 'the answer', I am agreeing with Ken Wilber that each perspective and philosophy has something to offer. Rather than assuming, that because there are limitations in each of the debates, in these intersecting streets, that none of them is important. I choose to see "that each … is important" (Wilber, 2017, P.134). However, none of them is the *only* one that is important. Therefore, I make no apology for positioning my thesis home in the middle of these debates and providing no single answer to them. Like a flowing river (Brinkman,2017), we are always in the middle (Deleuze and Parnet, 2007), where there is no right or wrong, there is only repetition and difference (Deleuze, 1994). Rather than present 'the truth', I aim to influence practice improvement that will make small parts of the world a better place. Let's step back inside and take a tour of the rest of the house, to see if I can achieve my aim.

Kitchen – ~~methodology~~

Host

Welcome to the Kitchen which, in my thesis home, acts as a metaphor for a methodology chapter. I am going to start by telling you what has gone into the preparation of the meal and then about some of my previous cooking exploits when I cooked up a previous thesis draft. In that draft, I had carefully gathered my ingredients and crafted my unique recipe and was surprised and at a loss to discover my Living Theory chefs that had been helping me prepare my meal didn't think the dish presented was ready for consumption. The chefs were clear that the dish I had produced was far from meeting the requirements for a thesis meal, and told me they felt it needed a lot more refining before my dish could be presented to my diners. As I explore the remnants of that attempt in the kitchen, I will explain how my response developed into my antimethodology (Nordstrom, 2017) as my thinking moved. The chefs who supported me changed along the way, as I found the humanistic/qualitative ingredients of Living Theory that my initial chefs who helped me in the kitchen brought, were limiting and unethical (Clarke, 2018). As I embraced the posthuman/post-qualitative cooking that I used it to think with, I was able to rethink humanistic ideas and think with post-living-theory. I found new chefs to provide me with posthuman/post-qualitative cooking guidance. I was unable to influence the chefs I began working with, so I found my response to feeling stuck.

Initially I had avoided posthuman/post-qualitative approaches, which are based on the complex ontology (theory of being) of Deleuze, because the language had put me off. I met Jamie McPhie when I began my PhD and he was finishing his. His work sounded fascinating, but the language was so challenging I rejected looking into it because I wanted my thesis to be accessible to people

to read. However, when I got stuck being able to combine all the elements within my thesis, which I had thought Living Theory would enable, McPhie suggested posthuman/post-qualitative reading. I realised it would provide me with the freedom from constraint and the creativity I needed to hold the many areas of my thesis together. I had felt my emerging knowledge was being strangled by the constraint, in what de Sousa Santos (2016) calls epistemicide. Meaning, literally, the killing of knowledge; in his case, of Indigenous peoples of what de Sousa Santos calls the Global South[19], and in my case of the knowledge of my minoritarian experience of growing up in care. Only a minority of the population experience living in care, and I used my experience to talk my truth to power by sharing my experiences with professionals and councillors as part of my process of becoming.

I endeavour to navigate the language, as each concept has become an ingredient, intending to help you, the reader, savour the new flavours. I encourage patience as the meanings will become clearer over time, as my immersion into reading allowed me to gain a greater understanding. However, as I explained in the bathroom about diffraction, trying to give a stable definition is not possible, as post-qualitative ideas are always on the move – always in a process of becoming (Jackson and Mazzei, 2017). I will, however, provide the understandings that I came to from my reading to guide you, the reader, to help understand the flavours I am adding. I encourage you to try them, even if you might not like the taste at first and see what they do to the meal. Even if some of the flavours don't suit your palate, I urge you to continue consuming the meal, as there are many different flavours and some may be more to your taste.

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[19] The term Global South functions as more than a metaphor for underdevelopment. It references an entire history of colonialism, neo-imperialism, and differential economic and social change through which large inequalities in living standards, life expectancy, and access to resources are maintained (Dados and Connell, 2012, p.13).

Preparing the Dish

We will have a meal made from my fusion recipe, where I bring together my approaches to my research using methodological inventiveness (Dadds and Hart, 2001).

Meta-host

I am not sure that a recipe or methodological inventiveness fits anymore. Dadd's and Hart (2001) describe a researcher's methodological inventiveness as "creating their own unique way through their research" p.166). Whitehead (2008) relates methodological inventiveness to the creation of a living-theory -

> *rather than referring to some overarching set of principles to which each individual's methodology has to conform, in an impositional sense of the word. There are however distinguishing qualities of a living theory methodology that include 'I' as a living contradiction, the use of action reflection cycles, the use of procedures of personal and social validation and the inclusion of a life-affirming energy with values as explanatory principles of educational influence (p.9).*

When I tried cooking this thesis meal before (Hutchison, 2018), my attempts fitted Dadds and Hart's (2001) idea of creating my unique methodological recipe where I sought to include the distinguishing qualities. However, my experience was that despite Whitehead's distinction between an overarching set of principles and distinguishing qualities, in the end these perform in the same way – they limit the dish to remain in a qualitative paradigm. As my cooking style developed beyond methodology and became a post-qualitative inquiry (St Pierre, 2021), I was no longer accepted within the Living Theory cooking school by the chefs who initially trained me. Instead, I was judged to be creating what

they deemed to be a narrative inquiry or creative writing. Although my thesis contains narrative and creativity in my writing, I am aware that this is a limited view from a qualitative paradigm. The feedback to my meal helped me realise that I was not able to create a living-theory as it is confined to a qualitative paradigm. Rather I am creating a post-living-theory, which is doing something different. The difference sits in breaking free of the qualitative constraints of creating a living-theory. Like St. Pierre (2014), I became "weary from defending a qualitative methodology I'd never been able to reconcile with postmodernism, I, and others, again took up its critique focusing especially on ontological issues" (p.3).

Whitehead (2021) argues Living Theory addresses posthumanism through his idea of life-affirming energy, which he calls cosmological – that is pre and posthuman (101:05). However, posthumanism is not just the inclusion of concepts that are posthuman, it's an ontological shift from humanism. Language matters (Barad, 2007) and the focus on the "flourishing of humanity" (Whitehead, 1989), positions Living Theory as humanistic. Orlikowski and Scott (2015) "view materiality as constitutively entangled with discourse in practice, not separate from, prior to, or distinct from discourse and practice" (p.703). Therefore, the focus on humanity (Whitehead, 2020) is entangled with what is considered living within Living Theory. However, post-living-theory takes an ontologically different approach to what is 'living' and does not reserve this for humans, animals, trees, but all matter (Pradhan and Singh (2015). To assume there is a separation between living and non-living is an ontological return to binary thinking (Waterhouse, 2011). Therefore, as non-living things are entangled with living things, the assemblages are living. My post-living-theory is not focused on 'I' as a separate being, rather an entangled being with non-humans in various assemblages, which I refer to as 'caring-with'. These get cooked up, not through a methodological inventiveness (Dadds and Hart, 2001),

which ontologically could never make such a shift. Rather, like Waterhouse (2011), my "Qualitative inquiry is reinvented … – not a procedural method, but rather a conceptual mindset. The result is a (non)method, an immanent experiment, in which data are transgressive, analysis is rhizomatic[20], and reporting is cartography (i.e., mapping)" (p.17). Developing Jackson and Mazzei's (2012) concept further to think with post-living-theory, which is neither an overarching set of principles nor distinguishing qualities (Whitehead, 2008). Rather it's using theory and concepts to take thinking to a different place.

St Pierre has become critical of mixing post-qualitative and qualitative approaches (St Pierre, 2014). However, Nordstrom (2017) says that "a new meeting, or an unholy agreement, is always possible" (p.220). As I problematised, questioned and turned round these qualitative/humanistic ingredients, aiming to find out what they do, I came to understand the inequity of the dualistic roots of the ingredients. However, I cannot deny their influence on my inquiry and thinking. To use them, I took care to wash them thoroughly, prepare and chop the blemishes away, to address the potential injustice, inequity and ethics of using qualitative/humanistic approaches. I found that despite attempts to the contrary, qualitative/humanistic approaches can end up being more about the ego of the self, at the cost and expense of the other. Researchers can end up defending a position, rather than being open to generating new and different thinking. Equally, researchers can end up in conflict, which led to the so-called "paradigm wars" of the 1980s (Munoz-Najar Galvez et al., 2020). I accepted the entangled nature of 'I' with others and realised that 'I' cannot keep myself separate. As Barad (2007) advises, I

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[20] Rhizomatic is a metaphorical way of researching based on plants that are rhizomes such as ginger which do not grow hierarchically with roots at the bottom and shoots upwards, rather they grow in all directions.

accepted an ethico-onto-epistemological response-ability[21]. I mean by this that I recognised the mutual response (Warfield, 2020, p.19) my inquiry has had on ways of doing/being/knowing (Kuby, 2017, p.877) as both the human (me and others) and the non-human (for example my laptop, teddy and cooker are all examples I discuss during the tour) are acting and acted upon which has changed who we have become and are becoming, as this meal will be cooked up during this tour.

Host

That's right, I wrote so many papers referring to my methodological inventiveness that I had not recognised the shift to my cooking style. Thinking with theory comes from being able to draw on a wide range of literature that I was able to then think with. The type of literature changes the flavour. Spivak (2014) describes thinking with theory;

> When we are reading this way, we are internalizing. Theorizing is a practice. Our own way of thinking changes, so that when we are reading, all of the theoretical reading begins to organize our reading, not because we are applying it. Reading theory is like athletics. First-class athletes do not think about moves they make. They do not "apply" what they have been taught. It comes in as a reflex (p.77).

As I wrote, I was immersed in the literature with books by my side, pdfs open on my laptop and papers being read to me on my phone. I felt the theories infuse my own, as new creations have emerged. I entangled humanistic with posthumanistic ideas in an attempt to address the ethical issues and they have created a different dish. By entangled, I mean it as Barad (2007) does, from the field of quantum physics where what is entangled is reconfigured. That it's "impossible to differentiate in any absolute sense between creation and

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[21] Response-ability means our ability to respond mutually with human and nonhuman others – to act and be acted upon.

renewal, beginning and returning, continuity and discontinuity, here and there, past and future" (p.ix). Humanism places humans as central and focuses on being, whereas posthumanism decentres humans and focuses on becoming (Brinkmann, 2017). I used posthuman ideas to be critical and creative in my critique of humanistic ideas, that I previously saw as ethical and now see as flawed. These posthuman ideas helped shift my research from trying to create a living-theory to a post-living-theory which I was then able to think with and use to improve my practices in a way that addressed the ethico-onto-epistemological concerns I had with living-theories.

I followed the normative ethical expectations of a thesis and gained ethical approval for my studies from the University of Cumbria. As a self-study gaining ethical permission is challenging (Short *et al.*, 2013). I wrote in my ethics form;

> As I am studying my practice ... it means 'everything' becomes part of my research so gaining informed consent can be difficult as it is hard to cover 'everything' in a consent form. Blair (2013) overcame this by 'sending redrafted copies of the thesis … so that there is an opportunity for consent to be renegotiated' (p.30). I plan to do this for those involved in the research (Hutchison, 2014, n.p.).

I followed my officially agreed ethics and everyone who is included with unpublished data gave their permission and signed a consent form to be named and included within the thesis. However, in the process of renegotiating permission, I discovered that the stories of ruin (Lather, 2012) that I included, due to my move to post-inquiry, meant I needed to remove *some* stories, as ethical permissions were not granted. Wyatt (2019) considers the ethics of the inclusion of or 'not naming or not remembering' (p.141) stories as the ethics of inclusion or exclusion are complex and part of the process of the becoming of the thesis. I wanted to be as accurate as possible, although I found that it's challenging to gain ethical permission for stories of 'failed practices' (Jackson

and Mazzei, 2008, p.314) and therefore many of the stories were removed or anonymised. These stories remain entangled with those others involved in the ruin, although I only identify those who gave their explicit consent.

I am cautious to only share stories where I have explicit, signed permission from those involved, however there is a danger of binary thinking (Waterhouse, 2011) to consider ethics as a separate process. Rather than have a separate ethics section, which could suggest ethics are separate from the rest of my thesis and that the ethical requirements are met once I fulfilled what it says on my ethics form. Instead, I continually question the ethical considerations in my processes of gaining knowledge and becoming throughout my thesis home. As I introduced in the Entrance Hall, ethics, ways of knowing and being are an assemblage – an ethico-onto-epistemological assemblage (Barad, 2007). They are on a plane of immanence where we are all in a process of becoming and hierarchies are flattened. 'Immanence is about the processes of producing flows of life, not governed by transcendence[22] or a system of laws and relations (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) (Kuby, 2017, p.884). The human and non-human others with whom I lived in my thesis home, my ethics, knowing and being are all entangled. In preparing this meal I haven't been able to separate one from the other. Instead, I continually turned them over and over and asked, 'what might this assemblage do (Barad, 2014; Jun and Smith, 2011)?' I think this creates a greater response-ability (Barad, 2007), as I remain responsive to the implications of the entangled ethical becomings of my thesis home.

The meal is not just the food preparation but the presentation, and I want the freedom to leave that messy (McPhie, 2014) and not tidy up all the ethico-onto-

[22] Transcendence is ontologically hierarchical which can lead to inequity, racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia as well as environmental destruction as non-humans are seen as less important than humans.

epistemological edges. Not only do I think that is impossible, I think even if it were possible, it's unnecessary. In the ripped and frayed (Higgins, *et al.*, 2017, p.18) edges of my patchwork tablecloth, there is interesting learning and new becomings.

> Patchwork uses "odds and ends of colored fabric in all possible shapes" (Faulkner, quoted in Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.476) that are ripped and frayed from the striated bolts. These fabric pieces can be thought of as the ruins of the striated methodologies of conventional qualitative research (Higgins *et al.*, 2017, p.18).

My cooking has let go of trying to pin down or follow any recipe, even loosely, as I attempted in my first thesis draft. As St Pierre says 'There is no recipe, no process' (2018, p.604). My experience has been that this meal began making itself and me, and I was as much part of the process as I was the creator. As Adler says, "The individual is thus both the picture and the artist" (Adler, 1956, p.77) or in my case the meal and the cook, the home and the resident, as we have been made through the research. Warfield (2020) expresses my realisation in her thesis, "This methodology was not of my making. To assume that anything is made in research by the magical solitude of the researcher is at once humanistic, selfish, and frankly delusional. This methodology became with and through …" (p.164). The with and through for me are many, both human and non-human. I had such a large quantity of data that involved humans and non-humans, that I came to rely on letting the data glow (Maclure, 2013) to help me decide what to include. I have added these as practice examples and stories. I thought and felt with and through data that included my childhood diaries and adult journals, sketch pads, documents from my work, news articles, photos, memories, conferences, presentations and videos of presentations, research papers, emails, walking and talking, talking face-to-face videoed or not, over the phone or internet. Then there is the literature that I consumed from books, pdfs and listening on my headphones as I walked,

drove, sat in trains, cars and buses, as I passed through landscapes. The list is long and has formed many different assemblages. Assemblages are the coming together and re-coming together of different flavours in my dish, each ingredient changed the flavour and with it has shifted my understanding. An assemblage is made up of many multiplicities, as no person or piece of 'data' can be singular, as we are all entangled (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987).

My 'I' has developed into a feminist posthuman (Warfield, K. 2019) 'I'. At the simplest level my 'I' is not a single straightforward unified voice as I attempted to show through my storyteller, host and meta-host voices, throughout the tour of my thesis home. Each voice is or has a multiplicity of influences. These are not the only voices I have however, and as my thesis home began to take shape they served to bring the criticality and creativity that the single voice missed in my first thesis draft. The idea developed at a leadership course at the University of Cumbria through conversations with Jamie McPhie before he became my supervisor, David Murphy and others on the course. They helped me begin the reterritorialization of my thesis from a straightforward Living Theory thesis to incorporating feminist, posthuman and post-qualitative approaches that have led to my post-living-theory. Also, thinking with theory that was beginning to happen, as I was introduced to papers by Donna Haraway (2016), Maggie MacLure (2013), Lisa Mazzei (2016), Alecia Jackson (Mazzei and Jackson, 2017) and Elizabeth St Pierre (2019). The three voices method of writing developed into a published paper in the Action Learning and Action Research Journal (ALARJ) (Hutchison, 2020) based on a presentation I made at the conference the summer before in Croatia. The voices have been in a process of becoming and have morphed from narrators to hosts, as fitted the metaphor of my thesis home.

I came to embrace that my 'I' is not an island set apart but intra-acted with my human and non-human collaborators in building my thesis home. These intra-actions have developed rhizomatically, as I grew in, and with, what for me has been transformative intra-relationships[23] (Barad, 2007), but that research reduces to data and literature. Building my thesis home has been a process of becoming and 'I' will never be the same and neither will my human and non-human travelling companions. "By authoring a (thesis), (I) authored (my) own destruction: (I) brought difference into (my) being. For one cannot write of oneself without entirely undoing oneself" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2007). Due to the affective nature of my research, I draw on Gabor Maté's ideas on Compassionate Inquiry (Maté, 2011). Maté has developed Compassionate Inquiry as "a psychotherapeutic approach … that reveals what lies beneath the appearance we present to the world" (Maté, 2021). I am drawing on it as an approach to my self-study. By being compassionate and curious it has provided me with the self-care I needed to enquire into some of the more painful areas of my research. I also draw on Contemplative Inquiry as my spiritual practices of meditation have increased. "Contemplative Inquiry may help to integrate diverse fields of knowledge as well as to deepen them individually" (Wallace, 1996, p.17). This provided me with the opportunity to contemplate the becomings of this thesis, in the eternal return (Pearson, 1997). The forms of inquiry add extra depth to the flavours of the cooking.

I am affected and that has developed my learning and has motivated me to continue with this PhD to affect others. I continued this process, not just as introspection and self-reflection, as useful as that was, but rather to do

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[23] '"identities" are mutually constituted and (re)configured through one another in dynamic intra-relationship with the iterative (re)configuring of relations of power'. Barad, 2007, p.241-2

something that will make a change in the world. What Gale *et al.* (2019) call activism, of reaching out to the world through doing, acting and dancing. When I am in a good place, I dance in the kitchen with my partner, we touch, sway, laugh, feel – affect each other. It's not cooking as such, but it becomes part of the assemblage of the meal – adding the ingredients of joy to what is being cooked. I will attempt to dance as we cook this meal together, but first I must tell you how the early attempts stopped the dancing for a while and how I returned to the dance.

The Washing and Preparation of my Ingredients with Posthuman/post-qualitative Inquiry

Storyteller

Preparing a PhD meal has not been a lone endeavour, many people have helped me in the kitchen. I was supervised by several chefs who held different paradigms when it came to cooking up my thesis meal. For the first four years, the chefs I worked with came from a humanistic and qualitative school of cookery. After my initial four years of careful preparation of my PhD meal. I came to a point where I felt I had perfected the recipe, prepared the meal and had brought it for the chefs I had been working with to taste, with the hope they might suggest an extra spice or two and then I would be ready to present it for my diners. We organised a tasting session but I misunderstood and thought they wanted me to be able to defend the meal I had prepared for them, and I was determined to be able to do this. I told them, "I would defend my PhD to the hilt". before I had a chance However, each chef agreed they felt the meal was a long way from being ready. After all the work that had gone into the preparation, I felt very upset. I had to hold back the tears until we

concluded. I went home and cried for a long time with my boyfriend as I was so upset.

Meta-Host:

This incident had a critical affect on me, I resonate with Zembylas, (2014) describing difficult knowledge,

> *the learner experiences affective dissonance (i.e., negative emotions) and struggles to learn from loss: a loss of agency (one's feeling of helplessness); a loss of meaning (one's inability to accommodate his or her affective dissonance); and the "loss of the idea of the social bond" (Britzman, 2000a, p.33; see also Taylor, 2011). The learner, then, cannot escape being deeply affected by the trauma he or she attempts to address. As Britzman (2000b) further explains: "What makes trauma traumatic is the incapacity to respond adequately, accompanied by feelings of profound helplessness and loss, and a sense that no other person or group will intervene. What makes trauma traumatic is the loss of self and other (p.202) (p.394).*

It may sound extreme to call this event traumatic. However, it led to profound feelings of helplessness and loss as I came to realise that I didn't know how to complete my thesis meal and I didn't understand what the humanistic/qualitative chefs were asking me to do. I spent time away, feeling lost. When I returned, I still felt confused and unable to see a way forward. I need to explain how I found my way back before I can continue to explain how I built my new thesis home from the ruins (MacLure, 2011).

Host

I felt at an impasse with the humanistic/qualitative chefs and with my studies. I felt lost and incapable of continuing. Kfir (2011) describes an impasse as signalling "a blocked route ahead of us" (p.15). I was certainly feeling stuck and

didn't know how to continue. I had to find new ways to return to cooking up my thesis meal. Initially I turned to other humanistic thinkers, to explore cooking using more Adlerian Early Recollections, as I found them useful for encouraging insight and change (Maniacci *et al.,* 1998). I had briefly been introduced to Adlerian Early Recollections for the first thesis meal. Adler was a contemporary of Freud, but had fundamental disagreements with Freud. Rather than seeing people as being controlled by their drives, he saw that it was social values that were central (Adler, 1956). I added much more Adlerian flavour, as it has been useful for me to deal with the affective dissonance (Zembylas, 2014) I faced when I felt lost about how to take my cooking style forward. This has helped explain much of how my values have developed from my early life and evolved in my adult practice.

I use my early recollections to show movement in line with post-qualitative approaches. I explore how I was able to use my nature and nurture in a way that gave me hope to change myself and influence change in others. Movement is a principle of Adler's - that people strive for superiority, to move from perceived inferiority feelings to the goal of superiority or success (Feist and Feist, 2009). I use Adlerian syllogisms to show the action statements that I interpret from my early recollections. These help to show how I created the movement for myself in a way that helped me seek success, overcome the difficulties in my childhood and influence my practice as an adult. Adlerian Psychology is humanistic, as it's focused on human social interest.

Initially, the humanistic ideas were enough to help find some movement beyond the impasse. However, I continued to feel confined as I tried to respond to the humanistic/qualitative chef's views. I began seeking new ways of thinking and researching. The posthuman/post-qualitative reading suggested by new chefs immediately gave me a sense of liberation. Rather than feeling I had to make

my research fit within the Living Theory style of cooking, I felt I could allow my thinking, writing and research to move beyond those constraints, to my own posthuman/post-qualitative dish. In preparing this meal I decided instead of disregarding humanistic/qualitative ingredients, to wash and prepare them in a new way to take into account their ethico-onto-epistemological (Barad, 2007) implications. As a broad concept, "humanism has spawned a variety of knowledge projects. It has, in fact, been used by liberals, Nazis, feminists, Marxists, Christians, Catholics and other groups in the production of truth" (St. Pierre, 2000). Therefore, humanism is not, in and of itself, ethical. Rather the hierarchy of humans within the paradigm creates inequity and binaries (Cirell and Sweet, 2020). However, I found it difficult to see the effects and affects of humanism, as it's such a part of our everyday life.

I attempted to not repeat the problems of humanism by pitting it against posthumanism. Instead, I tried to respond to what St. Pierre (2000) calls for, whilst highlighting the challenges I faced in looking at what humanistic concepts do;

> Rather than place them in a binary opposition that allows no movement and inevitably privileges one or the other, we might, as we attempt to describe them, look at how they function in the world. This is an enormously difficult task since the language, practice, and effects of humanism have been operating for centuries, envelop us every moment, and have become "natural." Humanism is the air we breathe, the language we speak, the shape of the homes we live in, the relations we are able to have with others, the politics we practice, the map that locates us on the earth, the futures we can imagine, the limits of our pleasures. Humanism is everywhere, overwhelming in its totality; and, since it is so "natural," it is difficult to watch it work (St. Pierre, 2000, p.479).

I lived in a humanistic thesis home for the first four years of my research and the meal I cooked was humanistic (Hutchison, 2018). To do something different, I created new assemblages and aimed to address the oppressive roots from which the ingredients of humanistic thinking have come. I attempted to become posthuman, to create movement, and re-work the humanistic ideas to become more ethical. Therefore, throughout my thesis home, I will re-think humanistic ideas from a posthuman perspective as I wash my ingredients and allow the aromas of the newly created posthuman/post-qualitative meal fill each room.

I will begin by washing my Adlerian ingredients with a posthuman/post-qualitative rinse. Adler said, "Trust only movement. Life happens at the level of events, not of words. Trust movement" (as cited in Mosak and Maniacci, 1999, p.86). Gale and Wyatt (2019) come from a posthuman/post-qualitative approach that says research "is about movement, intensity, and potentiality … it lives in the creation of the next moment; the next step into the not yet known" (p.568). So rather than take the Adlerian ideas as fixed I will trust only movement and think of them in the creation of the next moment.

When I was told my thesis meal was far from ready, I experienced the movement as a discouragement of all my Crucial Cs, which Lew and Bettner (1996) name as capable; count; connection; courage. Lew and Bettner have developed these from Adler's four psychological requirements (Adler, 1956) which they adapted; belonging becomes connect; improve becomes capable; significance becomes count; encouragement becomes courage.

The feedback on my thesis meal in 2018 had the affect that I felt unable to continue, as I didn't understand what I needed to do. This moved me to feel like I was not "capable" and left me feeling inadequate. As I realized my hard work was not good enough, I felt I didn't "count", which moved me to feel physical

pain. As all the chefs agreed my meal was not ready, I felt they were united in their view, which felt against me. I felt a loss of "connection", which moved me to me feel insecure. Finally, I felt I had lost my "courage" to bring what I thought I knew in my research, and whilst I didn't give up completely, I effectively ran away by going travelling for three and a half months. Understanding the movement through the concept of my Crucial Cs being discouraged, helped me understand why it had such a long-lasting and unusually large affect on me.

By connecting the Crucial Cs to my early recollections and Adlerian syllogisms, I began to create movement towards encouragement. I needed this encouragement to find a way to allow the creativity to return to my cooking. Unlike the Greek meaning of syllogism (a type of logical argument (Hagen, 2012) that applies deductive reasoning to arrive at propositions that are assumed to be true and generalisable (Stalker, 2019)), An Adlerian syllogism is a way to understand private logic. Private logic is a person's unique way of making sense of the world that helps them to reach their goals (Milliren *et al.*, 2008). I created an Adlerian syllogism, which was:

> I am … stuck
> Others are … not making sense
> The world is … seeming impossible
> Therefore I … need to find my own way out of here because no one else can help me. I need to take a break, to take stock and find the solution.

I explore caring-with-resilience in the Playroom.

My action statement (Therefore I …) shows the movement towards finding a solution on my own, which is in line with my private logic. This is because I know I have resilience to overcome difficult situations, due to the evidence I gathered over my life of the many times I experienced overcoming painful experiences. However, I also learnt that

a good strategy to be able to overcome is to practice self-care, and taking a break is a healthy way to achieve my goal of being able to find my own solution. My private logic is healthy, as I am both aware of my need to take care of myself and my desire to find a solution. I neither want to stay and be hurt more nor give up.

Meta-host

Post-qualitative approaches are always on the move and encourage a continual process of becoming. However, my Adlerian syllogism is lacking a posthuman perspective. This requires a decentring of the self, to "embrace a research ethic that uses the "I" to look beyond, to others (Pelias, 2005, p.419)" (Wyatt, 2008, p.964). Not just human others, but the things and concepts that are entangled into who 'I' am. Rather than thinking of self as a separate, singular entity, Gale and Wyatt (2017) challenge us to consider that,

> *agency is distributed, that, within an affective plane of immanence, every thing has power, and that the existence of "agentic assemblages," as vibrant confederations of discourses and materials of all kinds, have the power to displace our reliance upon the influence of the autonomous individual human agent (p.360).*

How would it be to consider me as an assemblage with other people, ideas and things that create continual movement? As I prepare my Adlerian ingredients using a post-qualitative approach and wash them with a posthuman rinse, I change the nature of the ideas ethically, ontologically and epistemologically. Adler considered individuals as needing to have social interest to be healthy (Adler, 2005). However, becoming posthuman moves social interest on, by recognising that we are within everything else and everything else is within us – there is no single entity to have social interest – we become social interest. Social is not limited to the human but includes all the things, physical (bodies, laptops, books) and metaphysical (thoughts, concepts, feelings). How does

considering Adlerian ideas as posthuman change the ethico-onto-epistemological nature of the experience?

Host

That is helpful to move my thinking on further. My lifestyle means that I don't stay on my own for long. However, in posthuman terms, this would be impossible, as there is no separate self to be alone. Lifestyle in Adlerian terms means "a cognitive map or self-created plan for navigating through life" (Milliren *et al.*, 2008, p.83). Thinking about self-created as distributed agency moves me away from claiming an individual influence, as the influences are entangled and impossible to separate. This is a paradigmatic shift in preparing my meal. Previously I was following the Living Theory school of cookery which separates the educational influences into "own learning, the learning of others and the learning of social formations" (Whitehead, 1989), as though these could be separated. Rather than creating a living-theory, as my first meal attempted, I am now attempting to create a post-living-theory meal that will be messier, as it will be on the move, even as we attempt to eat it. The flavours will be difficult to identify as they will become something else in the process of their making. Everyone who partakes of the meal will become entangled and experience the flavour differently as they consume it.

Looking at what the syllogisms do in my thesis, they are in constant movement from a posthuman perspective. My syllogism states that I saw myself as a separate individual who could find my own way, or that no one could help me. I now realise from a posthuman perspective there is no separate self. The humanistic perspective was creating a concept of being alone that was disabling. As I came to embrace being posthuman, I came to see I was never alone. Rather the humans and non-humans around me were in a constant process of becoming with me and my ideas (Somers-Hall, 2013). I developed

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many assemblages with other researchers, colleagues, concepts, places and things which have all been added to the posthuman/post-qualitative meal.

The ingredients of Adlerian syllogisms have been added to show the movement I pursue from my early recollections. It's not important whether my memories of my values are accurate or even true (Adler, 2005, p.79), rather that they help me "meet the future with an already tested plan of action" (Adler, cited in Powers and Griffith, 1987, p.187). My values are added to the dish, not as is meant in a humanistic view of Living Theory, where those values are seen as individually formed and unique to the individual. Rather, as posthuman development entangled with other humans and non-humans that continue to develop throughout my life. In addition, I will explore the strengths I developed from those assemblages.

Adlerian theory recognises strengths that make up our lifestyle as are our key strategies for achieving our goals in life or purpose in life (Milliren *et al.*, 2008, p.83). Adler said that "memories are reminders we carry with us, of our limits, and strengths, and the meaning of circumstances" (Adler, 1956 p.351). My early recollections have helped me to understand my strengths and how I use my lifestyle as strengths. For example, I had not realised that containment is so strong in my lifestyle. I had thought I was good at articulating my feelings. However, by videoing my responses as I was trying to cook my thesis meal, I came to realise my containment. Being contained was useful as a child to keep me safe and is useful for managing stressful situations at work, however it's not useful when expressing my feelings to others. This has led to exploring affect (Guy and Mastracci, 2018) as an important aspect of my research, as I changed to create a post-qualitative dish.

In the transition from cooking a living-theory to a post-living-theory, I realised Living Theory's humanistic/qualitative approach, despite attempts to be living and therefore on the move, ends up having a hierarchical and fixed nature. Researchers must fit within the codes and descriptors identified by Williamson and Whitehead (2021) in their living meta-analysis. As I shared my writing with some humanistic/qualitative chefs they were not open to the reinterpretations of Living Theory. Rather than try to fit it in the paradigm or abandon the ideas that are useful in Living Theory, I washed and prepared them as posthuman/post-qualitative. I changing them to become a post-living-theory adding difference to, rather than severing, ignoring or colonising.

There is a criticism Whitehead "uses living theory and living educational theory interchangeably so it's difficult for a reader to know what he is writing about" (Infogalactic, 2016). To be clear, I am using Living Theory as a shortening of Living Educational Theory (LET), by which I mean the original concept developed by Whitehead (1989). I will use Living Theory unless discussing something someone else wrote where they used LET, in which case, I will use that acronym. The capitals represent the approach. When I use the term living-theory, it's a shortening of living-educational-theory and is referring to the unique inquiry of a researcher using a Living Theory approach.

I am attempting to open up a space for Living Theory to develop as a rhizome. By this, I mean that how it develops is not held from a central point of power, as in a hierarchical structure. Rather it can be developed from all points of connection, not in a way that tries to overpower, as the ongoing Wikipedia entry for Living Educational Theory (Wikipedia Contributors, 2021) does, placing William Barry as central to Living Theory. At the time of writing, it has one line at the end of the entry about Whitehead, who is named as the originator of the approach. However, Barry references Whitehead clearly in his thesis (Barry, 2012).

Accounts on the internet place William Barry as the 'saviour' of Living Theory when Whitehead and McNiff separated ways. "American Professor William Barry believed the concept of LET was too important and found a dialectic between McNiff and Whitehead and he created a new understanding of LET" (Infogalactic, 2016). However, Whitehead continued to develop his work on Living Theory, even though Barry is claimed to take proprietary ownership of LET. This led to a narrative that Barry was the first person to clearly define Living Theory, which is being taught in the Atlantic International University on their Theories of Learning - Open Courses, even though he had used the established and clearly defined approach as coined by Whitehead as the basis of his thesis (Barry, 2013). The slippage extends in the course material that calls Barry the "definer and creator of LET" (Atlantic International University, 2021). These sources claim the concept of Living Theory as being owned by another in a move of deterritorializing[24], rather than to be generous and allow the concept to be nomadic and grow in all directions, as a rhizome (Fox, 2002).

I am not wanting to deterritorialize Living Theory in the colonial sense of taking it over and claiming it as mine, as the sources I referenced show Barry has been attributed to doing. Rather, I want to territorialize beyond Living Theory and create new territories for my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality to grow in new ways that are expanding beyond the current limits of Living Theory. My post-living-theory has become a rhizome and grown into new areas that I was unable to find a way to develop within Living Theory, as the ethico-onto-epistemological foundations are different.

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[24] Deterritorialization is a concept Deleuze and Guattari (1994) created to describe the separation of people from their practices. Reterritorialization is a concept of restructuring people's practices or reconnecting people with their practices in a different place. Territorialization is a process of creating new places.

> Countless scientists have seen their 'move' ignored or repressed, sometimes for decades, because it too abruptly destabilized the accepted positions … The stronger the 'move' the more likely it is to be denied the minimum consensus, precisely because it changes the rules of the game upon which the consensus has been based. But when the institution of knowledge functions in this manner, it is acting like an ordinary power center whose behaviour is governed by a principle of homeostasis (Lyotard, 1986, p.64).

I found this when I developed my ideas and showed them to some humanistic/qualitative chefs, who were unable to be open to the influences that posthuman/post-qualitative research might have for developing Living Theory. Rather than a generative cooking experience that has expanded the field of Living Theory, my thesis home has been built from researching in the ruins (Lather, 1997) of my initial thesis draft (Hutchison, 2018). Therefore, I feel it's important to explain the reasons for the shift in direction, to provide context for the shift and not to produce a smooth story (MacLure, 1996).

As I shared my struggles with other researchers, I heard and read about other people's experiences. I realised I am not alone in experiencing the challenge of trying to write a thesis that remains authentic to my inquiry. The Authentic Dissertation (Jacobs, 2008) presents dissertations that use "unorthodox processes for both research and its presentation" (p.4). The researchers' stories are punctuated with struggles to have their work accepted. Whitehead experienced his own long struggle to get his ideas accepted with his thesis. As he says: "It has taken this particular snail some 22 years to articulate the ideas in this thesis and the battles have been internal as well as external" (Whitehead, 1999, p.15). Therefore, I am sharing my experiences to encourage others to go through the struggle. Although I would have preferred not to have had such a difficult time finding a way to cook up this thesis meal, I have produced

something that I feel is authentic and has managed to hold together all the ingredients in a way that I am pleased with. I would like to think it could have been done without so much pain, but it's impossible to know and so I am grateful that the process that has created my thesis home.

Caring-with-resistance

Storyteller

I was unable to fully live my values in the process of trying to protect my thesis home. I found I was not living caring-with-mutuality when cooking with my humanistic/qualitative chefs and instead I began caring-with-resistance. In practicing caring-with-resistance, I found that my defensiveness, stubbornness and discouragement prevented me from living my values fully.

Host

It became a post-living-contradiction that to develop my thesis home in the way I wanted to, I found a different line of flight and began operating with caring-with-resistance. By resistance I mean not accepting any limitations on what I wanted to do and not allowing myself, my meal and my thesis home to be controlled or dominated. Villenas (2000) describes resistance as women's "practices of seizing the interviews for their own purposes" (p.85). In other words, not to succumb to the agenda of the person researching them. My situation was different. I found myself resisting my research, succumbing to the humanistic ontology of the chefs I first started cooking with. The caring is both for the purpose I am caring about (in this case building my thesis home) and for the affect of the humanistic ethical, ontological, and epistemological paradigm.

Meta-Host

Is the 'I' that felt all these feelings the egoistic 'I'? Or was it the posthuman 'I'? What difference do these ontologically different 'I's make?

> *One can say that we perceive the things themselves, that we are the world that thinks itself— or that the world is at the heart of our flesh. In any case, once a body-world relationship is recognized, there is a ramification of my body and a ramification of the world and a correspondence between its inside and my outside, between my inside and its outside (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.136).*

What were the ramifications on my body and on the outside world?

Host

There was certainly an experience of the egotistic 'I' being affected. I was concerned about telling those that had supported me, because I felt I had let them down. However, there was a sense of the posthuman 'I', where I was decentred and the thesis was affected. I had written myself into my thesis which distributed my agency (Barad, 2007) through the thesis and I felt the pain of the thesis for the crisis of its being as much as my own. However, this incident led to a total transformation of my thesis despite, or perhaps because of, the ruin (MacLure, 2011). My research moved from only using humanistic/qualitative methods to becoming posthuman. The cooking involved washing and preparing the humanistic/qualitative ingredients with posthuman/post-qualitative thinking, thereby changing their nature.

Image 8 Embodied Affect of Caring-with-resistance

Caring-with-resistance allowed me to get what I wanted in terms of my thesis home; however, the experience was uncomfortable and didn't enable me to influence the thinking of my early humanistic chefs during the process. The affect can be seen in Image 8 which is a photo that has been made into a drawing for ethical reasons of anonymizing the location of the photo. When I look at the drawing, I can see the affect of receiving the feedback from my humanistic/qualitative chefs. The movement is towards discouragement of my Crucial Cs and I can see the pain, frustration and anger I was feeling as I was trying to move into new thinking and was not being understood. I can see myself experiencing caring-with-resistance as the paradigms are clashing. Caring-with-mutuality could have been less painful and made for a more generative experience.

Cooking up a thesis meal takes a multiplicity and if the help in the kitchen works on an ethico-onto-epistemological plane of immanence, the preparation of the meal can be a process of caring-with-mutuality. I included a clip from supervision with my new cooking team.

Video 2 Caring-With-Mutuality Supervision Example (2020)
https://youtu.be/aijBTX4nmwI

My supervisors have given me ethical permission to include this video. In the clip, we are talking about concepts such as alongsideness (Pound, 2003) and co-creating (Maull, 2019), which I included in my writing and which introduced new ideas to my supervisors. The conversation feels generative, as we build on each other's perspectives about the concepts we are discussing. Briganti (2020) calls "generativity, a force that creates anew over and above what has been done so far" (p.66). Although it's my thesis, I can feel my supervisors' excitement about the concepts I am introducing. My new supervision team have both expressed enjoying supervision and finding it stimulating for them, and I enjoy it and find it extremely useful in developing my ideas and writing. The clip shows me developing my ideas with them as I talk to them about whether I should call what I am doing caring as mutuality or caring-with-mutuality. Even though I am feeling confused in the discussion, I feel encouraged and able to

develop my ideas further. Our gestes are showing our pleasure at developing the ideas together.

Returning to how my process developed. My initial preparation to try to meet what I felt were the requirements for a Living Theory thesis was to use the "analogy of a recipe to help understand the different 'ingredients' of Living Theory and my living-theory methodology" (Hutchison, 2018, p.27). Whitehead (2018) argues Living Theory only has "distinguishing qualities" (p.9). nevertheless, these are the ingredients that are required to create a living-theory. To divert from them is to no longer be creating a living-theory. My attempt to create a post-living-theory has changed the ethico-onto-epistemological nature of the dish in a process of becoming posthuman/post-qualitative. Rather than having qualities others should apply, instead there are processes and concepts that are useful, such as thinking with theory; rhizomes; becoming; affect. If anyone else desired to create a post-living-theory they could use these and other posthuman/post-qualitative processes, to see what dish they might make from them.

I had created a Living Theory wheel (Hutchison, 2018) in an attempt to make Living Theory more understandable by trying to identify the essential ingredients.
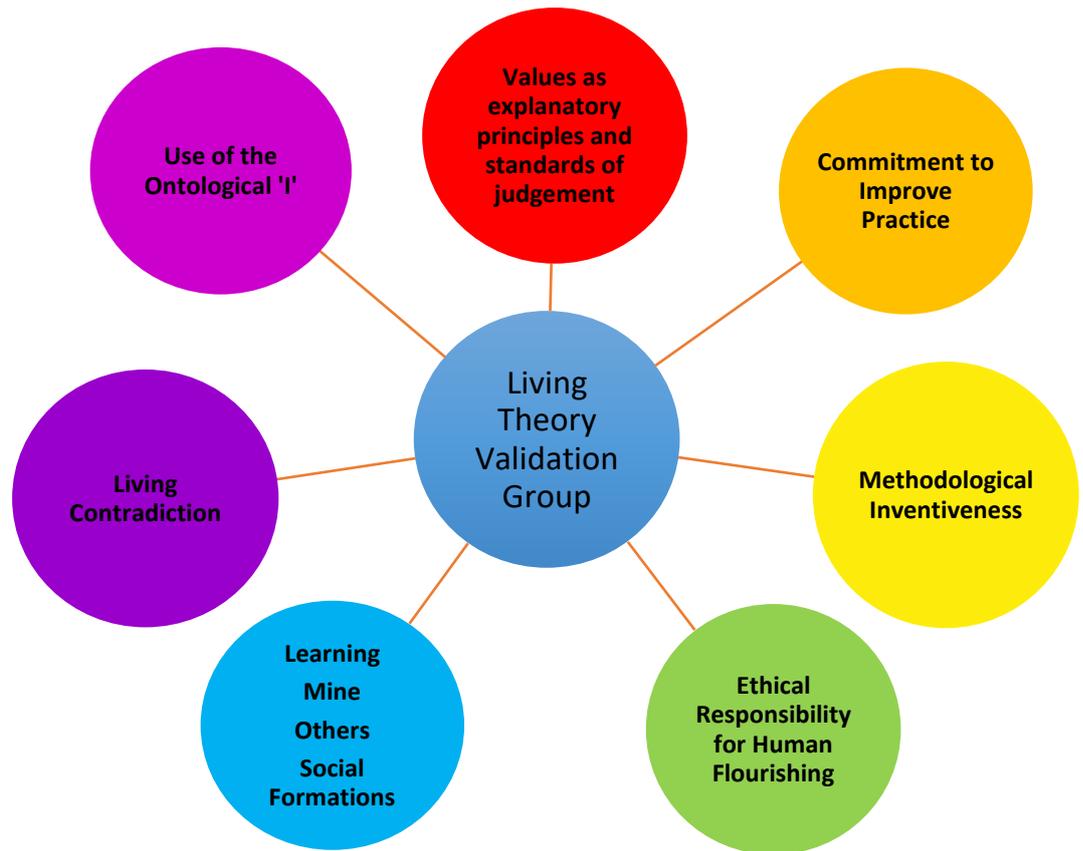
Image 9 Living Theory Wheel

I went into depth into each of these in my previous thesis draft, which I won't do now. Rather I will identify what I did to move on Living Theory by developing post-living-theory. I was consistently told in research groups that I couldn't call what I am doing now Living Theory because it missed an ingredient taken from the clarifying statement Whitehead created that every living-theory must meet to be considered Living Theory. Taken from his 1989 paper, living-theories are "explanations of their educational influences in their own learning, the learning of others and the learning of social formations, in enquiries of the kind, 'How am I improving what I am doing?'" (Whitehead, 1989).

My Living Theory wheel missed out on the ingredient of providing an explanation of my educational influence. I will break down what Whitehead (1999) has said an explanation is from his thesis,

> I explain my present practice in terms of an evaluation of my past learning, in terms of my present experiences of spiritual, aesthetic and ethical contradictions in my educative relations and in terms of my proposals for living my values more fully in the future (p.4).

In my thesis home, I grappled long and hard with my past assemblage as a child in care and how it has influenced my assemblages as a charity leader, digital nomad and partner. I used the post-qualitative concept of "thinking with theory" which "does not follow a particular method; rather, it relies on a willingness to borrow and reconfigure concepts, invent approaches, and create new assemblages that demonstrate a range of analytic practices of thought, creativity, and intervention" (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012, p.717). Thinking with theory has helped me explain my spiritual, aesthetic and ethical contradictions and how they are entangled with the educative relations I have with myself, who is already a multiplicity, and how the assemblages I have with other human and non-human multiplicities are influenced.

Educational is defined by Moira Laidlaw (2018),

> a process in which individuals develop their potential (be it intellectual, emotional, and psychological, and it's usually all three), and ground this greater awareness by taking increasing responsibility for their own learning. I consider what is educational as having to contain learning about one's own existence in the world of others, and ways which can singly and together lead to hope in the flourishing of humanity (p.31).

Meta Host

From a posthuman/post-qualitative stance, that definition has so many problems, which I will quickly run through. The idea of an individual is problematic - where does that individual begin and end? Everyone is made up of the influences of their culture, the people in their lives, their religion or lack of

it, where they grew up and when they grew up. An individual is a multiplicity of those influences and may have many different assemblages throughout their lifetime that makes the idea of an individual difficult to pin down (Mazzei, 2016). The idea of one existing in a world of others, has a dualistic separation, as though there is a separate 'I' existing in a world separate to 'others. Post-qualitative ideas question the very nature of us and them - "all are entangled. In Deleuzo-Guattarian ontology, there is no present, conscious, coherent individual who speaks the truth of her present or her past" (Mazzei, 2016, p.158). Therefore, we are never singly but always together. Limiting flourishing to humanity is problematic, as it could lead to the destruction of non-humans, which has been evident in the evolution of the current capitalist model of human flourishing.

Host

Agreed, there is much to be questioned and problematised in Laidlaw's definition of educational. Joy Mounter has been developing the relationality and interdependency of the 'I',

> In i~we~us Mounter argues the start is the 'I', the interdependent-self, unique but connected to and with the community, 'we'. Mounter, (2017), drawing on Desmond Tutu's expression of 'I' and 'you' to the fullest in collective growth and transformation, the designation of interdependent-relational-self becomes 'us', which she represents as i~we~us (Mounter *et al.,* 2019, p.93).

Posthuman perspectives would question the unique self which is still creating a binary and separation, suggesting that we are always the 'we' and 'us' in Mounter's research. From a posthuman understanding, Mounter's ideas would be expanded to include non-human as well as human intra-relationships. Not as separate entities, but all part of the same plane of immanence. Rather than removing the human, posthumanism is about decentring the human to make

way for more than human influences in learning (O'Donnell, 2018). This is already evident in the learning process in Living Theory, as multi-media representations (Whitehead, 2010; 2013) form part of the process of explanation and learning process (Whitehead, 2019, p.85). I think this adds to Living Theory as, like posthumanism, it's already an approach that does not seek to "bind, restrict, sort, categorize into themes, and classify the meanings of human" (Kuby, 2017, p.884). Living Theory came about from a rejection of the disciplined approach which posthumanism also rejects. Living Theory has shifted from being dialectical (the idea of living contradictions (Whitehead, 1996)) to inclusional (a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries as connective, reflexive and co-creative) (Whitehead, 2019, p.92). These are not mutually exclusive, but rather add to each other. Posthumanism has done the same for me in my development of my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality.

Re-thinking what is educational is not about rejecting the human, but expanding beyond the human. Through accepting that much learning comes from non-human intra-actions (Barad, 2007), the idea of educational can be expanded to be more than human. Rather than separating the educational influence in the learning of myself, others and social formations, I took the opportunity to recognise the entanglements of self, others and social formations. I came to see learning as a process of becoming.

A living-theory is a self-study; however, post-qualitative approaches have decentred the self, "The first-person voice of the self may become multiple, fragmented, or incomplete and in motion—that is, uncertain" (Warfield, 2020, p.167). My three voices provide a constant reminder of the multiple voices. My meta-host is a constant questioner and destabiliser of my host's more certain voice and the fixed story of my storyteller.

Cooking Techniques: Process of Becoming

The 'I' is different and constantly changing when it becomes post-qualitative - "emergence and creation occur in the act of becoming" (Jackson and Mazzei, 2008, p.309). I entered the PhD process to tell my story and my storyteller has allowed that, however my meta-host has deconstructed 'my' story to show "more differences, contradictions, and folds" (Mazzei and Jackson, 2008, p.309). My process of becoming has been an undoing of my certainty of who I am and what I have to say, and changed the nature of the central thesis running through my thesis home. My post-living-theory is more uncertain and more questioning, rather than a complete and tidy point to be made or an easy clarified statement as I attempted to create a living-theory in my earlier draft (Hutchison, 2018). Now I provide a series of different examples, not always consistent, that show what caring-with-mutuality does. I focus on the haecceity (thisness), "an open-ended process, a feeling of flowing, rhythm, or ''becoming''" (Kim and Bianco, 2007, p.70) of my post-living-theory. I will use examples in action and point to the thisness of caring-with-mutuality. This shows the becoming nature of caring-with-mutuality. It's not fixed - it becomes in different spaces and times and is never the same, but has a thisness that can be pointed to. When it happens, I know this is it, but if I try to pin it down and clarify it, I have already lost it - it's already on the move. The process of becoming is in keeping with what Whitehead calls living logics, "moving into living logics can however be risky. You are always on the brink, never knowing what the next step will be. This is a commitment to learning, embracing the unknown future" (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006, p.40). Unlike living logics, post-living-theory never gets to a certain idea that can be clarified. Rather, it remains on the move.

Cooking Techniques: Feminism

On the surface, my meal is made with male thinkers Jack Whitehead, Gilles Deleuze and Alfred Adler. All these male thinkers could be described as feminists (due to their inclusionality (Whitehead and McNiff, 2004) and criticality of patriarchal constructs, ontologies and epistemologies) although they have never described themselves as feminists. They have been influenced by women in their thinking. Whitehead often writes with women (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006; Whitehead *et al.* 2020). Deleuze was influenced by Virginia Wolfe (Deleuze and Parnet, 2007) in his thinking about women-becoming. Adler's wife was a Russian feminist intellectual and social activist who influenced Adler's thinking (Santiago-Valles, 2009).

It still seems strange to be only influenced by men and claim feminism as an ingredient. However, these men are only the start of my influences and many female feminist writers have greatly influenced my antimethodology and have inhabited my thesis home with me. I went back to the original texts of the men themselves. However, often it has been the women influenced by them who have had the greater influence. Warfield (2020) explains "the values that underscore feminist posthumanism: response-ability, justice, and feminist ethics of care" (p.171). These fit with my values and my meaning of caring-with-mutuality. Barad (2014) describes response-ability as "a relation always already integral to the world's ongoing intra-active becoming and not-becoming. It's an iterative (re)opening up to, an enabling of responsiveness" (p.183). In other words, not a singular point in time but something to continually revisit in order to ensure that everyone and everything in my thesis home are treated ethically. Justice, for me, is ensuring humans and non-humans are treated rightly and

fairly - justice is in a constant process of becoming and it is not possible to give it a fixed meaning. However, justice is something I consider in this thesis meal's process of becoming. Feminist ethics of care is to take into account the need for caring-with-mutuality, to not impose what care means but to work with those (humans and non-humans) involved and to recognise the entanglements. Therefore, I recognise the need to tread carefully to ensure no harm is done by that which ended up placed in my thesis home, whilst not wanting to tidy up the frayed edges of my tablecloth in my presentation. I am naturally messy, however it has not been easy to stop myself tidying up my thesis home to make it presentable to you, the reader, to smooth out the stories (MacLure, 1996) so my egoistic self looks better, to keep myself central rather than de-centre myself. My desire to want to have a new shiny tablecloth to present this meal on is strong, rather than one that shows the wear and tear that the process of cooking and being in my thesis house have caused. The process, however challenging it has been at times, has helped me to understand better what I am saying. Therefore, I recognise explaining the process as accurately as possible to help you, the reader, understand.

MacLure (1996) talked about the dangers of "smooth stories of self" (p.283) and as her work has become more post-qualitative the need for showing ruin. My meta-host has worked as the constant reminder to reveal the ruin, failure, bafflement, stuttering, disappointment, getting stuck and lost (MacLure, 2011) that I had in cooking this meal and in my process of becoming, whilst in my thesis home.

Cooking Techniques: Narrative

My storyteller voice is a narrative construction and unquestioningly presents my story from a humanistic perspective with a central 'I'. My meta-host provides the posthuman and post-qualitative questioning acting as a way "in which the human subject (I) is decentred, and methodological certainty, voice and agency are contested" (Arndt and Tesar, 2019, p.135). A criticism I have of posthuman/post-qualitative research is that the language is so complex that it has taken me three years of reading to get on the inside of the concepts. Posthuman/post-qualitative research has been liberating and allowed me to combine all of my disparate areas of research without being constrained to fit into a specific field, however I am keen to maintain a level of accessibility. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) themselves say, "it's nice to talk like everybody else, to say the sun rises, when everybody knows it's only a manner of speaking" (p.3).

This meal needs to simmer away in the pot to allow the flavours to soak in, to allow you, the reader, to think with the theories introduced in the kitchen. Let's continue this tour whilst the aromas of the dish fill each room as the antimethodology folds and unfolds (Nordstrom, 2017). Antimethodology is unique and cannot be replicated. It "affirms wild experience and the possibilities for thinking and doing research at the limits of thought and practice. This is joyous creation" (Nordstrom, 2017, p.223). I hope you experience the rest of the tour joyously as my thesis home is created with and through you.

Playroom

My Childhood in Care Playing with my Values

Host

Welcome to my playroom. I never had a playroom growing up, so it's very exciting to have one in my thesis home. In this room, I will explain how I came to understand my experience of coming through the care system with the assemblage I called caring-with-resilience. In my post-living-theory I named the post-living-contradictions that emerged through my research as areas of difference that diffracted as I sought to understand what was and what wasn't useful for me. I will explore the literature that provided me with ways of understanding that which helped me develop the resilience necessary to come through the care system. Caring-with-resilience provided me with protective factors; however, I will look at the limitations of caring-with-resilience and contrast those with experiences I had of being modelled caring-with-mutuality by those in my life. I will look at where and how my values developed and why these made me want to be the change I wanted to see in the world, and how my values developed my ability to be resilient. I will explore literature that explains why my story matters in practice and academically, despite my story not being generalisable, which is a requirement for most forms of traditional research (MacLure, 2002). I will argue that researching my story can influence improvements in practice for those working with children where expectations remain stubbornly low. The expectations come from third-person research that focuses on statistics that show children in care are expected to do less well in comparison to their peers. Only 13.2% gain 5 GCSE's A-C compared with 57.9% of the general population and only 6% go to university compared to 38% of young people (Department of Education, 2011). Although this figure is

thought to be higher now, the disparity remains whichever statistics are used (Harrison, 2020). The percentage of children in care going to university has not gone up, however young people in the general population going to university has increased to 50% (Sebba, *et al.*, 2015). Children in care go on to make up a disproportionate percentage of the adult prison population and prostitutes (Cameron, 2015).

Meta-Host

> *Establishing experimental research … as the gold standard for high-quality research … exemplified the positivist and conservative restoration in the larger audit and accountability culture that privileges an instrumental, engineering model of social science that feeds on metrics to establish "what works". Notwithstanding claims of inclusiveness and in the fervour of a new scientism, qualitative research was rejected as not rigorous enough to count as high-quality science (Denzin and Lincoln, 2012, p.448).*

By mentioning third-person research here, does it mean it's more privileged, more trustworthy than the qualitative and post-qualitative research undertaken in this thesis home? What does it 'do' to reference statistics here?

Host

It's not that I think third-person research is more 'trustworthy'. It's that third-person research tells generalised stories. For children in care, the generalised story is one of comparative failure to the rest of the population. I am positioning my research as a challenge to the dominant story of children in care failing. This is because I lived my life as a challenge to the expected norms of people growing up in the care system. I agree with Merton (1948), that third-person research that focuses on the failure of a specific group, is at risk of creating self-fulfilling prophecies. I was aware of the expectations for my life as purported in

third-person research when I was at school, and although I didn't follow that path, it was daunting knowing I was trying to achieve an education and a way of life few children in care achieved. I am motivated to provide an alternative narrative for children in care by researching my ability to have a successful life, where I am happy and help others. Cherry (2013) identifies, "resilience learned through childhood experiences can then carry that young person into adulthood with a fierce will to succeed" (Kindle Location 151). I felt that fierce will to succeed and think my research will do something to provide hope, where so much of the third-person research feels hopeless.

Meta-Host

Ok, that explains my thoughts on third-person research, and yet I am still using it as the example of knowing why children are doing worse in care. What does it 'do' to reference the statistics? Perhaps it undermines my responses as I decided to use first-person and posthuman/post-qualitative approaches. Yet my starting point is feeding into the narrative of third-person research being privileged, as I am privileging the findings as 'truth'. Barad (2007) quotes Alice Fulton saying "believing a thing's true can bring about that truth" (p.353). Therefore, despite my thoughts about third-person research, perhaps I am adding power to these statistics being the truth. I might still be feeding into a hierarchal perspective that third-person research is more important than first-person and second-person research. Or perhaps I am inadvertently taking a Cartesian perspective by accepting the idea of dividing research into first, second and third-person perspectives. By having multiple voices with different perspectives, I am attempting to flatten the hierarchies and acknowledge differences rather than sameness, which can lead to the same problems being perpetuated. As Elton (2019) says, "the opportunity is ontological – to flatten one's ontology" (p.6).

Host

Perhaps this discussion has no certain outcome, rather it is diffractive with many possibilities. It has raised my awareness of the power I give to different perspectives, as I move them into my thesis home. They are how I am decorating the home and have ontological and epistemological implications. However, the questioning of the different perspectives helps to flatten the ontological perspectives, rather than providing any specific idea with a privileged position.

My values are in the playroom as teddies. Throughout the tour of the playroom, I will show how my values play together to develop my post-living-theory and post-living-contradictions. By depicting my values as toys, they were able to play and I was able to see what they do when they take part in different games. This has helped me think in a different way about my values. Rather than as in a living-theory where values are standards of judgement and explanatory principles (Whitehead, 2014). When thinking of myself as having distributed agency (Barad, 2007; Ferrando, 2014; McPhie, 2019), it changes my perspective on my values that developed from the relational experiences that I will explore in the playroom. My values intra-acted and shifted as I responded to situations and created different lines of flight from different assemblages of caring.

I chose to depict each teddy as a different animal because the metaphors create connections. I could see with the animal behaviours and my values:

Penguin because they keep their eggs warm and help their chicks to thrive no matter how cold it gets, and they go out to the deep ocean's and bring back the fish to feed their young. They remember their mate and deepen their bonds with them, however long they are gone. It takes teamwork in the penguin world.

Image 10

Penguin =

Love

Butterfly because they show that however hard it gets, even when your entire body dissolves in a chrysalis, there is a better possibility where you get to unfurl your bright butterfly wings and fly. Hope is like a butterfly effect; a little action can have a huge effect.

Image 11

Butterfly =

Hope

Lion because they represent the courage and strength that is needed to fight injustice.

Image 13

Lion =

Justice

Monkey because monkeys are such sociable animals, and all take part in their community.

Image 12

Monkey =

Participation

In previous papers, when I was taking a humanistic approach, I gave a shorthand version of what my values meant to me.

• Love being a powerful force of compassion and action to improve (my own and) others' lives.

• Justice is acting to ensure that people are treated fairly and right.

• Hope is an active ability to hold space open for better possibilities.

• Participation is actively engaging people in shaping and changing (our) world for the better (Hutchison and Pound, 2019).

However, by defining them in this way I created the danger of them being fixed, yet in reality, my values are always in a process of becoming. I will show there is movement in my values in this tour; that my values intra-act with the rest of

my life, my practice and what's important to me. I feel my values have developed my resilience. They provided me with a safe way to get through my childhood and ways of working and thriving in my adult life. My values have helped me to be useful in leading charities, and motivated me to improve what I do for the people the charities are there to benefit. I think, like all good teddies, my values had protective factors when I was younger. They prevented me from damaging myself in line with the usual outcomes for children in care.

Teddy Penguin: Love

Let's look at how my teddy penguin, Love, protected me. Benard, (1991) wrote that there is "a phrase occurring often in the literature sums up the resilient child as one who "works well, plays well, loves well, and expects well" (Garmezy, 1974; Werner and Smith, 1982)" (p.7). Unlike Benard (1991), who goes on to dismiss love as too abstract for research, I will show how I found love to develop my resilience as a protective factor for me and became an important value because of the love I experienced as a child.

Meta-host

Loving well sounds a bit like the humanistic view of philosophy which seeks to answer how one should live and act (Winslade, 2009). What would it do to think about this question from a Deleuzian ontology, that rather than thinking there is a way I should live or act, opening up to create possibilities to question how might I live and act (Winslade, 2009)?

Host

This is a useful distinction. I am not wanting to find a generalised idea of loving well in my thesis home. Rather I am attempting to think about loving well as being different in different contexts and assemblages - that the idea and act of loving well is always on the move. I will explore how love and loving well moved in my childhood. I experienced love in different ways as a child.

Storyteller

From the age of 3½ my parents-b were unable to provide me with daily examples of their love because we lived apart, meaning they were unable to shield me from the cold day-to-day. I did feel an interest in my wellbeing from them and a desire for me to thrive. They still brought me the fish from the deep oceans to nourish me. I also felt loved by my foster family as they always treated me with parity to their three biological children. This parity included their caring, nurturing and interest in my thriving. They were there each day to stop the cold from harming me and gave me a safe space to learn how to develop healthily in my environment. I always felt loved by both my biological family and my foster family. Love was very much a value I was surrounded by and a value that defined me. As a small child, I felt being fostered meant I had twice as much love as other children. However, I was also aware of my parents-b's difficulties in expressing that love due to their mental illnesses. As a child, it was described to me that they were 'ill'. Sometimes they were too ill to see me and that would make me so sad it was worse than Christmas being cancelled. As a result of these experiences, I knew that love was not straightforward.

When I was 15, I wrote the poem Love/Pain which vividly shows how challenging I found the process of learning to love.

Love/Pain (written 8th September 1994)

Scared to be without pain

Scared to lose my hurting soul

Can't remember a night without tears

Don't remember not feeling lonely

So confused, so lost and yet I'm not

Sometimes I know just where I'm going

I know who I am

What I want from life

What I'll give to life

Then it all seems to shatter

As my heart screams out

What does it feel like to love without pain?

What does it feel like?

How can you feel for someone without losing it?

Losing your love, gaining more pain

I call it a learning process

But all I feel is another tinge of pain

Host

The poem shows how love as a value was complex for me. I wanted to feel love for others and yet love was tied up with all the pain of separation from my biological family and the complexity of emotions of having two families. I was developing a form of caring as I was growing up, however, when I tried to develop mutuality, I experienced pain due to the losses I had experienced that were continually hurting me. Therefore, the process of love and pain developed caring-with-resilience which enabled me to love and care for others whilst

simultaneously overcoming the pain that attempting to love and care caused me.

Fukuyama (2002) writes that,

> the natural propensity to love one's own offspring to the point of irrationality has a powerful adaptive logic: if a mother does not love her children in this way, who else will devote the resources, both material and emotional, that are required to raise a child into mature adulthood? Other institutional arrangements, like communes and welfare agencies, work a good deal less well because they are not based on natural emotions (p.99).

Although the statistics I mentioned earlier back this up, my experience is that although it was confusing and painful at times, other unrelated people would both devote the resources to raise me and to love me. That love could be said to be irrational. I am sure that at the age of 15 when I was writing this poem, the confusion and complex emotions that I was experiencing, must have made it hard for my parents-f to find rational reasons to love me. Yet my parents-f continued to love me, even when I was difficult to understand or help.

Despite the complexities in my emotional response, it did mean that I had love modelled to me by both my families, although it was in different ways. This kept the idea of love on the move. As my value of love developed from the assemblages of my experiences as a child, I was able to appreciate the complexities of love. The assemblage was developed out of feeling it was important to love myself and other people. Added to the assemblage, I had the belief in the love of God and I believed that God loved me and prevented me from going down some of the behavioural paths, that are common for other children in care. As a child, I had the humanistic perspective of myself as separate from others, often lonely and yet aware of being loved. The benefit of

that perspective was that I gained a strong sense of the importance of loving myself because I believed I was lovable. I believed that I should love others, coming from the religious idea of loving your neighbour as you love yourself (Mark 12:31). Therefore, I came to believe that without loving myself, I couldn't love anyone else effectively. My foster mum (mum-f) also taught me that love is an action, not just a word or a feeling. Therefore, for me, love is about a caring and compassionate action that helps others to be the best they can be and helps me to be the best I can be. For me, there can only be love if there is respect for the other.

Meta-Host

These ideas are very humanistic, as ontologically they view the self as separate to the others and God that I am talking about loving. From a posthuman perspective, there is no separation,

> *the loneliness of the Western subject is lost in the recognition of the others as interconnected to the self… the awareness of distributed agency in the evolving body of spacetime becomes infinitely resonant, as does each existential performance: there is no absolute «otherness»; we exist in a material net in which everything is actually connected and potentially intra-acting (Ferrando, 2014, p.168).*

How does the recognition of intra-acting with the world of humans and non-humans (Kuby, 2017) change my perception of love as a value?

Host

I recognise how seeing myself as intra-acting makes separation impossible (Kuby, 2017), that love is always for everyone and everything. Once I create the concept of myself as separate, my ability to love gets drawn into hierarchical structures of self, other, God, each being more or less important. Whereas, a flattened ontology recognises I am intra-acting with everyone and everything,

and therefore love is expressed on a level plane with no discrimination or prejudice.

Teddy Butterfly: Hope

My teddy butterfly, hope, reminds me hope is about better futures, that we are always aware we can come through the chrysalis process, however tough that might be. As Desmond Tutu says, "Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness" (Solomon, 2010, p.2).

During my research I realised that for me, hope has an unusual nuance that I developed out of my childhood experiences. I developed a process to envision the best possible outcome, then put all my energy, focus and activity into achieving that. However, I simultaneously imagine what could go wrong, so I can work through the potential problems that can happen. I realise I am not in control of every aspect of my life and things can happen that means the outcome is not as I am striving for. Therefore, I like to balance out my ideal with the preparation for what I would do if the worst outcome I can imagine happened. This means, even if the idea I am putting all my energy into happening does not happen, I know I will be ok because I know I can cope with the worst happening. This works like a diffraction pattern where both outcomes are possible simultaneously until the pattern shows as matter or a wave (Barad, 2007). I know I can imagine multiple possibilities again and again and no outcome is stuck forever. I can always restory any trauma (Neimeyer, 2014), or create a new story as Fromm says - "to hope means to be ready at every moment for that which is not yet born" (Fromm, 1968, p.9).

The process enabled me to develop caring-with-resilience. So much of my childhood was about things happening that I didn't want – being physically separated from my biological family; having freedoms restricted because of the high level of control placed on me by being in the care system; lack of consistency of my family-b who would get ill; the complexity of having social workers and court systems making decisions about my life. My self-designed process helps me overcome disappointments quickly and not be crushed by them. Instead, I can carry on with a positive outlook, as I know from past experience that I have the internal and external resources to overcome. Duckworth (2016) calls this ability to overcome disappointments 'grit'; she says, "it is inestimably important to learn to keep going even when things are difficult, even when we have doubts" (pp.108-9). She says that hope is fundamental to grit and defines every stage.

Meta-Host

Nietzsche (1996) tells the story of Zeus giving humanity hope to prolong their suffering, "he gives men hope: it is in truth the worst of all evils, because it protracts the torment of men" (p.45). Could my view of hope be merely protracting my torment?

Host

It depends on what is seen as torment, continuing to live could be seen as torment, as challenges continue to come. Hagen (2012) suggests it's grasping onto particular outcomes that cause suffering. I call my process 'hope scales' because I aim to keep the better possibilities balanced with the worst outcomes so I can move my energy towards the best whilst being prepared for the worst. I am not attached to an outcome, rather I am prepared for many outcomes. If I don't balance my hope scales, I can be unprepared if the best outcome goes wrong. It can take me a lot longer to recover as I have no pre-prepared strategy

to deal with the outcome and have to create one whilst in the struggle of the disappointment. It can then take me time to rebalance my hope scales to imagine a better possibility. If I only think of the worst outcomes, I find I lack the motivation to act.

Occasionally, there is a possibility that is so awful that I had not imagined it. That is when I have a strategy to armour myself off from everything else internally, like a chrysalis, where I work out how I am going to overcome this outcome. I have to dig deep and find my resources internally and externally (including others, human and non-human), to create a new way to overcome. The non-human resources include journaling, parks and countryside and sports equipment. This can take much longer and be much more emotionally painful than if I had already imagined the outcome beforehand.

Teddy Lion: Justice

My value of justice surfaced as a child. I recognised the care system meant that I had a disadvantage in life, like my teddy lion I was strong in my determination not to perpetuate the negative outcomes attributed to children in care (Cameron, 2015). However, that also gave me an interest in other forms of disadvantage and a deep desire for the systemic issues that led to racism, homophobia and ableism to be addressed. This awareness came from things I watched and read, and from my Christian upbringing which advocated treating others as you want to be treated. At the time, I didn't realise that I had identified the intersectionality of disadvantage in my concern for minoritarian groups. "Feminist theories have long embraced intersectionality, this sexism is compounded with racism, homophobia, ableism, and all other forms of hate" (Shaw, 2014, p.273). I certainly felt outraged when

I experienced being treated as 'less than' because I was female, although I was not always sure what to do about it.

Storyteller

At first school, I had been an able forward on my football team and was keen to continue developing my skills at middle school. When I went to the first training session after school, the sports teacher (a man), didn't say I couldn't attend, however he made me practice the entire session on my own in a marked out square. The boys all trained together. When mum-f picked me up and asked if I wanted to go again, I said no.

Host

This story still makes me angry. It frustrates me that I failed to explain why I didn't want to go back. I feel sure if I had said what happened my mum-f would have supported me to complain and try to do something about it. Rather than to merely reflect on the unfairness of how I was treated, or reflexively acknowledge the systemic patriarchal power that was ingrained in the schooling I experienced, I want to diffract this experience. "A diffraction pattern does not map where differences appear but rather maps where the *effects* of differences appear" (Fairbairn, 2017, II. Position 2).

For me, the effects of this experience were to recognise when there was systemic unfairness to a minoritarian group, and I want to try to stand up for them in some way. There are many examples of the diffraction pattern. When other students at school were being homophobic or racist, I would call it out and try to get them to see how their views were unjust, and talk with them about why they held these views and what the problems were with holding them ...and, and, and… (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987). I was also interested in understanding what problems people faced from their perspective, and spent a day in my

granny's wheelchair. I was upset to experience how difficult it was to access shops and wrote to the shopping centre to explain what I felt needed to be addressed from my day in the wheelchair …and, and, and… I told the boy at a party to take his hand off of my knee, and when he asked why I said because it was my knee and knew that is all that mattered …and, and, and…

I may not have responded as I would have wished about the football training, however the diffraction pattern was to make justice a value I held, and to make me act differently and ensure I stood up to future injustices, for myself and others. This led to my belief that no one group should be disadvantaged because of their race, gender, sexuality, age, disability or any other reason. Rather the world should change shape around their needs to enable them to live like everyone else. I believe the world is in the wrong shape and needs to change so disadvantaged people can live their life as easily as everyone else. One shape does not fit all, so we need a multi-shaped world to accommodate everyone in a way that allows them to thrive, rather than the current awful and unjust one size fits all world (i.e., male, white, Western, heterosexual, physically able, propertied and so on (Ferrando, 2014, p.169; Cohn and Lynch, 2017, p.288) which does not accommodate many people at all. I want to help create a world with a "flattened ontology of differential mutual inclusion" (Kumm et.al, 2019, p.343) that accepts everybody and does not see anybody as less than because of where they come from or the choices they make to be happy and healthy.

Meta-host

This all sounds very laudable, however there is a danger of only focusing on the human and blaming 'the world'. Elizabeth St. Pierre (2000a) points out that "poststructuralism does not allow us to place the blame elsewhere, outside our own daily activities, but demands that we examine our own complicity in the

maintenance of social injustice" (p.484). It sounds like a call for "the revolutionary individual who leads the masses to overthrow domination and emancipate mankind in the name of social justice" (St. Pierre, 2011, p.386). However, St. Pierre suggests that is not going to create the change that is sought because what is needed is;

> *the ongoing, persistent examination of what Foucault (1966/1970), in his archaeological analyses, called the "order of things", the anonymous structures, regularities, divisions, codes of knowledge, and rules of formation that organize and limit our lives. Understanding that we can never be outside such structures, that we can never be free in the revolutionary sense, our task is to use all available analyses and create new ones to make visible and then to deconstruct dominating formations so that different regularities in which power might circulate more freely can be thought and lived. We don't, then, have to wait for a revolution to change things. Everyday freedom is practicing "a constant 'civil disobedience' within our constituted experience" (Rajchman, 1985, p.6) (St. Pierre, 2011, p.386).*

How does deconstructing and creating new structures change my perception of justice, and is there room for the more than human in that?

Host

My habit is to privilege humans, as I was brought up in a humanistic worldview. I agree with Foucault (2005) that what I called changing the world is the need for a new "order of things". However, by not considering the more than human I am perpetuating the idea that justice is a privilege for humans. I believe the structural issues of patriarchy and capitalism need to be re-thought anew. I recognise my speaking out against prejudice is a form of change. However, I recognise I also need to change my worldview to recognise that justice is also for the material environments we live in, and that the violence inflicted on them

in the name of human progress is just as damaging (Ferrando, 2014). Justice is more than doing what is right and fair for humans, but also for non-humans; recognising rivers, lakes and oceans have the right not to be polluted and woodlands have the right to remain (Benöhr and Lynch, 2018). Clean water is a necessity for human and animal life, as are trees which create the oxygen that we breathe. We are not separate, we are all within an immanent world and so the world cannot change shape without changing the shape of myself and when I change shape, I change the shape of the world in a mutual process of becoming (Deleuze and Guattari,1994).

Storyteller

As a child, I spoke out and challenged people when I saw injustice or heard prejudice. It led me to be open about being fostered because I felt it important people understood what it meant and to challenge people's expectations. I wanted them to know that I was the same as everyone else and not to be treated differently. People couldn't bully me because if they said difficult things, I saw it as an opportunity to educate them about what it was like to make the world a more habitable place for those who find the world more of a challenge. I did this as a child and continue to do this as an adult.

Host

I was exhibiting early attempts at caring-with-mutuality, as I was attempting to share my own experience to improve their experience. That aspect of sharing moved what I was doing beyond caring-with-resilience, as I had developed caring-with-resilience as a way for me to get through my own experience. Caring-with-resilience is limited in that the concern is for self and not explicitly for another. This is extremely useful for surviving difficult circumstances; however, it can be limited by lacking concern for others. The lack of concern for

others can lead "subjects to work tirelessly on the self, while turning away from the structures of domination that created the need to build resilience in the first place" (Ciccone, 2020, p.1317).

In other words, I wanted to be the change I wanted to see in the world and expand my experience to understand the world from other perspectives. I try to always speak out against discrimination, even if it's not something I am experiencing. I grew up with a sense that I am not able to be comfortable on the back of others suffering.

Meta-host

The change we want to see in the world sounds like a quote that is usually attributed to Mahatma Gandhi, although he never actually said "be the change you want to see in the world". However, many people are unaware that Gandhi was highly racist against black Africans (Frayer, 2019) and was casteist with his view that Dalit's have limited power, and went on hunger strike to ensure they didn't get a separate electorate system (Arundhati, 2019). He also slept naked with his teenage granddaughter (Frayer, 2019). These actions are deeply concerning and don't seem to be consistent with my values of justice. Do his other actions as a revered man of peaceful protest, and that his views did shift over time (Bhaskar, 2018), override these problematic views and actions? Does that mean the injustices he upheld at the time are ok? Is it ok to use ideas that are connected to people who have such serious contradictions in their beliefs? Would it be better to ignore all knowledge and ideas from anyone who has stood in the way of other groups progress or acted inappropriately?

Host

This is a useful line of questioning. I had not heard of any of the contradictions with Gandhi, I had only heard of the mainstream view of Gandhi as an icon of

non-violent resistance. I am aware of the tension I feel hearing these, as it challenges my smooth story (Maclure, 1996) of Gandhi. I am opposed to racism and seek in myself to be anti-racist (Kendi, 2019) and challenge any views in myself or anyone else that places one race as more important than another or denigrates people based on their race (Dominelli, 2017). I don't live in a caste society and haven't experienced a caste system; however, I don't agree that people should be treated unfairly because of where they were born. In the UK, class is still a big issue and I am opposed to the idea that people are more important, deserving or able because of the class they are born in, or indeed class they find themselves in as an adult. I am also opposed to an adult using a child to test their sexual restraint by sleeping naked with them. Unlike an adult in such a situation, I don't believe a child has the choice to consent due to the power differential between a child and an adult, and must not ethically be used for such experimentation.

I am led to question whether I should remove references to anyone that has acted unethically. However, I would then have to remove myself as I am by no means perfect and at times I act in my self-interest and not ethically. I am led to the discussion of the ethical differences between Heisenberg and Bohr (Barad, 2007). Heisenberg remained in Nazi Germany working to develop an atom bomb but was never successful and Bohr worked for the allies to create a successful atom bomb that killed thousands of people. The atom bomb brought the war to an end, but Bohr's work contributed to thousands of deaths, whilst Heisenberg's work never contributed to a single death. However, Heisenberg is vilified for working for the Nazi regime, which was responsible for the deaths of millions of people and Bohr is praised for his contribution to bringing the war to an end and victory against the Nazi regime. The ethics are by no means clear cut, therefore rather than censor voices I deem as having problems, I will try to acknowledge and grapple with the problems to show there are no smooth

stories. That includes in me. I will try to present my own story with the contradictions I encountered and how they have helped me to improve my practice or were necessary at that moment.

Meta-Host

Do I think I am made more aware of the issues by acknowledging the problems and therefore more able to keep in check my implicit bias? Perhaps? This is an example of 'reflexivity' isn't it? Perhaps I could try something a little more 'diffractive' for this section too?

> *As Haraway suggests, diffraction can serve as a useful counterpoint to reflection: both are optical phenomena, but whereas reflection is about mirroring and sameness, diffraction attends to patterns of difference ... Haraway notes that " [reflexivity or reflection] invites the illusion of essential, fixed position, while [diffraction] trains us to more subtle vision" (1992). Diffraction entails "the processing of small but consequential differences," and "the processing of differences ... is about ways of life" (ibid.) (Barad, 2007, p.29).*

Would taking a diffractive approach provide an example of the difficult yet productive nature of wrestling with theory, turning it over and over again to produce something more creative perhaps, or even something more immanently ethical?

Host

I did think I was taking a more ethical approach by naming the problems I see with the behaviour or thinking of the people I am referencing. However, I can see that this reflexive approach does not provide any difference just by naming the issues. I will start by naming them and then looking at different perspectives that play with the differences I am uncovering, to see what they are doing. I will attempt to question the fixedness of the position and try to shift it to different

positions in order to question what that does. I will also try to do the same with my own story and see what patterns are made by the interference I create by processing the same point in different ways.

Teddy Monkey: Participation

Let's play with our final teddy animal - my monkey, Participation. Like my teddy monkey, as a child I recognised that I was part of a society and that because of my experience of being in care I had something I could offer. Therefore, participation became important to me as a child, because I was in care and could be a voice for myself and others in care. I was invited to have my voice heard both on an individual level by most of my social workers and at a system level to go to conferences and committees and share my experience as a child in care. My social worker gave me a leaflet to explain what participation meant and that Article 12 in The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child upheld my right to be heard.

> 12. Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child (United Nations General Assembly, 1989, p.4).

This experience of having my voice heard reinforced the belief I had the right to have my voice heard, as do other people. It was not just the written rights, but my lived experience that embedded my belief in the right to participate. It led to the belief that as a child I was not the generation of tomorrow, but was an active participant in society as a child, and that children should also be listened to. It's clear now, with the school strikes, children want to have a world left for them to inhabit. They are taking action into their own hands, to hold governments and

power to account, to make a difference that will ensure there is a planet left in a healthy enough state for humanity to continue to inhabit (Harvey, 2020).

My experience of having my voice heard and being made aware this is a right of children has shaped my values to include participation. I agree with Cunningham and Laidlaw (2017) who refer to "values as living and developmental" (p.18). I shall iteratively come back to my values throughout the tour of my thesis home to see how they have emerged and evolved during the research adventure, as we move from room to room.

Playing with my Building Blocks: Adler

Storyteller

Once upon a time, I was born to parents-b with schizophrenia and drug addiction. They loved me very much, but in the end, it was decided I was no longer safe to live with them. I was left with only one memory of when I lived with them - I am three years old running down the stairs to the kitchen table and using a knife to spread some jam on my toast. My (mum-b) and biological dad (dad-b) are at the table watching me.

Host

My storyteller has introduced my earliest recollection. Adler believed early recollections could show how we create stories that we use to live our life by. Adler was a contemporary of Freud. however, like Deleuze he was anti-Oedipus (Adler, 1956; Deleuze and Guattari, 2000), and split from Freud to develop different ideas. In my playroom, we have some building blocks to play with to represent Adler's ideas. I chose building blocks because Adler felt that
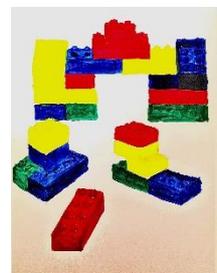
we are defined not by our biology nor our environment but instead by the use we make of them. In other words, how we use our building blocks. This is unlike Freud who thought we are driven by our biological desires. He was forward-thinking for his time as he believed men and women were equal. However, Adler's views on homosexuality are problematic as he viewed homosexuality as a pathology (Adler, 1956). I don't agree with Adler that homosexuality is a pathology, I believe people have the right to express their own sexuality, and that no one form of sexuality is better than another or that one is wrong or right. I believe we are all wonderfully different, and that should be celebrated. Having recognised there are views of Adler that I have problems with, I will focus on his ideas I find useful.

Meta-host

That I highlighted Adler's view on homosexuality (potentially) means I might be able to counter it with my worldview. However, is this really washing my ingredients and preparing them differently? Is this enough? Just highlighting it? Let's take a deeper look at the 'ontological' level. We might find that the skeletal structure on which this problematic theory is based is the same belief system that underpins and guides Adler's other thinking. Does this then problematise the other, perhaps more 'useful' material? If so. How? For example, viewing a culturally constructed 'moral' (a 'transcendent' ethic rather than an 'immanent' one) from the zeitgeist he was in as the reasoning to base this oppressive medicalised 'rule' on (medicalising and politicising the body (Bunton and Peterson, 1997)) is a part of the ethico-onto-epistemological (Barad, 2007) worldview of Western thought. Therefore, can this mean the issue is with the underpinning structure rather than the particular views of a person/individual, where some of their ideas might be 'good/useful' and some not? If someone's bones are malformed, it affects their entire bodily posture along with their

thoughts, their mannerisms, the way they are seen and treated by others, etc. I
don't mean this to be a straw-man, rather an out-of-place comparison.

So, if we use the same 'ontology', perhaps we might trick ourselves into thinking
it's the best one to use in that particular situation? Is it really contextual or does
the ontology need an overhaul?

Host

Another good interjection. Thanks to my meta-host for preventing me from
simplifying the problems posed by Adler's stance. My impatience to let us play
with my building blocks is no excuse to oversimplify an important point, so we
will divert for a moment on this tour to consider the questions raised. I came to
learn that engaging with the new language of post-inquiry is worth the effort to
think differently. I found the language difficult to begin with, however investing
the time to understand and grapple with it has helped me write my thesis home
creatively and critically. My meta-host reminded me that a diffractive approach
will help to consider the ethico-onto-epistemological issues. Barad (2007) says
"ethico-onto-epistemological questions have to do with responsibility and
accountability for the entanglements "we" help enact and what kinds of
commitments "we" are willing to take on, including commitments to "ourselves"
and who "we" may become" (p.382). I am not wanting to create or re-create
homophobic ideas and so I must look at the difference it makes using the ideas
of Adler, who, by seeing homosexuality as a pathology, was by the nature of his
stance, homophobic. Making my stance explicit is ethically not enough, I need
to also question Adler's ontology.

The interjection reminded me that when I first read Individual Psychology (Adler,
1956) I stopped when I got to Adler saying being gay is a pathology and didn't
read any more for some time. It had such an effect on me as to not want to read

anymore, and affected me in that I no longer felt interested in his views. I only continued exploring Adlerian Theory because the Adlerians I was researching with assured me Adlerian Theory was inclusive and not homophobic. Adler's views on homosexuality point to the fact that the rest of his ideas will take a heteronormative perspective. How have my fellow researcher's come to the idea that Adler's ideas are inclusive? It may be that Adler's own arguments rescue his theory from his own error, as he believed that neither biology nor environment makes us who we are, rather it's the use we make of them both. Therefore, his beliefs in the wellness or pathology of any given person are not of relevance in many ways, as Adler was more interested in the use people made of their situation, regardless of their actual health.

Meta-host

McPhie (2019) argues that distributed agency means we are always in an assemblage with the object, ideas and concepts around us. Therefore, I would argue It's important to understand what agency (making use of the biology and environment) means to Adler and what useful means to Adler. These are questions of ontology and they do something to his ideas. What could it add to Adler's ideas to bring in a posthuman idea of distributed agency? Barad (2007) explains this concept using writing as an example,

> *writing is not a unidirectional practice of creation that flows from author to page, but rather the practice of writing is an iterative and mutually constitutive working out, and reworking, of "book" and "author"). Which is not to deny my own agency (as it were) but to call into question the nature of agency and its presumed localization within individuals (whether human or nonhuman) (p.x).*

How would it be to consider Adler's ideas from the perspective of distributed agency?

Host

Useful to Adler meant having social interest. Reese (2009) describes social interest as encompassing 'the characteristics of being caring, concerned and compassionate for others…meeting the tasks of life and community while contributing to the welfare of other human beings (Oberst and Stewart, 2003)' (p.9). The tasks of life Adler referred to are "communal life, of work, and of love (Adler, 1938, p.42)" (Dreikurs and Mosak,1966, p.19). Work, without context, could be argued to be pro-capitalist, however as Adler was "a socialist and social activist" (Gay, 1989 p.216) his meaning of work is to provide a meaningful contribution to society whilst sustaining oneself. His view was a humanistic view - "The person who performs useful work lives in the midst of the developing human society and helps to advance it" (Adler, 1956, p.132). Adler's views were that homosexuals failed on these life tasks and therefore to have social interest. This is quite likely, as being homosexual was illegal when Adler was developing his ideas and therefore would have a big impact on being able to live freely and would lead to some secrecy, which would affect the ability to succeed. It also seems that late in Adler's career he took a less pathological viewpoint,

> in the mid-1930s, his opinion towards homosexuality began to shift. Elizabeth H. McDowell, a New York state family social worker recalls undertaking supervision with Adler on a young man who was "living in sin" with an older man in New York City. Adler asked her, "Is he happy, would you say?" "Oh yes," McDowell replied. Adler then stated, "Well, why don't we leave him alone." (Manaster *et al*., 1977, pp.81–82)

Therefore, it's a reminder that we are all in a process of becoming and that when we judge someone on their early views, we need to be aware these continue changing, especially when someone is continually researching them. Adler was working at a time homosexuality was illegal, which would affect how people who were homosexual would behave and how homosexuality was viewed. Now homosexuality is largely legal and equal rights were granted in most parts of the

world. It's likely that in keeping with Adler's ontology of equality and social activism he would have viewed homosexuality on an equal footing with heterosexuality. Therefore, whilst I remain opposed to his early ideas of homosexuality as a pathology, I also realise he was on a path of becoming and I feel his views shifted in his lifetime and would have been pro-equality today.

My deeper dive into Adler's ontology makes me feel much more comfortable in thinking with his theories, whilst being aware of the potential injustices humanistic approaches can perpetuate. Diffraction is always on the move, so I will remain questioning about other contradictions or problems in the thinking of those I am drawing on and what that does.

Thinking Adler's ideas with distributed agency shifts the agency from my Cartesian self, separated by mind and body; self and other, to thinking of agency as an assemblage with biology and environment. Therefore, there is an iterative process of change that is not unidirectional. There is not a singular 'I' making use of my biology and environment, rather we are in relationship with each other, influencing each other – intra-acting.

With that ontological reorientation, we can play with my building blocks drawn from the idea's I found useful in my research. I find Adler's ideas on how early recollections provide an understanding of how we approach life as adults useful. Adler thought,

> There are no 'chance memories'. Out of the incalculable number of impressions which meet an individual, he chooses to remember only those which he feels, however darkly, to have a bearing on his situation. Thus, his memories represent his 'story of life', a story he repeats to himself to warn him or comfort him, by means of past experiences, to

meet the future with an already tested plan of action (Adler, cited in Powers and Griffith, 1987, p.187).

Adler thought that our early recollections contain within them how we view the world and that, by creating an Adlerian syllogism, we can identify how we respond. In other words, the building blocks we have created from our early experiences can be seen in our early recollections. I created Adlerian syllogisms as part of my research to allow me to use my early recollections to help me understand how I came to have a useful life. I analysed my early recollections to understand how I came through the care system with better-than-expected outcomes; to see what these might reveal that might be useful to influence those working with children in care or other children with difficult starts to life. I used Adlerian syllogisms as my way of analysing my early recollections. This differs from the form of logical syllogisms described by Socrates that describes a form of logical analysis. Instead, an Adlerian syllogism is created by the person in response to the sentence starters; "I am …; Others are …; The world is …; Therefore, I must …" (Fall *et al.*, 2017, p.127). The conclusions are based on the person's view of the world which can be used to explain their form of lifestyle as an adult. Adlerian syllogisms are usually used in therapy to address a pathology or problem. I worked with Robyn Pound who has been influenced by Adler (Pound, 2003) to use Early Recollections as research method (Pound and Hutchison, 2019). Adlerian syllogisms are a metaphor for understanding a person's style of life, "entering the domain of creative imagination where metaphoric imagery can become a key that unlocks new possibilities for self-created 'insight' and therapeutic change" (Kopp 1995, p.xiv). Rather than addressing problems, I was using them as an explanation for why I was successful in living a useful life, when most children in care struggle to do so (Sebba, *et al.*, 2015). I am hoping that introducing using Early Recollections as part of the research might be useful for others to explain how their childhood has influenced their adult practice. I did a workshop in Sibiu, Romania with

Robyn to see if Adlerian practitioners found this method useful and we got an encouraging response (Hutchison and Pound, 2019). My syllogism for my earliest recollection which I called Toast is:

I am … three spreading my jam

Others are … watching me

The world is … small

Therefore, I must … eat my toast

At first glance, you, the reader, may see no explanation for how I achieved anything as an adult. However, Pound and I analysed what my syllogism says about my approach to life using the Crucial Cs (Bettner and Lew, 1989). We identified that all four of the Crucial Cs are evident in my syllogism, acting as building blocks I developed to enable me to have a useful life. The first building block I am expressing is capability. I see myself as a three and half-year-old as capable of spreading jam on my toast. I am not seeing myself as struggling or neglected because no one else is helping me or spreading my jam for me. The second building block I am expressing is connection with my parents-b, as I am recollecting them being at the table and I am aware of them watching me. I could have been alone or remembered them being uninterested or aloof. I am expressing my feeling of counting as another building block because I am aware my parents-b are looking at me. I could have thought they were unaware and that I didn't matter to them. I am seeing my courage as the final building block, as I am spreading my jam and eating my toast myself even though my parents-b were both struggling with their mental health and substance misuse issues. I could have felt to upset or scared to look after myself in such an environment.

It's accepted in Adlerian psychology that wellbeing occurs when an individual experiences their Crucial Cs (Pound, 2021). The theory is that if we feel

capable, we feel competent which enables us to develop self-respect. If we connect, this is equated with survival, where we have a sense of belonging that keeps us safe. If we feel we count, we have a sense of significance which enables us to develop self-esteem.

Meta-host

My supervisor is prompting me, saying "I like this as a starting point for thinking 'through' a particular ontological problem…. humanism, e.g., do 'you' tell yourself these stories or does your culture or even your environment or a mixture (Krishnamurti, 1989)? And who is this 'myself' if the 'self' is distributed? This seems like the 'agency' was always already 'yours' to create the story of yourself. This could be problematic as it might even suggest that we have the agency to control our own lives, placing the onus on those at risk, rather than those in/with power. If agency is distributed, not as a unidirectional cause-and-effect trajectory but as a multi-directional environmental 'becoming', then how might that affect this particular story? If we think 'with' distributed agency, how might it alter this specific example (as a thought experiment)? Also, how might it impact Adler's humanistic claims?"

Host

Thank you for keeping me thinking about the perspectives of the thinkers I am drawing on. I had been accepting humanist perspectives unquestioningly until I began looking at posthumanistic perspectives. Like Jasmine Ulmer (2017) in her paper on posthumanism where she admits she had been put off by the term, I also felt uneasy with the term thinking that humans would be seen as unimportant. I had not realised that posthumanism means that humans and the values of justice, love and hope are still important, in fact, posthumanism is promoting the equity of all humans and non-humans, and that human 'progress' should not be at the expense of the land, sea and other creatures. Sapiens

(Harari, 2014) explains that the idea of humans being seen as more important than everything else in the universe has arisen from monotheistic religions, and more recently by ideologies that justify the needs of humans to abuse the planet we live on for our own needs and wants. Adler's views are indeed humanistic and therefore do privilege humans over any other creature. However, they are also based on the idea of being socially interested which, whilst privileging humans in that idea of social, does also recognise the need for considering things from all perspectives rather than your own pleasure or significance (Adler, 1956). I would argue that considering others mitigates some of the most problematic issues of humanism. I think the concept of social interest reduces the western tendency to perceive the world in dualisms; that I am right and you are wrong; that my needs are more important than your needs; having a 'them' and 'us' mentality among humans. That many humans see non-humans of equal value at least suggests the value or importance of respecting that viewpoint.

Adler's views are from a western perspective in that he sees there is a separate, autonomous self that holds the stories we tell ourselves (Adler, 1927). However, the idea of exploring early recollections accepts that we have many influences that create the stories we tell ourselves. Adler suggested exploring these in more detail by looking at our family constellations to gain a greater understanding of the influences we have that make up the stories we tell ourselves (Adler, 2004). Adler argued the beliefs, culture and norms of our parents and grandparents are often dominating our own stories, thus he recognised the multiplicity that the self is. Adler (2005) wrote, "as an indivisible whole, a system, the human being is also a part of larger wholes or systems-- the family, the community, all of humanity, our planet, the cosmos" (p.234). Deleuze and Guattari (1987) recognised the multiplicity of themselves as the two of them came to write, saying there was already quite a crowd when they

came to write Anti-Oedipus. However, Alder argued that once we are aware of that multiplicity, we can make some changes to how we are influenced by them. His ideas suggested how therapy could help individuals amend the influence of their multiplicities (Adler, 1956).

To return to the Crucial Cs, it's also important to recognise that they can also be developed in ways that are not useful. My syllogism is full of self-care in that I am looking after myself by feeding myself. Therefore, it's clear that my syllogism shows that all my Crucial Cs are met in a useful way. My early recollection shows that the stories I tell myself have all the building blocks that enabled my wellbeing and allowed me to come through the care system to have a useful life.

My story is only a single story; however, I agree with Adichie (2009) that it's important not to tell a single story of any group. As she says, "Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person." I am not meaning for my story to become the definitive story for children in care. However, it's an important story to research, because the stories of people who went through the care system are rarely told by those who have experienced it and are rarely told about people who have gone on to be successful. Most third-person research focuses on the poor outcomes that persist for children in care (Department of Education, 2011; Sebba, *et al.*, 2015; Cameron, 2015). I would like to encourage more single stories of people with lived experiences that challenge the dominating discourse.

Meta-host

The idea of lived experience being privileged comes from humanist philosophy of phenomenology.

> *For Heidegger, humanism is shaped by thought, which … is re-enforced by the view of the human as the master of being, which, in turn, is*

underpinned by a mode of thinking that is based in the subject/object division … and affirms that the human is the master of being (Rae, 2014, p.69).

What might be left out if only my lived experience is the focus of this tour of my thesis home? Deleuze's philosophy is ontologically focused on difference. He thinks "being's becoming must be thought in terms of multiple becomings whereby being becomes in one way and another and another and another simultaneously" (Rae, 2014, p.121). Rather than thinking of lived experience as being experienced from a singular fixed being.

What are the multiple becomings of my lived experience other than singular fixed experiences?

Host

Adler recognised that memories are not fixed, accurate representations of the past. Indeed, they may not have happened at all. Rather they are the stories we tell ourselves, and they may change over time (Adler, 1927). Equally, syllogisms may change over time. Therefore, whilst I am advocating for the stories of those who don't usually have a voice to be heard, I also recognise the need to understand these stories are not straightforward. I am advocating that having space to hear the complexities and multiplicity of experiences helps to recognise the need for a multiplicity of responses by the caring professions. More voices being heard creates different responses (Britzman, 2002) that can influence responses to be diverse. Caring-with-mutuality is a creative-relational (Wyatt, 2019) response that embraces the multiplicities of those in the relationship. Therefore, rather than take a humanistic approach in this tour, I added a posthuman approach. This aims to decentre my experience to recognise the differences, multiplicities and assemblages that have affected me.

Playing with my Chemistry Set: Merton

Merton (1948) thought that if only the stories of failure are told in research, we will create self-fulfilling prophecies. I think research into the care system is in danger of only telling these stories of failure and therefore perpetuating further failure of the care system. It can lead to those working in the care system expecting poor outcomes for children in care, which leads to continued poor outcomes. As we play with my chemistry set, I am seeking to create something different.

Donna Gaywood, a member of Conversation Café (a research group I attended each week) gave an example of how she used my story to ensure the expectations for a child in care were as high as for other children. She explained to me the influence of my story in her practice. She explained how she used my story to influence the practice of professionals by encouraging them to spend extra resources on a child in care to fully access the curriculum, as the child was falling behind their peers. A social worker explained that "given the boy's background and early experiences, he (was) doing very well" (Gaywood, 2019). Donna wrote to me about how the situation evoked strong emotions in her and how she made,

> an impassioned speech about the need to offer children who go into care the same expectations we have for other children, that they can and should achieve all they are capable of. I spoke of cultural and social capital and the importance of using the extra money available to increasing this, so that they could achieve. "Good enough" is just not good enough. Low expectation will only replicate itself (Gaywood, 2019).

Donna explained she used my story as an example of a reason not to accept low expectations for children in care, rather, to expect that children in care can also be successful. She was able to use my story to affect change. I was delighted to hear my story being used as an example of success in an attempt to influence the practice of a social worker, whose actions may have been inadvertently creating self-fulfilling prophecies for the boy in care which could have led to poorer outcomes compared to other children.

Let's play with Merton's chemistry set, where the many failed experiments that are made are not what we will focus on. Rather we will focus on a single success. Merton suggests we should focus on the single success, and I focus on my success as a child who came through the care system and bucked the trend of failure, and didn't succumb to the self-fulfilling prophecies that were being pushed onto me from third-person research. During my research, I was influenced by existentialism and the idea that I can choose what happens to me, that I am responsible for that change (de Beauvoir, 2010).

Meta-Host

There is a danger of thinking of the 'I' in the chemistry experiment as humanistic self-referential 'I' that does not recognise that 'I' is a relational assemblage. What difference do self-referential and relational 'I' make ontologically? Wyatt (2019) calls for creative-relational inquiries based on Massumi's idea of creative-relational which is characterised as,

> *a process of becoming that takes it, the animal, the human, us, beyond ourselves, into the other, into becoming-other, into the more-than. Desire is the push and pull, the draw, the force of the creative-relational; the force that connects, the force that leans us towards (the) other, towards becoming-other, towards movement, towards change (Wyatt, 2019, p.42).*

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The self-referential 'I' can lead to sameness that fails to change injustice, whereas the creative-relational 'I' follows the pathways of difference, which can influence change in systems, concepts and people. How can seeing myself through a creative-relational inquiry make that change?

Host

Taking a creative-relational approach (Wyatt, 2019) to my inquiry has helped me recognise that my experiences are beyond being. As a child, I experienced becoming-other (Deleuze, 1989) with the foster care system I was in, with the concepts of care the social workers that worked with me worked within, and with my experiences of my friends, family and places I lived. These becomings changed my experience - my success story is not singular; it was a story of becoming-other and those others are what led to my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality.

Playing with Growing Plants: Dweck

There is a plant growing in my Playroom which shows how I achieved my successful outcomes. I had a Growth Mindset that Dweck (2006) says is important for being able to achieve even when there are disappointments and failures. This links back to Adler, as I am not set by my biology or environment but rather, I believed I could work hard at school and get my ticket. For me, it was a ticket out of the usual expectations for children in care and children of parents with mental health and substance misuse issues. I was going to have choices about what I did for my living, and whilst at school I was not sure what that was going to be. I did know I wanted to enjoy what I did and make a difference for people who also have challenges in their lives. I came to achieve that by working in

charities, and my plant has grown and bloomed and blossomed into a garden, where not only have I thrived, but I influenced others to thrive and the organisations I was involved in leading.

Meta-host

Plants tend to grow from the roots upwards, which leads to thinking hierarchically and linearly. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) used the metaphor of a rhizome to encourage thinking differently, as a rhizome grows from the middle, in all directions – "A rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be" (p.7). *How would it change the concept of growth mindset to think rhizomatically?*

Host

Thinking rhizomatically changes the growth from being singular and individual to necessarily realising everyone and everything are intra-acting and therefore there is no separate 'I' to grow or thrive. It changes perhaps from influence to an entanglement of thriving, or in some instances disappointment and failing.

Boland (2020) uses the notion of the rhizome as a metaphor of the internal work of developing his living-theory of lived spirituality. I appreciate the way he uses the metaphor of the "unseen progress and development of the rhizome under the earth as it slowly grows, becoming ever more complex, expanding its territory. In doing this, it sends up shoots (professional practice). These shoots do not indicate where the growing tip of the rhizome is, they indicate where it has been – for it is always moving on as its journey continues" (p.16).

However, despite the non-hierarchical nature of a rhizome, Boland remains limited within the humanistic/qualitative paradigm. Living Theory leads him back

to prioritise the benefit of all the inner work in how it influences his professional practice. It is as though the shoots are still somehow the pinnacle of all the underground work, rather than the practice of inner work being beneficial for its own sake. Thinking with post-living-theory could lead Boland to explore these practices on an immanent plane which could lead to different affects, as thinking with my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality has done for me.

Playing with my Puzzle: Frankl

Finally, there is a puzzle being built in my Playroom which acts as a metaphor for the meaning and purpose I developed throughout my childhood. I viewed my experience in care as an opportunity for me to share my experiences, so that they might influence change for others who were in the care system but might not feel confident to talk out. It was important to me to know that my experience of being fostered could make a difference to others, and made me feel that there was a meaning and purpose to my life experience. Frankl (1992) wrote his seminal book *Man's Search for Meaning* in 1946 after being released from the concentration camps of the Nazi's. His experience of watching his fellow humans living or giving up on life in the camps provided evidence for his view, that the drive to live is fuelled by the feeling that there is meaning and purpose to our lives. My experience in care was not life or death, but I did feel that my ability to share my story to make a difference to others, and thus gave me the meaning and purpose that prevented me from following the usual outcomes for children in care. Instead, I saw myself as being able to provide a benefit to myself and others by talking at conferences about my experiences, and being a co-opted member of my local Social Services Board. I told my story of being in care, and the things that being in care affected, such as the amount of contact

with my biological family which was only allowed once every 6 weeks; the intrusion of having to have annual medicals and police checks to stay at friends' houses; the good and poor practice I observed with social workers who visited me.

Meta-host

Was it my ability to tell my story that prevented me from following the pathway that makes up the usual statistics of children in care? Or could it have been other influences/pushes/forces of encounter (affect) also co-creating and co-directing my path? It almost sounds like it was the Cartesian 'I' that decided and chose to go in that direction, whereas the others who are failed by the system chose not to, or didn't have the 'ability' to (taking us back to Haraway's response-ability). How does considering telling my story as the co-production of self-efficacy as a distributed agential assemblage (Barad, 2007) change the ontological perspective?

Host

Viewing the 'I' telling my story as a singular separate person creating a Cartesian dualism suggests there is something special about me that other children in care don't possess. Therefore, they will continue to experience negative statistical expectations. Viewing my 'I' as an assemblage of the social workers who offered me the opportunities to have my voice heard (e.g. the board members who listened; the car I was supported to drive) that made my story being heard possible. The possibilities for thinking about how to improve other experiences is shifted. McLeod (2010) identifies that listening to children is important because it helps protect them, helps them to make decisions for themselves and enhances their wellbeing and resilience. She identifies that listening to children improves policy and practice and "is a matter of ethics and human rights (Freeman, 1999). It is disrespectful and disempowering to ignore

a person of any age" (p.67). However, it's the assemblage of those in power listening (e.g. the platforms to speak from; the means to participate) that enable children to be heard. Ontologically, thinking in terms of such distributed agential assemblages moves the blame from children in care not speaking up, to the response-ability of professionals to listen and provide opportunities and spaces for children in care to be heard.

Storyteller

Some social workers were excellent and sought my views, checked I understood everything and included me as much as possible. Other social workers whom I considered to have poor practice, directed all their comments at the adults in the room, talked about me, not to me and used language I couldn't understand. During my teenage years, my sense of self was rocked as I approached 18 and legally my foster placement would come to an end. I was fortunate to have a very astute social worker who didn't just assume everything was stable in the placement because it always had been. At 17 I was ready to run away from home because I felt so confused about my situation. My social worker asked to have lunch with me and picked me up from school. That day I had written notes to my friends and family explaining why I was running away and had planned to leave with no destination in mind and sleep in my car somewhere far away. No one else had suspected anything, however she asked me straight out if I was planning to run away. I confessed I was and she was able to offer to pay for a B&B for a weekend to give me some space to gather myself, to talk to my parents-f to explain what was happening. She arranged one session with a counsellor to talk through my feelings.

Host

At the time I was very grateful, however looking back I realise how important this intervention was. This intervention created a diffraction pattern that mapped the effects of the difference her intervention caused (Barad, 2014). I could very easily have ended up living on the streets and got into prostitution and hard drugs. As I reflect on the incident, I realise that her incredible practice as a social worker, to respond to her intuition and reach out prevented a series of events that could have been catastrophic. She could have felt like I was an easy case that didn't warrant any extra time to be spent on me. Instead, she reached out and helped me to come up with a safe solution to my confusion which enabled me to have time to work out my feelings. I was able to share at conferences the importance of social workers always approaching the person they are working with freshly, and not assuming everything is okay because the notes suggest the placement is stable.

This example was a reaching out of caring-with-mutuality, as rather than see me as my file suggested, she reached out to me to find out what was happening with me and responded in a creative way to my situation. In this sense, I realise there was a diffractive process happening. Were she to have reflected on my file, she would have looked for sameness. She would assume I was in a stable placement and had always been, therefore stability would continue. However, she diffracted the situation by taking a "creative-relational inquiry" (Wyatt, 2019) into my case. She looked for difference in the patterns of my behaviour and saw that rather than being stable, I was showing signs of wobbling. Diffracting my behaviour through the case notes she had read; she took a chance with a direct question about running away. She used her creativity to draw these different indicators together and a relational approach to eating with me to pose her question. Her inquiry into my situation was creative and relational, brought together through the hyphen "unfolding unpredictable possibility" (Wyatt, 2019, p.159). She was taking a risk in her inquiry, as the case notes suggested

predictability, and yet she was questioning a different possibility to the one the case notes would have told. The assemblage of social worker-case notes-child in care-wobbly behaviour led her to diffract rather than reflect, and see a different set of behaviours than the ones that had always been before.

She really saw me, and then sought more information to really hear me. I experienced from her a deep compassion for what I was going through, a form of professional love that wanted to work with me to find a solution to my situation. I was given a sense of hope that there was a better possibility than my imagined solution of running away. She helped me to feel that she was fighting for things to be fair and right for me, in any small way she could offer, to provide me with a sense of justice - that although things were difficult for me from no fault of my own, she would help me. Finally, she enabled my voice to be heard and gave me options to participate in my own solutions. All my values were evidenced to me in her actions towards me and they, in turn, encouraged my Crucial Cs. I felt capable of finding a better solution and was able to take the break at the B&B and then able to come back and work with my parents-f to stay living with them whilst I finished my A-levels. I felt connected as she was able to understand what I was going through and was able to facilitate talking to the counsellor and, when I got back, talking with my parents-f. I was also able to tell my friends what I was doing, instead of leaving them notes to say I had run away. I felt like I counted because she had been noticing my difficulties and felt moved to do something about it. Finally, she gave me the courage to find a better solution and face my difficulties rather than running away from them. This is the a/effect of caring-with-mutuality.

In the Office, I will explore how perceiving my crucial c's as being met as a child enabled me to have and use these as an adult.

Storyteller

I was also fortunate with my first social worker, Mr Herringshaw, who I remember asking my opinion even as a small child. I was able to attend the meetings about my care and talk to him at least for part of the meeting. One time it came up that my parents-b wanted to go to court to have me live back with them. I was taken out of school to attend the court and remember telling Mr Herringshaw when he asked me what I would say to the judge that I would curtsey and tell the judge I didn't mind what happened as long as my brothers(f) didn't mind.

Host

Mr Herringshaw was my earliest model of caring-with-mutuality from a professional. I always felt he had compassion for my situation as he was the social worker that brought me to my foster family. When I felt ill in the car on the way, he stopped and let me get some fresh air, showing professional love for my situation. He gave me hope for better possibilities by allowing me to be as involved as possible in the decisions happening to me. I felt like he always wanted what was fair and right for me and sought justice for me by enabling me to have my say in decisions that affected me. Throughout, he allowed my voice to be heard, and for me to participate as much as possible in the decisions being made about my life. I recognise my comment about my brothers(f) may be a naïve comment to something that would change the rest of my life, but I did feel listened to and considered in the decisions affecting me. These values encouraged my Crucial Cs by making me feel I was capable of saying what I wanted to happen, that I was able to be connected to both my biological and foster family. I felt I counted because he listened to me and enabled me to be heard. He gave me the courage to say what I wanted to happen.

These social workers showed the difference it can make to be listened to and have someone believe in me (Sissay, 2019; Cherry; 2013). These examples of good practice of social workers show how they were caring-with-mutuality through their ability to listen and pay attention to me, which meant they were able to make better and more informed decisions for my care. I felt valued and as though I had a say in my care, however limited that was able to be, which made me feel more empowered and able to achieve. Fortunately, those social workers who had poor practice, where they were caring-with-authority by not including me in the discussions or decisions about my care, had less impact

I will return to the assemblage of caring-with-authority in the office as it emerged as I researched my practice as a charity leader.

because I had experienced and come to expect that my voice should be heard when decisions affected me. However, caring-with-authority can often leave the person receiving care feeling disempowered.

Storyteller

As a teenager, I was a co-opted member of the Social Services Board. I took this role very seriously and would highlight and make comments on the hundreds of pages of papers. I knew I was making a difference as councillors would come up to me after the meetings and tell me they had not realised the effects of the restrictions on children in care, and that I brought them to life for them. They found it useful to hear my perspective to help them, when making decisions about the lives of children in care, balance safety and their need for reassurance with the ability for children in care to live a normal life.

Host

Not living with my biological family and being in the care system was often painful and difficult. Opportunities to participate enabled further distributing of

agency to create improvement of practice and policy decisions, providing a sense of meaning and purpose to my life experiences. Frankl (1992) quotes Nietzsche's words, "He who has a why to live for can bear with almost any how" (p.84) to describe how those in the concentration camps could continue living. Freud thought people are motivated for pleasure and desire, and Adler that it was for power and significance. I agree that these are motivations for living. I want to live much more when I am enjoying what I am doing, and when I feel what I am doing is important and appreciated. However, when those opportunities are unavailable such as in a concentration camp, Frankl found that the thing that keeps people alive is a sense of meaning and purpose. I am not suggesting being fostered is the same as being in a Nazi concentration camp, however I feel my ability to find pleasure or have power in decisions about my life, such as to live in a different family, were limited. Although the social workers who showed good practice did try to rectify some of the imbalance of power and the difficult feelings I had, when things were hard, I could still find meaning and purpose in my life.

So, we are preparing to leave the Playroom and move upstairs on the tour of the thesis home. In the playroom, my teddy values of love, hope, justice and participation provided me with some protective factors. The assemblages of caring-with-resilience and some early attempts at caring-with-mutuality developed through distributed agency (Barad, 2007) with human and non-human others. In various assemblages, I was able to overcome my situation and achieve educationally and open up healthier options rather than the usual outcomes children in care often have. We played with my toys of the theoretical ideas of Adler, Dweck, Merton and Frankl and found that, once washed and prepared, they can help explain my success. I showed examples of how some of my social workers provided me with experiences of caring-with-mutuality, which went on to influence my practice. These ideas will re-emerge in my thesis

home, as I show how these ideas have helped me as an adult, and will explore the other strategies I adopted as a child and an adult that have been less useful to me. The next stop on the tour is the office, where I will show how I researched my work in my thesis home, and what has emerged.

Office

Charity Leadership

Host

As we enter the office, the focus of the tour will shift from my childhood to my adult career and my leadership as a practice (Ford, 2016). My toys were not packed away and forgotten about however, rather they have continued to develop creatively and taken lines of flight (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) to travel into my office. So, let's get to work and step into the office. The tour of this room will focus on my practice as I developed my leadership role in charities. We're going to spend most of our time touring my nine-year role as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Bath and North East Somerset Carers' Centre, where (with their long-standing support) I undertook most of my research. I will also touch on a variety of other roles, including my work developing services for young carers and as a digital nomad, contracting for charities to help them with their growth and development.

It won't be a linear tour, rather I chose moments that glow (MacLure, 2013), as they show the movement in my becoming, and how that has influenced the becoming of those I engaged within my leadership roles and of the charities, social enterprises and other social formations. I will explain the benefits of the changes I made and how they have improved my practice. I aim to influence not-for-profit leaders and those that work for charities to base growth on what beneficiaries need and want (NCVO, 2019); be led by the beneficiaries to seek money not to be led by the money (NCVO, 2019); to prioritise their own and others self-care to prevent burnout (Maslach, 2013).

Meta-host

MacKillop (2018) points out that,

> *leadership in organisations continues to remain elusive, Rost (1993) claiming that two-thirds of organisational leadership studies don't actually define leadership ... To the point where leadership has become 'slippery' and 'understood as nearly anything' (Spicer and Alvesson, 2011: 194–195) (p.206).*

What is leadership to me? MacKillop (2018) points out that leadership is always on the move as it "can be represented as a set of multiple and changing practices, pragmatically deployed by organisational subjects to re/draw alliances and, ultimately, exercise power" (p.206). How does leadership move in the office and how do I show "issues of power, conflict and mess (that) are also often side-lined" (Ibid, p.206)?

Host

My practice of leadership is always on the move, as I am always seeking to learn and improve what I am doing (Whitehead, 1989). Leadership is expected from CEOs. Farkas and Wetlaufer (1996) view is "CEOs must learn on the job how to lead a company, and they must learn while every stakeholder is watching" (p.110). There are inbuilt pressures that I experienced as a CEO that were also experienced by all staff, such as having a probationary period that had to be passed in order to remain, and subsequent annual appraisals. However, other pressures were more of a perception that other people had. For example, I remember a staff member telling me in words to the effect that, "I was the boss so I had to tell them what to do". I disagreed with their view and felt my role was more participatory, as I will show in examples where I am practicing caring-with-mutuality in my leadership. I aimed for staff to be more capable of creating their own ways of working, rather than needing me to tell them what to do. I aimed to develop what we needed to do with staff, carers,

trustees and other stakeholders, rather than taking an authoritarian approach. I will also show how, at times, I found myself caring-with-authority as I succumbed to the view that I was the one that must know what to do and therefore should tell people what to do. I was allured by the power available to me in my role. I will explain how that caused an atmosphere of conflict and a sense of us vs. them. I will attempt to maintain the messiness of the examples in this tour, as MacKillop (2018) advocates. My tension is an example of how the word leadership "is understood as the result of struggles between competing discourses seeking to hegemonise a given social order" (MacKillop, 2018, p.209).

Bendell *et al.* (2016) argue that leadership is not a settled term and whilst many may think of "special individuals; single-handedly capable of transforming organisations with their inherent capabilities and skills… in the past 15 years there has been a growing backlash against this 'belief in the power of one" (Gronn, 2002: 319)' (p.1). Therefore, whilst I am looking at my influence, I am not claiming to have achieved the benefits to the charities I work with because of my singular exceptionalism. Bendell and Little (2015) argue that "assumptions about "leadership" … have added to the persistent social and environmental problems we experience today" (p.14). They argue for deconstructing the idea of leadership, reconstructing it with an approach that enables leaderful groups to develop sustainably. Leadership through alongsideness (Pound and Grant, 2021) provides a reconstructed form of leadership that is about power-sharing, and utilising beliefs and values as knowledge (p.318). I was influenced by leadership through alongsideness, as I created my own post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality in how I lead charities, recognising that power and achievements are distributed.

I am not aiming to add to the caring leadership literature, which suggests there is a romanticised type of leader (Pederzini, 2020). Nor am I aiming to enter the debate on the difference between caring about and caring for, which I see as setting up unhelpful binaries. Rather the assemblages of caring-with are offered as concepts to think with, recognising there is a multiplicity of ways of caring that perform differently. I aim to consider what leadership can do, to consider leadership as distributed (Bolden, 2007), rather than leaders and followers which can lead to binary thinking (Waterhouse, 2011). Rather I will map different assemblages that are constantly in motion and on the move, in order to find something more ethical and generative.

In my playroom, I talked to you about my toys; the building blocks representing Adlerian Theory; the chemistry set as a metaphor for the importance of individual success stories;

When the tour gets to the bedroom, we shall explore some less useful ideas I developed from childhood that emerged in the course of my research, where I have identified it would be better to find more useful ways of responding.

the plant representing my growth mindset; the puzzle to show how I made my own meaning and purpose. Although the tour of this room is looking at my professional practice as an adult. My toys from the playroom have followed us in. Showing how they are still relevant to my growth and have helped me to develop my skills as a professional. These childhood toys gave me a good basis for coming through childhood without the more usual negative outcomes of being in care. They have also gone on to be useful in how I built my career, and haven't been left behind in childhood.

In the Playroom, I looked at how the Crucial Cs (Lew and Bettner, 1996) helped me understand how I got through the care system and avoided the more usual, harmful outcomes for looked after children. In this room, I will show how my Crucial Cs developed and how I used my Crucial Cs to improve my role in helping the charities I worked with.

Storyteller

Growing up I had the ambition to do work I loved and that helped other people. I was determined to get a degree so I had choices that would enable me to get such work. I gained my degree and have been fortunate to find work that I enjoy and helps people. In my roles helping young offenders and then young carers I became frustrated that I was unable to develop services freely, as I was limited by the organisations I worked with. I became CEO to be able to respond to carers more effectively, by being able to develop the services they requested.

Host
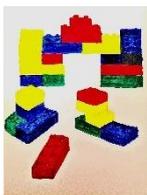
 The building block of capability was important to me personally, as I became CEO of the Carers' Centre at age 29. I was aware of the areas I had limited or no experience or knowledge of, such as managing finances and charity legislation related to governance. I had to be vulnerable, by being honest about the things I didn't know and asking for help to understand them. As Brené Brown (2015) says, "asking for help always means risking vulnerability" (p.181). Fortunately, the trustees responded to my vulnerability and honesty by supporting me and finding people who knew more than me who could provide me with guidance.

I took on the organisation after a previous role had not worked out due to the trustees having a lack of understanding of what the job entailed. This was largely due to a lack of succession planning, which is not unusual in charities and other not-for-profit organisations (Froelich *et al.*, 2011). Failing to plan for succession is a risk for charities (Froelich *et al.*, 2011) when a post holder has been in the job a long time and their role has not been reviewed. Using their job description can mean someone is employed and discovers the job is not what they expected or able to do. When I applied, the trustees had undergone a full review of the organisation and the position they were interviewing for, which meant I was interviewed with an accurate job description. At the interview I was entirely honest about the parts of the job I would need to be trained on.

My Post-living-theory of Caring-with-mutuality Emerges Through the Crucial C of Capability

When I started my PhD I focused on my leadership as a practice, "Conceptions of leadership as a practice are concerned with how leadership emerges *as a practice* rather than residing in the traits, character, or behaviours of individuals" (Ford, 2016, p.223). I sought to improve my practice using a Living Theory approach and was influenced by *alongsideness* which Pound (2003) says, "relies on my respect for people, whom I see as being in a process of becoming, as I am myself" (p.187).

After finishing as CEO, I got stuck trying to develop my living-theory and shifted to developing my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality. I found limitations with Living Theory and sought to expand beyond the view of practice being

professional. Almost all living-theories are focused on improving professional practice, despite many having much wider significance. Most living-theories focus on teaching and education (for example, see Russell, 2021; Branch, 2020; Meyers, 2019; Campbell, 2018; Kaizer-Remmer, 2017; Damon, 2017; Bahadur Qutoshi, 2016; O'Connor, 2015; Lee Scott, 2013; Wolvaardt, 2013; Timm, 2012; Whitehead, 1999; Hughes, 2012; Kinsella, 2012; Potts, 2012; Thamsanqa Gumede, 2011; Phillips, 2011; Vargas, 2010; Lothian, 2010; Geller, 2010; Phillips, 2010; Riding, 2008; Riding, 2008; O'Neill, 2008; Spiro, 2008; Adler Collins, 2007; Charles, 2007; Rawal, 2006; Hymer, 2007; McDonagh, 2007; Cahill, 2007; Glenn, 2006; Sullivan, 2006; Farren, 2005; Hartog, 2004; Roberts, 2003; Delong, 2002; Bosher, 2001; Finnegan, 2000; Cunningham, 1999; D'Arcy, 1998; Laidlaw, 1996 and Evans, 1995).

Others living-theories include professions in health care (Naidoo, 2005; Pound, 2003); social work (Jones, 2008); local authority (Jones, 2019; Huxtable, 2012; Lohr, 2006); business (Kaplan, 2013; Crotty, 2012); and charity (D'Souza, 2008).

There are some theses that Whitehead (2022) lists on his website that I would argue don't produce an individual living-theory but refer to or critique Living Theory. In a similar way, my thesis is not claiming to create a living-theory but to have been influenced by Living Theory to create something different. Church (2004) is influenced by living standards of judgement which she uses to develop her thesis but does not create a living-theory. Serper (2010) claims to deconstruct Living Theory and transform it into something different, which is a similar route to the one I have taken. There is one thesis that does not focus on a professional practice and yet claims to create a living-theory of a "creative art

of inquiry" (Scholes-Rhodes, 2002). Scholes-Rhodes (2002) began researching when in the pharmaceutical industry, but described a need to leave her job. She described her retreat into her domestic setting (p.11) due to the concern of the harm she might be doing to herself through engaging with her Living Theory Research Supervision Group (p.251). I recognise the challenge of trying to create a living-theory that does not conform to improving a professional practice. Scholes-Rhodes was able to create a living-theory by removing herself from the Living Theory research community. I chose to find a different route and create a post-living-theory rather than take the solitary route Scholes-Rhodes needed to take to complete her thesis (p.12).

My thesis has expanded beyond professional practice to understanding that I am my practice as a posthuman self, entangled with human and non-human others. I have kept the office in my thesis home as my professional work exists, however my professional practice is not privileged as a more important practice than other versions of practice, as Living Theory seems to do.

Despite my move to posthuman/post-qualitative research, I have remained influenced by Living Theory, and Pound's living-theory of alongsideness (Pound, 2003) has influenced the development of caring-with-mutuality, which also recognises that we are all in a process of becoming - different for all, but concerned for all to thrive. The main point of difference is; that caring-with-mutuality goes beyond people and includes the material objects and concepts that work with us, which will be shown in this tour of the office. Connection is important in alongsideness, I will explore how connection is also plugged into the assemblage of caring-with-mutuality as one of the Crucial Cs. Mutuality is not meant as being the same, as difference is important. Rather than seeking

similarity, mutuality recognises the entanglements of distributed agency. Encouragement is an important aspect of developing an environment to thrive.

Caring-with-mutuality was evident in my leadership practice, as I was not only focused on my capability, I also aimed to increase the staff's sense of their own capability. As an organisational leader, I recruited people that I felt had different personalities and skills to my own, to give diverse perspectives and abilities. I automatically encouraged people's capabilities, as I employed them to do tasks and roles that I was not good at or able to do. I found that being safe to be vulnerable (Brown, 2015), can lead to increased capability, as I found I often learn more when things go wrong rather than when things go well. I found my learning is greatest when I tried to do things that I don't have expertise in.

Practice Example

When I began at the Carers' Centre, we rebranded and I tried to do it all myself with amateur results. I recognised that I was struggling and decided to recruit a Communications and Marketing Manager. She was able to revolutionise our brand, marketing and communications in ways that I couldn't. I learnt that it's best to find an expert to do things that I don't have expertise in. This ended up making me feel more capable, as I knew I had the resource to turn my idea into something amazing, rather than feeling frustrated because I couldn't translate my idea into the high-quality marketing materials that I desired. On 26/4/14 I wrote in my appraisal 'Really enjoyed developing the marketing and comms plan' (Hutchison, 2014a), which shows how much having someone in post who was capable helped me not only be better at, but also enjoy that side of the work.

Storyteller

As CEO, another area of weakness of mine was dealing with poor performance and staffing problems. Rather than name specific incidents, I will talk about these in general terms to protect people's anonymity. It was dealing with a very sensitive staff issue, which led to a disciplinary. I realised the new manager we had recruited to manage human resources (HR) was relaxed and comfortable with the process. I was feeling stressed, responding emotionally and struggling to be professional due to my feelings. I recognised these were not helping the situation. In the end, I handed over the process and it ran extremely smoothly and was resolved with professionalism.

Host

Practice Example

On reflection, I realised that the staff's behaviour had been allowed to deteriorate due to my lack of expertise and skills in that area. Had I recognised that sooner and got the new manager to address the staff members conduct earlier, rather than feeling that I 'should' be responsible, we might have improved the situation and potentially avoided a disciplinary action (Winslade, 2009). It would have also been better for my self-care, as my wellbeing always deteriorated when I was trying to deal with such issues.

My learning came from recognising that my limitations were not weaknesses, rather they were opportunities to strengthen the organisation by finding and developing those skills with other staff, and recruiting people with those skills where they didn't exist. Additionally, once those staff were in place, whilst I didn't become an expert, I improved at the areas I could do and ensured the marketing and communications and HR were well managed.

Meta-host

This is a reflective account of my weaknesses and limitations and how I overcame them. How would it change if I took a diffractive view of what happened?

> *Ideally, wresting control from language (or in musical analysis from notation) does not constitute an attack on language or discount it from mattering as a potentially crucial element within a web of diffractive interferences. It does, however, constitute a deprivileging of the linguistic and notational habits that underlie a hierarchical relationship between composer and performer, instrument, listener, or other agents. All of these agents are involved performatively, i.e., actively within the spatio-temporal constraints of a particular version of a piece. This runs the obvious risk of exaggerating some minor agents' role in the piece, and yet is also a profoundly necessary corrective to more traditional, representationalist hermeneutic methodologies (Fairbairn, 2017, II. Position 2).*

In other words, am I using language unquestioningly and therefore making a simplistic explanation? Would taking a diffractive perspective focus on different areas that everyday use of language tends to ignore, such as the importance of the marketing materials themselves, which might change how the example is viewed? Waterhouse (2011) suggests moving from "analysis as interpretation to analysis as rhizoanalytic connection" (p.126) and that the following questions help to move away from interpretation towards rhizoanalytic connection. What does it do to my inquiry to answer these questions, "does the research work? How does it contribute to becoming, becoming with the world?" (Waterhouse, 2011, p.151).

Host

The reflective practice examples I gave of the communications and HR improvements focused mainly on the people involved; myself, the communications and marketing manager and later a manager to manage HR processes. However, the marketing materials changed the organisation in a way that the people in it were unable to. They presented an image beyond merely the staff working at the Centre, not just that they were more professional, as they were professionally designed and printed, they also presented the organisation we were changing into. The marketing materials both presented the differences we were making and made the difference themselves. There was "not as an absolute boundary between object and subject, here and there, now and then, this and that, but rather as the effects of enacted cuts in a radical reworking of cause/effect" (Barad, 2014, p.174). I felt that at times the marketing materials were pushing us forward as an organisation, as they were portraying what we were becoming before we had become what they showed us to be. I feel the marketing materials helped the organisation be awarded a five-year commissioning contract. I feel the organisation had not sufficiently improved to win a contract when I led the writing of the new commission. However, our marketing materials were part of the evidence that convinced the commissioners to give us the contract. Therefore, these non-human elements may have been more important than the human elements at times in the organisation's process of becoming. They were part of the caring-with-mutuality relationship that led to the learning and improvement of the organisation.

To move the inquiry from analysis to rhizoanalytic connection is to move beyond living-theory to my post-living-theory. The way the research works has shifted and changed and continues to change as I think with posthuman/post-qualitative theory. I began researching from a Living Theory approach, looking for data that could be used "to produce authenticated evidence to back up (my) claim and test its validity or truthfulness." (McNiff and Whitehead, 2010, p.90).

Unlike creating a living-theory where I was trying to create a comprehensible explanation and provide sufficient evidence for my claims (Whitehead, 2014). My post-living-theory has tried to destabilise and question my claims – "think *fragmentation, ambiguity, loss of certainty"* (Maclure, 2002). This has been a difficult habit for me to break, as I am prone to make grand claims and appear entirely assured and certain. My meta-host was introduced to problematise, question and deconstruct my tendencies to assert truth claims.

Thinking with St. Pierre I moved from thinking I can add a few posthuman/post-qualitative ideas and still create a living-theory which is a humanistic/qualitative approach (St. Pierre, 2014). Rather, I shifted to realise my approach is ontologically different and needs to be entirely rethought, which has led to me creating a post-living-theory. This has been difficult to write as my thoughts are continually in a process of becoming and are on the move, meaning my thesis home has been built and torn down, decorated and redecorated many times.

Storyteller

As CEO, I encouraged people to grow and learn by creating a safe environment where mistakes were seen as learning opportunities and blame was not apportioned. I received complaints from carers which were often linked to a staff member's mistake. Rather than blame them, I would take responsibility and ask what learning could help improve their practice. Often this was some reflective practice to think about how things could be improved in future. I could then thank the carer for making us aware of an area for improvement and tell them how we would improve that area. Often the carer would go from being upset about the difficulty they had experienced to being pleased they had been able to improve the services we provided.

Host

As my inquiry has moved from living-theory which is reflective and reflexive to post-living-theory which is diffractive this has moved on how I think about this story. The effect of the pattern of my behaviour of learning from, rather than blaming people for mistakes, enabled us to do things differently in the future and for carers to feel differently about their experience (Barad, 2014). My approach is an example of caring-with-mutuality, where a situation that could cause defensiveness and conflict provided a different line of flight to create an environment for all to thrive; the carer complaining, us as staff learning how to improve, and the organisation. This example of caring-with-mutuality enables my values to play in different ways.

My monkey plays out in my approach. It is in line with my value of participation and an aspect of my emerging awareness of mutuality and our processes of becoming. Carers' complaints were listened to and acted as ways to develop the organisation.

My butterfly fluttered out my value of hope by using what seems the worst things that can happen, in this example, something going wrong and a carer complaining. Their complaint would then be used as a learning opportunity that helps to make a better future by improving the organisation.

My penguin played out my value of love to be compassionate, as often the staff member blamed themselves, even if I was not blaming them. I would take time to reassure them that it's ok to make mistakes, as they give us opportunities to learn and do things better.

My lion played out an opportunity for more justice, as carers often expressed quite rightly that they felt they had been wronged. I apologised on behalf of the organisation, to recognise the injustice they had experienced. I also feel an injustice is remedied by appropriate action and that by using their complaint to improve the organisation, their injustice was transformational and influenced greater justice in the future. Furman (2012) identifies "leadership for social justice [which] is action oriented and transformative, committed and persistent, inclusive and democratic, relational and caring, reflective" (p.195).

I agree with Laidlaw (1996) who says that values, such as justice "do not live for me alone as ideas in my head … such concepts have taken on their own life" (p.62). My values became entangled with the organisation, as they became something new. I explained how my values came from the challenges I faced in childhood. Ahmed (2010) says, "Perhaps the relationship between leadership and suffering is only paradoxical if we assume that suffering is stifling. We learn from what Braidotti rightly points out; those who have been undone by suffering can be the agents of ethical transformation" (p.216). My childhood experiences haven't been stifling but have enabled me to implement ethical transformation in my leadership roles.

After I left as CEO, a staff member sought me out after he also left his role. He sent me a letter as he wanted to let me know he was leaving and to thank me for employing him. He expressed how he perceived me as the CEO, "You … have inspired me both with your values and the way you have gone out of your way to live them with such courage, humanity and resolve" (Graham, 2020).

When researching my practice, it's always a concern that any feedback from staff won't be honest, as whilst I was CEO I was in a position of power which

MacKillop (2018) highlights as being important to consider. The affect of receiving the comments since I left are particularly affirming, as those providing them have nothing to gain from giving them and because they have sought me out to provide the feedback. I had thought about such feedback as data that felt more authentic and added validity (Whitehead, 2014). However, from a post-living-theory perspective, I questioned the idea of data and validity and now think with the feedback and map the affect, as I thought with theory (Lather, 1993; Hayes, 2018). Ethically I was unable to seek such critical views for my research. I believe feedback from such staff would have a different affect, as my lack of ability at managing the situation meant I often felt that I was a post-living-contradiction during the process. The affect could have been to improve my approach to managing difficult staff situations sooner. Unfortunately, it took me a long time to learn that I was not the best person, and I dealt with such situations poorly several times before I recruited someone more capable than I was, to improve management of those situations.

Brown (2015) says we can only expect people to be vulnerable to fail if we provide safe places where we build trust for those in our teams. She identifies trust-building as something that takes time and needs to be consistent, where we live our values and are vulnerable to admit our failures. Winslade (2009) suggests that trust-building can create new lines of flight. I showed examples of where I have admitted when I didn't understand; got it wrong or needed to improve; asked and responded to feedback and didn't blame others. I also received feedback that others observed this when they met me. In 2014 we had a Carers Trust mentor visit and his feedback from talking to me was,

> She inspires trust as both speech and body language are in harmony. She is not afraid to admit mistakes or to cover up areas for improvement. That gives one confidence that she knows her abilities and is eager to learn (Carers Trust Mentor, 2014).

For my research, I had a conversation with David, who was my Deputy for seven years and took over from me as CEO. He told me he had been sceptical when I said that if he made mistakes, it was ok, as it was a learning opportunity. He said he came to learn this was true, as I consistently supported his learning when he made a mistake and never apportioned blame. He said he found I was always generous with giving credit for successes and only ever supportive in understanding what learning could be gained from failures (Trumper, 2019). This opened up a new way of working for David where he could be honest and learn in a safe environment.

My Post-living-theory of Caring-with-mutuality Emerges Through the Crucial C of Connection

According to Saporito (2021), half of CEOs report feeling lonely. I addressed the isolation of being CEO, a role that holds all the responsibility and has no peer to share it with, by finding ways to connect.

Practice Example

I encouraged connection with everyone in the organisation by having an open-door policy (Shenhar, 1993). People could talk directly to me about their issues. This had some problems, as I would be as honest as possible and was criticised for not disseminating information equitably. However, Jill, the Chair, and I agreed that connection and honesty, where possible, were more important than protocol. I ensured I made time to talk to staff, volunteers and carers whenever possible, not formally, rather stopping and making time for a chat in the kitchen, or popping into people's offices and finding out how they and their families were doing.

Storyteller

I had regular supervision with Jill. We developed a mutually respectful relationship where we were able to kindly challenge each other and provide support and concern for each other. We both respected the operational and strategic lines of our relationship and would negotiate what was appropriate for her to do and what was more appropriate for me to do. Jill knew that when there was nothing more she could do to help, she could always bring food. I remember while writing a tender that was make or break for the charity, she brought me in homemade soup for lunch. That was the best way to help at that moment. I had a mutually respectful relationship with the other trustees, and built-in opportunities for developing and strengthening connections as well as the business needs. I lengthened the meeting times and added in half an hour for a break and provided food, in order to show appreciation and allow time for socialising and to build connections across the trustee team.

Meta-host

Thinking with a posthuman ontology, food sounds like an important performer in my relationship building and in how caring-with-mutuality was enacted as a CEO. Perhaps that is why I decided to let the aromas of my antimethodology meal infuse my thesis home as we take a tour with the hope you, the reader, will be enabled to think with my post-living-theory of with caring-with-mutuality.

> *Posthuman subjectivity expresses an embodied and embedded and hence partial form of accountability, based on a strong sense of collectivity, relationality and hence community building … A posthuman ethics for a non-unitary subject proposes an enlarged sense of inter-connection between self and others, including the non-human or 'earth' others (Braidotti, 2016, p.49).*

Is the food part of the intra-action happening? How are the relationships altered by thinking of the food as an equitable part of the relationship and the communities that are built? How is food embodied and embedded in my work?

Host

Bianco (2007) talks about food having an affect, to "create a mood" or to get people to "relax and open up" (p.49). My experience is the same - people are not only affected by the biological process of eating food they are also affected by the feeling and emotions food evokes. Food can be a way of caring physically and mentally and can evoke mutuality as everyone comes together to eat and partake. Elton (2019) invites us to take a posthuman view of food to decentre humans to be on a flattened ontology with food. She says, to be on the "same plane as the chicken you have roasted is to never see dinner quite the same way again" (p.6). To consider creating equity for the food and the production of the food, I am led to consider the sourcing and the complexities of "ethical foods" (Gray, 2016, p.242). Fairtrade may be a way to add equity, Goff (2016) acknowledges there are still problems with the poorest in the world being impacted.

Food is integral to my process of relationship and community building, however, considering food as part of the assemblage, I hold in mind both my immediate need for food and the consequences of that consumption on the future production and environmental impact (Gray, 2016). I am moving to caring for the food in its process of becoming, shifting from an individualistic humanistic perspective to a posthuman viewpoint. Food has been a key guest.

Practice Example

> Some staff expressed their need for celebration of their successes to increase morale and motivation to keep going, and so I would bring food such as cake and fruit to punctuate such moments. When food was provided at carers events and activities, it added to the feeling that carers were being cared for and looked after. Food added to the social dimension and made opportunities for friendships to develop. The food changed the nature of events from a formal meeting to an opportunity to develop informal connections.

As a CEO the workload is high, however, my values still had time to play. By making time for people my value of love was able to play. Brown (2012) says, "the result of … mutually respectful vulnerability is increased connection, trust, and engagement" (p.50). Caring-with-mutuality is a form of mutually respectful vulnerability, as Brown (2015) says, not without boundaries, as this has the opposite effect of disconnection, loss of trust and disengagement. I shared within the boundaries of confidentiality and appropriateness. I found through the relationships I built up and my value of hope, I could address when people were struggling and help them to see better possibilities in their job role or personally. I was also able to hear about issues that were happening informally, where people felt things were unfair or not right. I was often able to address the injustices people felt through informal chats, which could help people to see that either the situation was fairer than they had perceived or to address an issue I had not perceived from my vantage point (Shenhar, 1993). It also meant people had direct access to me and were able to be heard enabling me to live my value of participation. This is caring-with-mutuality in action. Rather than seeing the role of CEO as one-directional to impose or have power over, I saw my role to have power with those in the organisation.

Meta-Host

Thinking about my approach to power from a post-qualitative ontology, power becomes rhizomatic, not coming from the top but from the middle and relationships can be viewed as assemblages (Cluley and Radnor, 2020). Deleuze and Guattari (1987) think of power as the affects of bodies.

> *We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body, either to destroy that body or to be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it or to join with it in composing a more powerful body (p.257).*

What does the ontological perspective of seeing relationships as assemblages do, when considering my role as CEO? How does the shift in power from hierarchical expectations of organisational structures, to having power with others, flatten the ontology?

Host

I may have been in charge of ensuring we had the money to deliver services, and was part of the assemblage, however, alone that would have provided no benefit to the thousands of carers we supported each year. The assemblage needed to include the staff delivering services to make any difference. The idea of heroic leaders belongs to a hierarchical ontology. My post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality flattens such hierarchies to recognise that power is distributed (Bolden, 2007) and is an assemblage with the human and non-human others necessary to make a difference to improve carers lives.

Storyteller

I made time for connecting with others through various groups, especially other CEOs. We provided each other with both practical and emotional support, as we could share confidentially when there were financial or staff issues that were causing us stress and anxiety. I had coaching early

on as CEO to help me develop my skills and had a friend as a mentor who I could talk to. I attended several research groups throughout my time as CEO, as I was researching my practice.

Host

All of these gave me opportunities to connect and time to reflect to increase my learning (Schön, 1983). Although these also took time out of my busy workload, I always felt more able to cope and be more effective the more time I took for these opportunities. If I tried to gain more time by missing these opportunities to connect, I would feel less able to cope and would feel unable to do my job as well.

Meta-host

> *Couture (1994) … imagines the university as Dracula, feeding off the virgin souls (selves) of teachers who offer themselves up in the name of reflective practice. Couture fears that action research works by consuming the ungovernable alterity of the 'client', producing a state of amnesia, and leaving in its place 'this dead, smelly thing called teacher identity' (p.130)-a simulacrum that silences resistance and erases the memory of other, fractured and conflicting possibilities of identity (MacLure, 1996, p.283).*

Is there a sense that my self-research is just buying into an enterprise that requires payment of my giving up my soul for the research? Am I even giving accurate accounts of my practice, or am I seeking to give accounts that provide easy answers so that what I say makes sense of my actions? What about the conflicts, messiness and narratives that don't fit easily?

Host

It may be why I was so affected by the feedback that my draft thesis (Hutchison, 2018) was not ready that I discuss in the kitchen

I was told many times that people think I am brave to talk about such personal experiences in my research. I acknowledge their sentiment and often their concern, however people perceiving what I am saying as brave is an indicator that I haven't sanitised my narrative and have left in some of the harder, messier stories. There are certainly psychological and ethical challenges in writing about personal experiences (Wyatt, 2006). As my research is entirely self-funded, I don't feel any pressure from the academy to provide any particular narrative and choose to give more personal accounts. I also recognise my tendency to provide "victory narratives", I worked hard to "problematiz(e) the researcher as "the one who knows"" (Lather, 2012, p.11). To achieve this, I began the tour of this room, as Lather recommends, with stories of ruin where I highlighted areas of weakness and failure. I recognise that there is a danger of smooth sanitised stories being told in research, therefore, I found it helpful to understand my failures and challenges and find creative responses to improve my practice.

My Post-living-theory of Caring-with-mutuality Emerges Through the Crucial C of Counting

Storyteller

As CEO, it was easy to feel as though I counted as the position is visible and gets recognition. I would pass on that feeling of counting by being generous with my appreciation, recognition and opportunities for people to participate. As much as I would not blame others and would take responsibility for things that went wrong, I would share the credit for any successes.

> Practice Example
>
> I worked to ensure I made time to recognise people's successes at a team level by celebrating with food and drink at team meetings. On an individual level, I would take time to email the person to acknowledge and show my appreciation for their achievements, or by having a quiet word to recognise their work. I had to be conscious in my efforts to make time for such recognitions, as there were always other things to be doing. However, it was always worth taking the time for their feeling of being valued and recognised and it always made me feel better for showing my gratitude.

Host

Successes were always achieved as an assemblage, as nothing was possible to achieve without the hard work of the staff and volunteers. I think taking credit for others work immediately makes them feel they don't count and reduces motivation and morale.

My practice of showing gratitude not only made people feel they counted, it increased their other Crucial Cs. By acknowledging their achievements, it strengthened the staff members feeling of capability. By taking the time, I increased the connection between us and gave them the courage to continue doing their job.

Meta-host

Words matter literally when we think with Barad's theory of agential realism "matter and meaning are iteratively reconfigured by a whole range of participating agencies in each and every moment in the ongoing re-constitution and mattering of the world" (Taylor, 2017, pp.317-8). Earlier I talked about food from a posthuman perspective being equally important as the humans in

celebrating success or changing the nature of a meeting. Words are the same, they matter and bring meaning. Does it "distribute value more generously" (Bennett, 2010, p.13) to consider the words as matter? How does it affect how people see themselves when we realise, we are entangled with the words that are used to describe us?

Host

I realised that it's powerful to tell people why I appreciate them from personal experience. However, viewing words as matter that become entangled with how we see ourselves and adds a tangibility to the words. To consider that the words are as physical as the food (Warfield, 2020) I talked about providing to celebrate successes makes me understand why they are important and effective. It makes me more mindful of the words I use to describe people and encourages me to be more generous with my appreciation, as it's so easy not to add materiality to my gratitude and miss the value of, and opportunities to affect, those I work with.

My Post-living-theory of Caring-with-mutuality emerges Through the Crucial C of Courage

Meta-Host

Mialet (2003) has written about Professor Stephen Hawking as a "distributed or extended body (his secretary, his computer, and his students)" (p.574). Due to his disability, she argues it's easier to see how his genius is distributed, rather than being in his brain as a dualistic model would suggest. She argues his work emphasises the posthuman assemblage that makes visible how his science is created by multiplicities of human and non-human entities. Mialet (2018) makes the point that "he was making visible what we normally don't see, these different

collectives that we all need, to a certain extent, to work and think and act". In my work, I realise I didn't achieve success at the Carers' Centre alone. The successes were distributed through the paid and voluntary staff, the premises and the carers themselves, amongst other things. How can I rethink my successes through the idea of myself as a distributed agent?

Host

My ability to achieve successes were distributed (Mialet, 2003; 2018) with others. The table shows the year-on-year growth economically and in the number of carers supported we achieved when I was CEO. The money was not for the sake of having more money, rather it was to help more people as shown in the table.

Table 1 Growth Summary as CEO

Financial year end (FYE)	Income	Spending	% Income fundraised	No. of Carers	% of carer population
31 Mar 2017	£930,778	£788,999	45%	4,345	25%
31 Mar 2016	£917,730	£855,242	43%	4,015	23%
31 Mar 2015	£833,873	£834,368	35%	3,629	21%
31 Mar 2014	£648,203	£706,124	25%	3,523	20%
31 Mar 2013	£591,017	£511,110	12%	2,224	13%
31 Mar 2012	£356,120	£381,455	22%	1,200	7%
31 Mar 2011	£361,599	£344,500	22%	1,019	6%
31 Mar 2010	£338,582	£301,784	17%	901	6%

Practice Example

As part of the assemblage of the Carers' Centre, I secured an asset for carers for the long-term despite a climate of cuts and austerity (O'Hara, 2015). We had an excellent track record at securing funding; however, the decision was still difficult for the trustees who weighed the risks for the charity with the benefits (Charity Commission, 2018). They were able to have the courage because the Senior Development Manager and I, who led the project, had previous successes. They were able to be confident that we were able to take the step change as a charity and buy our property. Janine and I had shown we were reliable and delivered on previous projects which is a tenet of trust (Brown, 2018).

Owning the premises helped us meet our organisational strategic aims of being here in the long-term for carers (Carers' Centre strategy 2018-2024) by providing a permanent place for carers, as the video below shows:

Video 3 Bath Carer' Centre Launch (2014) [*https://tinyurl.com/BathCClaunch*](https://tinyurl.com/BathCClaunch)

The video expresses that the premises are not just about having an asset, but what it can help us achieve for carers. As I say at 0.45 the Carers' Centre is a place where carers can take a break, gain support and meet up with other carers. I believe that the vision for the Centre also gave the trustees the courage, as they trusted that we would maximise the use of the premises to benefit carers. NCVO ethical principles are that charities should put beneficiaries first (NCVO, 2019) and the trustees knew our ownership of the premises was first and foremost about being able to meet carers' needs more effectively.

Meta-host

From a posthumanist ontology (Kumm and Burbary, 2018) the money, garden and building are as important as the people involved in getting them, as are the concepts used to inspire the project – 'a place for carers'. What does it do to see these as equal to mine and others input? How would it have changed the

project if we had used different concepts? How did the concept of 'a place for carers' add to the sense of community and did it make the project more than just a fundraising cycle? Did it change the materiality of the money by it being used to buy a concept, not just a building?

Host

I do a lot of fundraising and it matters that the money is for a meaningful purpose, rather than getting it for the sake of it. It matters to my motivation and it often matters to other people to be motivated to give (Fradd, 2012). Very few funders will be convinced to give if I cannot articulate clearly the purpose the funding is for. In this project, we thought carefully about the concept of 'a place for carers'. It seemed to encapsulate what carers were telling us they wanted, we felt it captured that we valued carers because we felt they deserved a place of their own and having a place seemed to provide an opportunity for carers to find a sense of community.

We felt it would change the project if we used different concepts, even a single word felt like it changed the meaning. We originally thought of saying 'a space for carers', however, this felt less personal and didn't feel like the carers would have ownership, which we felt was integral to purchasing the premises.

Considering non-human actors as equally important in the project changes my perception by helping me to consider how the non-human parts perform (Barad, 2007). The premises perform by providing long-term security for the organisation, which as staff we were unable to provide. The longest contract we were able to secure, as staff, was for seven years, which is long-term when it comes to charity funding (Brick *et al.*, 2009) but is significantly less than the premises are likely to provide. A contract is still a non-human actor, and so, as staff, from a purely monetary perspective we are a drain on the resources of the organisation. Fortunately, our performances were viewed more broadly than

just the cost of our wages. Our ability to provide high-quality services for carers, improving the quality of their lives, gave us value. However, the premises also contributed to providing these outcomes and outputs, which helps me to see how the non-human is of equal value to mine and the other staff's contribution. This helps to decentre me and recognise how non-human elements enabled me to live caring-with-mutuality in practice. To see me as a distributed agent, in assemblage with the human and non-human resources.

Merton's Chemistry Set

Telling success stories emerged as being important in the research as lines of flight. I began playing with Merton's chemistry set and will look at the stories

carers I worked with told in my work. The stories act as rhizomes growing from all directions, with no hierarchy. They provided inspiration to others in similar situations, that they could overcome their situation, as well as inspiring professionals to improve their practice.

As I looked at several individual success stories at the Carers' Centre, I will look at my work with the Young Carers Development Trust where I was originally contracting as Executive Director whilst CEO at the Carers' Centre and I am now Chair.

The aims of the Trust are to inspire, nurture and achieve (YCDT, 2021). The main way the aim to inspire is achieved is through the stories of the individual young carers we support. In 2015, I gained funding and organised for a video to be made where the young carers we supported at the time could tell their own stories to inspire other young carers.

Video 4 What is the YCDT? By Suited and Booted Studios (2015)
https://tinyurl.com/YCDT15

The young carers in the video were all able to tell their own story in their own way, and say what difference the Trust made for them to achieve their ambitions, through the nurturing that the Trust provided. Carlsen (2005) describes stories as processes of becoming, "a continuous striving for progression in life story by participation in small and large cycles of transformation" (p.241). From a posthuman perspective, these are not from a separate self but rather are entangled and intra-acting with other young carers, professionals and organisations, who are inspired by the stories they are telling. They can strive for their own transformation as they tell their stories and inspire other young carers transformation, as they encourage them to achieve their ambitions. Although the stories are success stories (Merton, 1949), they are not smooth stories of self (MacLure, 1996), as they retain the "uncertainty and disappointment" (MacLure, 2011, p.997) of their journey. By acknowledging the moments of ruin in their process of becoming (Lather, 1997), the transformation is all the more powerful, inspiring and encouraging for others in similar situations, or for those working with young people trying to overcome adversity.

The stories are on the move, as they don't act as fixed stories, rather they are in motion with the young carers processes of becoming. The stories show the movement towards goals and reorientation when their ambitions shifted or they didn't get the results they were hoping for. I organised for a storyteller to help the young carers attending tell the ups and downs of their experiences.

Storyteller

At the session to develop this video, Amy, an ambassador and previous mentee of mine, agreed to write a paper together. This gave Amy a new way to be able to tell her story. She was studying psychology at the time and researching young carers, however as her research was third-person, she had not had the chance to research her own story and learning as a young carer.

Host

Practice Example

Our paper weaves together our 'we' voice and our individual voices to develop our own unique stories where we had a shared understanding of the learning that came out of the paper. Working on the paper together was a step in the journey for me to develop the concept of caring-with-mutuality. At the time, caring as mutuality emerged from writing the paper. We had our own unique insights and input, we were enriched in our learning and development and a value of 'equality and respect' enabled us to critique and strengthen each other's work (Dyke and Hutchison, 2017, p.83).

Amy highlights in the paper that my story had already inspired her to believe she could attend university. Amy wrote, "only one young carer … in my region

had gone to university, this was Sonia. This for me was a beacon of light to me, someone has done it! This to me meant I could do it too". (Dyke and Hutchison, 2017, p.99). Amy has now been able to go on and use her story of success as shown in the video to inspire other young carers, that they can go to university too. Amy is now acting as a development manager mentoring other young carers to achieve their ambitions.

Meta-host

At the time of writing the paper with Amy, I was working to finish my initial attempt at my thesis, where I was developing my living-theory of caring as mutuality, the ruins of which this thesis is built from (MacLure, 2011). Amy helped move my inquiry forward by researching with me, where we identified experiencing caring as mutuality within our relationship. We unpacked how each of us experienced values of love, hope, justice and participation. The learning we experienced during writing this paper could be described as "that of pure memory, which creates relationships between temporally separated events" (Wilson, 2020, p.4). We both looked at events in our lives and the memory of working with each other and identified an experience of caring as mutuality and were helped to develop our living-theory. We used reflection and reflexivity and found patterns of similarity or sameness, which we could clarify and explain our living-theory of caring as mutuality.

As my research moved into areas beyond Living Theory, I began to explore posthuman/post-qualitative approaches. My learning moved from "pure memory" to "pure difference" (Wilson, 2020, p.4), which Deleuze identifies as most important and is a cut from what went before. Learning together from before and after simultaneously, which changes it into something different, in our process of becoming (Deleuze, 1989). This is what I am trying to achieve with my post-living-theory, I took my previous pure memory learning and

diffracted it into pure difference, as I experienced my process of becoming. Can I diffract the learning experience with Amy to see it anew as a post-living-theory of caring-with mutuality?

Host

To diffract my experience with Amy, I will seek to map out the effects of difference, rather than the original paper which, I now realise, was mapping the similarities we found despite our differences. If I map the lines of flight the experience of the paper took us on, I can see that for Amy the effects of the differences were to provide her with an alternative way of researching and reflecting, which led her to "think more critically about my own writing" (Dyke and Hutchison, 2017, p.88). The effects of the difference for me were to recognise that we were able to share so much despite coming from very different places. I had expected because of our differences, we would come to some very different conclusions. I was affected by noticing how our different starting points led to "repetition in use of quotations" (p.93) which led to a recognition of our process of caring as mutuality. This changed my perception of caring from being a singular form of caring that was always the same, to recognising differences in how caring is experienced. At the time I thought there was a hierarchy in that difference, which led me to name the experience as caring <u>as</u> mutuality, which I now realise privileges mutuality as more important than the caring. I now realise this comes from a humanistic ontology that is hierarchical, due to the binary separations that arise from seeing humans as separate and privileged. "Instead of separating them" *(Deleuze, 1989, p.155),* my understanding of assemblages has shifted my understanding to caring-with-mutuality, as I now see them as entangled. It was this initial effect of difference that led to thinking about how caring performs differently in different situations.

The plants I grew in my playroom are still growing strong in my office despite the storms they have weathered, as is evident in the examples I gave of mine and others thriving. Undertaking practitioner research throughout my leadership shows that I held a growth mindset to improve my practice as a leader. I found the question 'How can I improve my practice?' (Whitehead, 1989) useful and asked it often when I was CEO. However, as my research has developed, I diffracted my original attempts to create my living-theory into a post-living-theory and identified the post-living-contradictions that emerged.

Storyteller

In 2013 I undertook a restructure of the Carers' Centre when we won a large commission to run carers' services, which meant we needed to grow the charity significantly. The looming desk in my office is a reminder of the allure to caring-with-authority that I found myself attracted to during the restructuring process.

Host

Practice Example

I wrote papers about the restructure and my learning from a Living Theory perspective as pure memory (Wilson, 2020). I reflected on the restructure in several papers (Hutchison, 2014b; Hickey *et al.* 2014; Hutchison, 2020). The papers have shown my learning over time, as separate to the learning for the other staff involved and for the organisation.

In my paper in 2014, I viewed the process through the humanistic/qualitative lens of Living Theory. I identified that my values were negated and then re-emerged, which led to practice improvement. I stopped pursuing an impositional restructure where it was imposed top-down, which Lewin *et al.* (1939) identified as problematic in the 1930s, and yet continues to persist. Ford (2016) identified the problems as "individualistic and controlling aspects of more traditional ways of viewing leadership" (p.224).

However, before my values re-emerged, I was tempted by caring-with-authority which would have led to an impositional approach. The post-living-contradiction of the assemblage caring-with-authority emerged as I later diffracted the event as I identified the effects of the different ways I responded to the restructure. I identified how my caring to get the restructure 'right' became entangled with the option to use my authority as CEO to push through a solution. This approach may still have ended with the organisation being restructured, however it performed differently than I wanted, as it left me feeling uncomfortable and the staff feeling they were not being included. By caring-with-authority, I mean an assemblage of myself with concepts of power and authority over others which led to binary thinking that I could make decisions in isolation. It views the world as separated and leads to paternalistic, hierarchical approaches, thinking that the leader knows best and can therefore make better choices than everyone else (Bendell and Little, 2015). I realise I am tempted to think with caring-with-authority when I am unsure of what to do and doubt my skills. Rather than pushing into my vulnerability (Brown, 2010), I leant on the structures of hierarchy and power that my position of CEO afforded me. I was tempted by Theory E (Beer and Nohria, 2000), to manage from the top-down, blaming the structures and systems that meant Chris, the consultant we employed, had to solve the problems because he was qualified to do so. That approach left us in a values vacuum that ignored our feelings of discomfort and put the staff's

feelings of fear and concern last. In my 2014 paper, I note several factors that were making me vulnerable to caring-with-authority, which were; being tired, being overstretched, being busy, being intimidated by the complicated legal requirements of the situation and feeling insecure because of previous mistakes (Hutchison, 2014b).

However, my discomfort became so great that I asked Chris if there was another way of achieving the end goal of a better structure, which didn't negate my values. He then shifted us towards Theory O (Beer and Nohria, 2000), which is an employee-first approach, that assumes the capabilities and solutions are within the organisation and that they are built collaboratively. Chris's role became one of support to ensure we remained within the law, whilst the whole organisation helped find solutions to the problems we faced. As we combined these approaches, we felt empowered to set the direction whilst ensuring all staff were listened to in creating the solution. We named the paradox that the new contract was the impetus, but that we wanted a collaborative solution that would lead to an organisation that could succeed in supporting more carers, which is our purpose.

I identified ways I was able to return to my values of love, hope, justice, and participation. Love because we decided to provide all staff with the full information for every job and increased the regularity of communication which I believed would reduce stress and uncertainty, which Bordia *et al.* (2008) identify as important for people's wellbeing in such a process.

Hope because I was able to promise that there were more jobs than people, we would support anyone moving into new roles and because we moved from doing 'to' the staff to doing 'with'

staff (Heron and Reason, 1997). This meant people were able to imagine better possibilities for the organisation and as a Senior Management Team, we would try to implement their suggestions. As individuals, they had the possibility to go for a promotion and improve their circumstances.

 Justice because we ensured all the processes were transparent. Everyone had an equal opportunity to go for new positions and everyone could see the new pay scales were fair in terms of the roles and responsibilities people would undertake. We implemented a recruitment process, which we tried to ensure was as fair as possible and gave people access to complain where they were not happy and investigated these fully.

Participation because we gave staff the opportunity to have dialogue (Heath *et al.*, 2006, p.369) and tell us everything that they wanted to happen and everything they were unhappy about the process so that we could change it. Although this was uncomfortable at times, it led to us being able to improve the process. A major way we showed this was a document my deputy, David produced, which listed every comment staff made and what we did to respond. The document showed we had listened and considered every concern and even if we were unable to do what staff wanted, we were able to explain what we had done.

Meta-host

It sounds like caring-with-mutuality was a more generative process. There is a danger that caring-with-mutuality could be seen as the 'right' way and caring-with authority as the' wrong' way, which may lead back to binary thinking. Like Waterhouse (2011) did in her thesis, rather than considering the assemblages as being right OR wrong, could I recognise them as both right AND wrong? Indeed, caring-with-authority would be a better approach in an emergency,

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when a decision about what to do is needed immediately. Someone taking control and ensuring everyone is safe, would be better than caring-with-mutuality, which would seek multiple views and could lead to people being injured or dying, as it would delay any action being taken. Waterhouse's approach to avoiding binary thinking is to encourage "experimentation in order to see what (potentially) more satisfying ways of living" (Waterhouse, 2011, p.288) there might be. If I view this as experimentation, what does it do?

Host

If I view this as experimentation, I can see that returning to my values meant the process became caring-with-mutuality, as staff became able to contribute in a meaningful way that influenced the process. The affect was that I felt a shift from being separated from the staff to them feeling involved, which was more satisfying. The experience influenced me to start processes with caring-with-mutuality, where staff were more informed and involved all the way through and part of shaping changes from the start, even or especially when I felt uncertain.

In our joint paper (Hickey, et al., 2014), we looked from the perspective of our individual values. I showed the influence I had on Chris's learning to recognise that exploring and articulating values is an important process to underpin any restructuring exercise (Hickey, et.al., 2014). In 2020, I used the incident to look from the perspective of the learning I gained from my early recollections and how the incident came to challenge dominant discourses about restructures being undertaken in a values vacuum (Hutchison, 2020). By looking at the restructuring process in different ways, there is a level of reflexivity I gained to understand how the social, economic and cultural lenses we each viewed the world had on the process, for myself and the others involved. In 2014, I explained how my values came from my experience of being in care. Chris explained how his values came from growing up in what he describes as, a

"raucous Irish catholic household" (Hickey, et.al., 2014 p.5). David identified his sexuality and disability as influencing his values.

The many views over time and in different ways add a diffractive process, each time turning over and over again (Barad, 2014). In my first paper (Hutchison, 2014b), I focused on how my values re-emerging changed the process of the restructure from top-down to more collaborative. It focused on how others experienced the change and what could be done to improve the process further. In my second paper (Hickey *et al.,* 2014), I wrote a joint paper with others involved in leading the restructure. We focused on how each of us moved closer to the values that were important to each of us in the process, how that felt for us and what we would do differently in future. I revisited the restructure as a practice example (Hutchison, 2020) and looked at it from the perspective of my early recollections and how courses of action I learnt from childhood helped me to return to work in line with my values. These different papers not only help me understand the incident of the restructure, but they also helped me to see my intentions in my work differently. They are relevant beyond the specific moment in time and space, as I can see that the incident has influenced how I work. I came to run decisions I make through the filter of my values, to check if I feel in line and where they are not, to adjust to being more values-based. I feel I have greater insight as to what that meant through writing about those experiences in the restructuring incident. I consider more what others feel in the decisions that I make and seek to create more collaboration and co-creation when making changes. "Co-creation is commonly thought of as moving beyond tokenistic participation and guided by fundamental notions of participation, praxis, collective creativity and knowledge exchange" (Depper and Fullagar, 2020, p.87). I am more aware of the courses of action I take that have helped me achieve my aims since childhood. In a sense the restructure is not fixed in time, it's continuing to have an iterative repatterning (Barad, 2014) in how I think

about my practice and my learning. It's still reshaping how I respond to events in the now, as I am still entangled in that event and the consequences of the multiplicity of actions we took (Warfield, 2019), and on the thoughts and feelings of those involved – the affect.
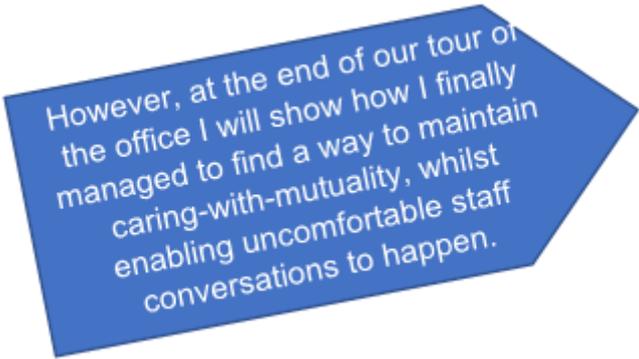
However, at the end of our tour of the office I will show how I finally managed to find a way to maintain caring-with-mutuality, whilst enabling uncomfortable staff conversations to happen.

It's not a question of whether we got the restructure right or wrong. That dualism does not perform in a useful way (Jacobs, 2008, p.155). Rather, it's what I take each time I look back at the event that takes a new line of flight. The process alters how I see my practice in the now, whichever now I was looking at each time. As I look at the restructure now, at this moment writing, I realise that it influenced me to be more assured to take a values-based approach and that generally, this has led to greater harmony and comfort for myself and others. However, I also realise it has not helped me to respond to situations where there is disharmony, where other people perform or behave in ways that contradict my values. In many ways, my values have been unhelpful in responding to such situations, as I feel myself becoming entangled in how those involved in the situation are feeling and being unable to draw myself out to respond in a professional and boundaried way (Brown, 2015). I find myself unable to cut off from my values and yet have to follow processes I feel uncomfortable following, which is unhelpful for myself and others involved.

Most of my research in this area has found my best response has been to find other people who are more skilled in these circumstances and have struggled to find a way to improve my practice. During such incidents, I find my wellbeing reduces and I am sure others involved are also experiencing a reduction in their wellbeing. However, at the end of our tour of the office, I will show how I finally

managed to find a way to maintain caring-with-mutuality, whilst enabling uncomfortable staff conversations to happen.
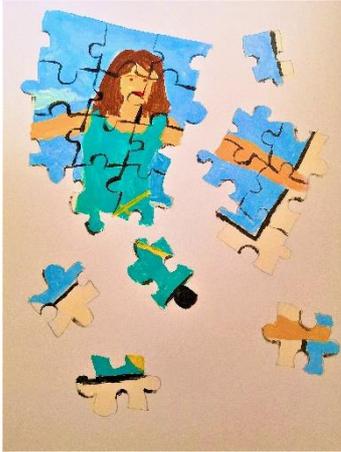
Frankl's Puzzle

Research has been done on the meaning work provides people (Rosso *et al.*, 2010). However, different jobs are reported to give a greater sense of meaning and purpose. Working in helping professions and in roles that have high autonomy are felt to be meaningful. Therefore, working as a leader in the charitable sector is high on the list of types of work that provide meaning and purpose. Charities by their nature are there to help, as they are legally required to provide a public benefit (Charity Commission, 2014). I spent my career benefitting those who have a need due to their circumstances, the majority of which has been due to their caring role. My sense of meaning and purpose comes when I see people begin to thrive as a result of their interaction with the charities that I am involved in. This is usually not directly because of something we have provided, but because we have influenced them to look after their wellbeing, enabled them to make a connection with others and given them the information and know-how to cope or improve their situation. I also feel a sense of meaning and purpose when I can see that the charities that I am involved with are influencing the understanding of those in the community to be more understanding, supportive and engaged. The Carers' Centre strategy 2018-2024 is focused on these areas which were identified in our Theory of Change (NCVO, 2020) as ways we could improve carers quality of life.

Knowing my work is contributing to improving the lives of those the charities I work with seek to benefit adds to my sense of meaning and purpose. Much of my knowledge of those differences come from the stories the carers themselves express. The quarterly magazine told many stories of the difference the Carers' Centre has made. Several charities I work with have made video case studies and feedback is collected which people say in their own words the difference they have experienced. I collated a range of anonymous carers' feedback given to the Carers' Centre, to highlight the difference carers reported,

> Before my meeting at the Radstock Carers' Centre, I was very anxious and stressed. The lady who I had my meeting with was very helpful and made me feel more relaxed. She gave me information about services etc, which I found very useful.
>
> I found all the help I've had to be diminishing my anxiety constantly. I still have some serious problems to be addressed in connection with my caring roles, but I'm optimistic about the future and the family members I care for.
>
> I found being involved in the social work student teaching project a cathartic experience, a space to share, where what I am saying might make a difference to the experience of future carers.
>
> I found it interesting to reflect on my experiences and how to put them across without sounding like I have "an axe to grind" or going into too much detail and making the audience feel uncomfortable.
>
> I feel the involvement of carers is vital as their voices so often go unheard in health and social care. This is a real opportunity to change the culture of social work at a fundamental level. The Health and Social Care Act promotes "the patient voice" being heard and this work is doing exactly that.
>
> I feel hearing carers' real experiences bring the students' learning to life,

and that it gives them real scenarios on which to hook the learning and to help make sense of theories and concepts. It's also useful for seeing the complexities of real-life situations.

When talking about my situation I felt the familiar guilt that I am betraying the people I care for by talking about them, but I also know if I didn't have the space to let off steam and talk about experiences in a safe confidential space I wouldn't be able to continue being a carer.

This feedback shows our work made a difference; however, it was not always straightforward or linear; the issues of guilt, anxiety and being seen as having an axe to grind show change is messier than a linear change of going from feeling bad to feeling good. Warfield (2020) suggests the posthuman "self may become multiple, fragmented, or incomplete and in motion—that is, uncertain. It may slip backwards in time to former situated and knotted moments" (p.167). In the feedback, the carers express that the challenges and complexities were worth experiencing. They name the benefits they perceived as feeling relaxed, gaining information, gaining a sense of optimism, cathartic experience, feeling of making a difference, bringing learning to life, having their voice heard and letting off steam.

Several experiences also stand out to me as examples of knowing that my work has had meaning and purpose for me and for those I work with. The stories show how caring-with-mutuality has been experienced by others in my work.

Storyteller
One time in a supermarket a parent I had not seen in about 8 years recognised me. She told me their son, who was now 18, still remembered and used the stress-busting techniques I taught him when I worked with

him ten years earlier. I was moved to know that something he had experienced as a small child had supported him throughout his life.

Another experience involved a parent that came on a weekend event that we ran for families with children with disabilities. Her child had behavioural issues and pushed another child, which caused the parent of that child to get very upset with her. I ended up sitting on the floor with her to come alongside her to listen to how terrible she felt and how she wanted to leave. I encouraged her that I would support her and her children if she decided to stay and that I would also drive her home if that is what she decided. In the end, she felt supported enough to stay and I took her children for a long walk to give her a break and help her recover. A member of staff who was working with her after the weekend reported that she told him I had saved her life.

Host

When we consider "the taking place of affect is the displacement from the passion/affect/trauma of the other" (Athanasiou, 2008, p.6), these stories provide a narrative of the affect of my work on others who were dealing with their own traumas. I also find the stories have an affect on me, as I am moved by knowing that these people considered I made a difference to their lives and those of their children. As my post-living-theory develops, I recognise that these moments of affect are part of the recognition of the difference my practice makes. Rather than seeking to always practice in the same way, I am seeking to find moments of affect that affirm my practice is moving in a direction of helping others, preferably to thrive, but surviving is also important.

Storyteller

I became chair of YCDT in 2020, an organisation I was involved with almost since its inception. Working directly with the young carers as a mentor and supporter of their development, as a manager of volunteers, as a trustee and now as chair.

Practice Example

During supervision with the two staff in the organisation, they individually brought me concerns. The Charity Manager was concerned about her capacity to reach her fundraising target and develop the other areas of her role. She was unable to do more hours and the pandemic reduced the ability to diversify income. The Service Manager was concerned about being able to develop her skills and experience in fundraising for her future career prospects and was seeking additional hours as the charity was expanding to support more young carers. I felt that the best solution was for the Services Manager to have their own fundraising target to cover her increased hours and reduce pressure on the Charity Manager, as the only fundraiser. However, both staff raised concerns about how the change would work. From previous experience, I realised there was potential for conflict and dissatisfaction.

Host

As I showed earlier in the Office, I struggled throughout my leadership of charities to effectively manage staffing conflicts and difficulties. The challenge faced was exacerbated by the pandemic, which has led to almost exclusively relying on applying to charitable Trusts and Foundations to donate funding, a

common experience for small charities (Blake, 2020). I will show how there was a movement to caring-with-mutuality in the scenario and how the experience helped me to improve my practice in managing conflicts and difficult conversations. I will also explore the movement and affect on the staff and the organisation.

I didn't want to avoid the issue by trying to find someone else to deal with the issue as I had done before, or ignore the concerns and hope the issues went away on their own. My experience has been that issues tend to get worse, rather than resolve of their own accord (Hutchison, 2015). Instead, I wanted to improve my practice to tackle conflicts head-on, whilst finding a way to achieve caring-with-mutuality rather than caring-with-authority, which I showed was not beneficial to me or those involved.

In looking for a different approach to address my avoidance of addressing staff concerns when they arise, I had read *Dare to Lead* (Brown, 2018) and researched useful tools on the *Dare to Lead* website (Brown, 2021). I sent the staff the BRAVING Inventory (Brown, 2020) that I found useful and the link to the website before the meeting. The inventory is designed to set a culture of honesty and a place to be safe to be vulnerable. I felt this was important to enable any concerns to be explored and resolved. My hope in using this tool was that the staff would not feel they had to agree to the changes in the meeting, or leave feeling aggrieved.

BRAVING   Inventory   (Brown,   2020).

> **The BRAVING INVENTORY**
>
> **Boundaries** | You respect my boundaries, and when you're not clear about what's okay and not okay, you ask. You're willing to say no.
>
> **Reliability** | You do what you say you'll do. At work, this means staying aware of your competencies and limitations so you don't over promise and are able to deliver on commitments and balance competing priorities.
>
> **Accountability** | You own your mistakes, apologize, and make amends.
>
> **Vault** | You don't share information or experiences that are not yours to share. I need to know that my con dences are kept, and that you're not sharing with me any information about other people that should be con dential.
>
> **Integrity** | You choose courage over comfort. You choose what is right over what is fun, fast, or easy. And you choose to practice your values rather than simply professing them.
>
> **Nonjudgment** | I can ask for what I need, and you can ask for what you need. We can talk about how we feel without judgment.
>
> **Generosity** | You extend the most generous interpretation possible to the intentions, words, and actions of others.

I felt vulnerable setting the meeting out this way, as I had not done this before. In the past, I tried to smooth over concerns rather than allow staff to voice their concerns and have uncomfortable conversations. I now realise I was "smoothing over … polyvocality for univocal coherence" (Cirell and Sweet, 2020, p.1184). The BRAVING Inventory challenged my avoidance of conflict in my past practice by saying: "You choose courage over comfort. You choose what is right over what is fun, fast, or easy. And you choose to practice your values rather than simply profess them" (Brown, 2020).

Video   5   Caring-With-Mutuality   A   Practice   Explanation   (2021)

https://tinyurl.com/caring-with-mutuality

The video shows how I held space open for transformation, from difficult feelings to feeling more collaboration and appreciation of each other. The meeting had several moments when the staff members agreed to new ways of working, however, there were signs that they were not happy about the outcome. For example, they added "I guess" to the end of the sentence when they agreed to changes. I picked up on little signs and encouraged the staff to say how they were really feeling, which felt uncomfortable to me as I was refusing to accept a consensus, as I suspected this was not their real feelings. Instead, I opened a chance for the staff to express their difficult feelings and come to their own conclusions, solutions and increased self-efficacy (Bandura, 1999).

Meta-host

Brené Brown has been criticised for upholding the inequity of the capitalistic system, Alyson Cole (2016) says of Brown's work that "vulnerability, as it turns out, might just be the spirit of capitalism!" (p.264). The tools I am using and the outcomes I say I am seeking are humanistic. These have the dangers of perpetuating the inequity that comes with both. Deleuze and Guattari (2000)

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articulate that capitalism develops "an extreme inequality in the different areas of productivity and in incomes" (p.232). Humanism they argue "is cynicism (that) is capital as the means of extorting surplus labor, but piety is this same capital as God-capital, whence all the forces of labor seem to emanate" (p.225). In other words, humanism is the other side of the coin to capitalism and props up the inequities that capitalist societies create (Williams, et al., 2020).

How am I combatting these implications of thinking with humanist theory, using humanist tools, and seeking humanist outcomes?

Host

I worked to wash and prepare the humanist ingredients to combat the inequity humanism creates in our capitalist society. I agree with Ken Wilber that "no one is smart enough to be wrong 100% of the time" (Manson, 2021). Therefore, rather than reject humanism, or indeed capitalism, I aim to take the most ethico-onto-epistemological approach within the current capitalist system. Wilber (2001) says he thinks formulating a Theory of Everything is "inherently undoable" (p.xii) however, he has attempted to do just that because he says, "I believe, a little bit of wholeness is better than none at all, and an integral vision offers considerably more wholeness than the slice-and-dice alternatives" (p.xii). Similarly, I think achieving to integrate humanism and posthumanism is impossible, however I think trying to wash and prepare humanistic ingredients to address their ethico-onto-epistemological issues is worth trying. I found benefits in using humanistic tools and ideas for improving my practice, however I recognise there are still unintended consequences, due to the binary thinking (Waterhouse, 2011) their use can encourage. Therefore, I will attempt to deterritorialize Brown's ideas, to wash and prepare them as posthuman/post-qualitative.

I tried to map the effects of the meeting and what assemblages of caring emerged. I identified that my values of love, hope, justice and participation were evident in the intervention. The concepts of growth mindset (Dweck, 20c16), avoiding self-fulfilling prophecies (Merton, 1948), building blocks (Adler, 2005) and meaning and purpose (Frankl, 1992) were also evident. Everyone's Crucial Cs (Lew and Bettner, 1996) were encouraged and we all expressed feelings of greater capability, connection, counting, and courage from the experience. As I mapped the territory of the encounter (Waterhouse, 2011) I found the effect of the differences I was making from previous encounters (Fairbairn, 2017). I found myself able to feel caring-with-mutuality emerge, rather than caring-with-authority as I had previously experienced in the early attempt at restructuring and with other HR challenges.

My learning was that having open and honest dialogue in the meeting was important in practicing caring-with-mutuality. Some of the conversations were not comfortable in this meeting, as both the service manager and charity manager expressed things they found difficult. However, they were necessary to ensure everyone was able to fully participate (Gergen and Hersted, 2016). I learned how to hold open the space for these conversations by drawing on the BRAVING inventory. Drawing on this non-human resource added to the assemblage, as caring-with-mutuality is more than human. The BRAVING inventory enabled me to respond in a different way than I had to similar interactions with staff. I learnt that conflict and uncomfortable conversations, when managed within a safe space, can improve the feelings staff have for their role, changes that are being implemented, their appreciation of their colleagues and improve their interactions. This increased my love for the staff as I was able to appreciate them in new ways.

I learnt that the process enabled the staff to experience caring-with-mutuality despite there being challenging moments in the meeting. I had previously thought difficult conversations would prevent caring-with-mutuality, as the discomfort would mean they would recoil, and the mutuality would be lost. However, I learned that the staff were capable of being courageous (Lew and Bettner, 1996), honest, and to hear each other, and that this enabled them to shift their perceptions and feelings to allow greater mutuality and increased care for each other. This led to a greater sense of justice within the interaction, as the staff were able to find their own solutions to issues that they were experiencing as unfair or imposed (Vince and Reynolds, 2010). I learnt that, dealt with appropriately, conflict can increase caring-with-mutuality and lead to greater understanding and respect. The experience increased my sense of hope that, in the future, I will be more comfortable to hold open spaces for difficult conversations, and so lead to more caring-with-mutuality.

The staff's reflections showed their learning was to have a greater understanding of each other's feelings and intentions which allowed them to have a greater experience of caring-with-mutuality. They acknowledged the BRAVING inventory helped them to increase their transparency along with what one called my facilitation and the other called my mediation. I sent an email to gain the views of the Service Manager and Charity Manager (Hutchison 2021a). The Service Manager identified the practice improvement was from reading the BRAVING Inventory. Identifying "this changed the way I presented some of the areas I wasn't prepared to move on … and also the areas in which I was prepared to be "generous"" (Service Manager, 2021). The Office Manager identified a realisation that defensiveness from previous bad work experiences was reducing openness to their colleague and that the meeting had improved their ability to be open, appreciative, and encouraging of their colleague. They identified that they made some self-insight into "understanding my own flaws".

They summed it up as "that very unusual meeting helped me to grow" (Charity Manager, 2021). Therefore, both shifted their ability to have more caring-with-mutuality towards each other, enabling greater cohesion, collaboration and appreciation. Hopefully, this will lead to the change being more successful and an opportunity for both staff to flourish whilst they help the charity to thrive (Whitehead, 2014).

The learning organisationally has been that the BRAVING Inventory is a useful guide to creating safe spaces for honest and open communication, enabling greater transparency, which can lead to caring-with-mutuality. I am planning to introduce the BRAVING Inventory to the trustees at an away day where we can use them as the basis for our meeting and beyond. I am planning to encourage the staff to use the BRAVING Inventory with volunteers and if they feel it's appropriate with young carers. The aim is to create a cultural shift that will provide the conditions for caring-with-mutuality to flourish and create further practice improvements as a result of creating a safe culture for people to communicate openly and honestly.

Meta- Host

This is still very reflective; how could I make more room for diffraction? Wyatt and Gale (2018) call for "using writing as a diffractive practice which does not simply reflectively engage with the world but interferes with it, troubles it and, in so doing, makes it different" (p.126). How could this practice example be looked at as a diffractive practice?

Host

This is possible by shifting the perspective of the analysis, from the final cohesive outcome to the middle of the interaction (Deleuze and Parnet, 2007). The middle part of the process was troubling. As we acknowledge, it was

uncomfortable both for the staff who were acknowledging their vulnerabilities, frustrations, and fears and for me. I was addressing a post-living-contradiction that I introduced earlier in the chapter of not feeling comfortable with conflict. Previously I turned to caring-with-authority where I abandon mutuality for telling staff what to do, thus avoiding conflict, as they are given no opportunity to respond. Or I turned to caring-with-rescuing, as I tried to rescue the situation (Karpman, 1968) and smooth over the conflict, rather than let it interfere with the process. The effect the difference had as it was diffracted, was that I was able to overcome my rescuing (Karpman, 1968) tendency and have the courage to sit with the discomfort. Instead, I sought to do something different by introducing a new tool that would interfere with the post-living-contradictions I previously experienced in similar situations. As the Service Manager said, "better to have these conversations preventively, than to need them later, curatively" (Service Manager, 2021). Therefore, troubling and interfering in the process were both present. The effect of the difference (Wyatt and Gale, 2018) was that instead of my usual outcomes, where staff leave still holding their concerns, the interaction prevented the staff from leaving frustrated, disgruntled, and having begrudgingly agreed to something that they felt bullied into or unable to refuse. Without the interference of the difficult, honest, troubling conversations, the change would most likely have caused problems for both staff and would have arisen later, and the change would have been less effective or failed completely.

I will explore caring-with-rescuing more in the Bedroom.

Digital Nomad

Storyteller

In 2018, I changed my career from having a single main role as CEO of the Carers' Centre, to only taking work that I can do remotely or with limited in-person contact. This began with fundraising for the Carers' Centre and expanded to contract with several other charities, with regular hours and also with short-term contracts to help with fundraising, strategy, governance and development, or for specific needs such as funding bids, training, evaluations or workshops.

Host

> Practice Example
>
> I call my new way of being a *digital nomad* (Prester, *et al.*, 2019). This has allowed me to develop my sense of self and manifest my destiny (Chopra, 2012), whilst maintaining my sense of meaning and purpose. I am supporting charities to develop and be able to deliver the support required for the people they are set up to benefit, enabling them to achieve their purpose. This shift in my career allows me to bring my many practices together, as I can more effectively balance self-care, studying, family and friends, travelling and work. I feel I have a greater sense of my Ikigai, a Japanese concept that can be translated into "a meaning for being" (Yamamoto-Mitani and Wallhagen, 2002). I am having a greater balance of doing what I love, what I am good at, what the world needs and what enables me to make a living (Oliver, 2017).

Becoming a digital nomad could be its own thesis, and as such I am only touching on the implications of digital nomadism, and will leave more in-depth research into this area for post-doctoral study. Bringing together the multiplicity of my practices as a digital nomad has led me to move away from seeing practice only within a neoliberal context. The dominant understanding of practice, on which Whitehead based his idea of practice in Living Theory, is

"reflected in a historically developed tradition of action that grows up around producing products that satisfy a generalized need" (Chaiklin, 2011, pp.233-4). My paid work may be able to be seen as producing products to meet the needs of the people the charity is set up to benefit, through the services we provide. I found this single view of my practice is too limiting and is the reason only one room in my thesis is dedicated to this area of practice. Charity leadership is indeed important to me, however there is more that creates my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality. Next, we will see my many interests in travelling, skiing, snowboarding, Freebording (Freebord, 2021), walking, swimming, yoga, tai chi, my multi-dimensional bio-psycho-social-spiritual self, and later in the bedroom will see my frailties and post-living-contradictions in my most intimate relationships. All of these and more are my ontology, that is my practice. They cannot be reduced to one single part as though work is my practice, without negating my posthumanity (Braidotti, 2006).

We are coming to finish in the office. The tour explored that leadership, rather than being traits or qualities to learn or emulate, is multiple and changing practices that are always on the move (MacKillop, 2018). My teddy values have continued becoming and helped me improve my practice in becoming a more ethical and generative charity leader. However, despite knowing my teddy values, there are times I found myself to be a post-living-contradiction and ended up caring-with-authority. My childhood toy concepts have continued becoming and diffracted new possibilities. My values, along with my building blocks of the Crucial Cs, all came together as an assemblage to create caring-with-mutuality. I mapped the effects of the differences these make and the affects they have in different contexts. Stories of success were viewed as what they do to inspire and help avoid self-fulfilling prophecies (Merton, 1948) and shown how they diffract as pure difference and change how I think about things. Growth mindset (Dweck, 2006) was realised, not as finding a 'right' way, rather

recognising growth developing from viewing incidents over time and in different ways. I identify the effects and affects that make me feel my work with charities and non-profits is meaningful and purposeful (Frankl, 1992). I positioned my leadership role within charities and not-for-profits as just one of my practices. As I am my practice, there is an ontological importance of recognising my multi-dimensionality. My post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality has emerged as being the most useful assemblage of caring, and although my post-living-contradiction of caring-with-authority was less useful to me, it's not a binary but a multiplicity of possible assemblages of caring that each perform differently.

Next, we are taking a step outside into the garden, to understand the importance of self-care in keeping up the energy to continue to make these improvements in my multi-dimensional practices.

Self-care Garden

Meander Around the Garden

Host

Let's take a step outside. My thesis home has taught me is that it's important to make time for self-care and stepping outside. This meander around the garden explores the multiplicity of self-care practices and uses my practice of Freebording (Freebord 2021) as an example of what self-care does. I will explore how self-care is important for self and human and non-human others. Self-care will be explored from a posthuman/post-qualitative perspective as mutually constituted and entangled in various assemblages, not as a separate, dualistic self. We will explore that without this multiplicity of self-care, in the words of Maté (2019), the body may say no, or as Maslach (2013) describes may lead to burnout. We will see how this may make caring-with-mutuality impossible, as the quality of care for human and nonhuman others may be affected without self-care. This tour of the self-care garden is written for a posthuman/post-qualitative scholarly audience, however practitioners, researchers and well, really, all humans may find it helpful to consider what self-care might do for them.

Storyteller

My recognition of the need for self-care started early in my thesis home, in 2014 I took a sabbatical. The full-time day job of running the Carers' Centre had become very stressful for me due to HR issues which led to some disciplinary matters. I found the process extremely draining and difficult and experienced symptoms of burnout. I negotiated with the trustees a 6-month sabbatical to recover in Lake Tahoe, California, where

I was able to spend the winter season skiing every day and feeling back into myself and the cosmos, through time outside.

Host

This is a big garden, it stretches as far as the USA, Canada, South Africa, Croatia, Romania, France, Spain, Ireland and Switzerland, as these are all the places I visited whilst I was living in my thesis home. They were what I needed at the time for my self-care to refresh and revitalise myself. The trips gave me time to practice self-care, however day-to-day self-care has also been vital, and the activities I used for my self-care have also been important. Zembylas *et al.* (2014) identify that "hands-on caregiving processes can be so focused on others that they do not pay enough attention to making sure that their own needs are cared for" (p.202). I wrote a paper all about self-care and the lessons I learnt from my sabbatical;

> I have returned back as the CEO with a different perspective. I had always thought my role was to model hard work which would inspire staff to also work hard. I have now realised the real challenge is to be a role model for self-care and show that if I look after myself, I can achieve more when I am working hard and inspire staff to prioritise their own self-care. I am trying to keep up the habits I developed in the USA (Hutchison, 2015 pp.8-9).

These habits were tai chi, meditation, walking, talking, eating healthily, wearing bright colours, prioritising friends and family, exercising outdoors. My self-care garden has hills, mountains, forest, seas and oceans, it has surfboards, bikes, yoga mats, snowboards, skis and Freebords (Freebord, 2021).

Meta-host

Self-care appears to be wholly humanistic. What would it do if I took a posthuman perspective and looked at everything as entangled rather than

separate - the food, people, clothes, hills, mountains, forest, seas and oceans and looked at the intra-actions with the self my host voice is portraying as separate?

> *Intra-activity is an intentional linguistic (and ontological) move to signal the entangled, intra-action of humans and nonhumans unlike interaction which focuses on social human relationships (see Barad, 2007) (Kuby, 2017, p.878).*

The materiality of the surfboards, bikes, yoga mats, snowboards, skis and Freebords do something when they are brought into the multiplicity that changes the experience.

> *Agentic in-between-ness—enacted agency—is the relationship between human and nonhumans producing newness (Barad, 2007). The agency doesn't lie in the human (nor the nonhuman) but in the in-between-ness of humans with the material world. Reality(ies) is about more than humans. This is a paradigmatic shift. (Kuby, 2017, p.878).*

How does it shift the idea of self-care to look at the practices as multiplicities intra-acting rather than being separated into forms?

Host

Before the interruption from my meta-host, I was about to separate my practices of self-care into parts. However, my meta-host has reminded me to consider that separation creates binaries and hierarchies thus privileging some humans over other humans and human over non-human. This leads to social injustices being committed through the way of seeing the world. Barad (2007) points out that these separations are problematic if we don't see the intra-actions between ethics, being and knowledge. She brings these together as ethico-onto-epistemology.

During my time in my thesis home, I realised that, whilst I theoretically professed to reject Cartesian dualistic thinking due to it causing many of the problems of environmental and societal destruction, in practice I had unconsciously been agreeing with Descartes in his maxim "I think therefore I am" (Descartes, 2009, p.34). I had fallen for what "modernity has brought with it, an unfortunate dissociation, a split between what we know with our whole being and what our thinking mind accepts as truth" (Maté, 2019, p.xi). I discovered this when I found myself going on a spiritual journey and realising that I had subconsciously been relating to my thoughts as my being. It was not until I listened to *The Power of Now* (Tolle, 2004), walking by the Coast in Wales, that I was able to observe the voice inside my head. I experienced that my being was not attached to my thoughts and was able to fully realise that I am not separate from the rest of the world and that the feeling of separation was being caused by filtering my connection with the world through my thoughts. This walking experience "disrupt(ed) privileged and normalized understandings" (Tarbett, 2020, p.40) and was part of my Contemplative Inquiry which has brought a spiritual dimension to my research (Haynes, 2005).

Self-care works differently when the Cartesian view of the mind-body split is not taken as the world-view. Westerman (2005) says "Descartes drove a wedge between the subject on the one hand and everything else on the other, including body, material objects, and other people" (p.7). Separating mind, body and spirit is not possible as they are intra-acting. Adler-Collins (2007) explains that caring is "open to moving into new areas of inquiry that explore other ways of knowing, such as aesthetic, poetic, narrative, personal, intuitive, consciousness-evolving, intentional and spiritual, as well as moral-ethical" (p.36). My inquiry has become more and more creative the longer I have lived in my thesis home, and has led me to understand that as I opened up to more approaches, I increased my wellbeing. When I was trying to conform to what I thought was expected in my

thesis home, or to be limited by others suggestions, the affect was that my wellbeing decreased. In the Authentic Dissertation (Jacobs, 2008), Trudy describes the process of developing a PhD as creating an "identity … based on personal, cultural, historical, and social factors that come to bear on each student's definition of who they are and what knowledge is pertinent to survival and well-being" (p.31). When I began, I set out to improve my practice. It has become clear that I am my practice. Trying to separate my paid employment, past, personal and spiritual self has not been possible. As I came to recognise posthuman/post-qualitative approaches, I realised that the self I thought of was also not possible to separate from the cultures and society I am in, nor from the material objects within my thesis home.

Maté (2019) takes a biopsychosocial approach where "individual biology, psychological functioning and interpersonal and social relationships work together, each influencing the other" (p.189). Adler also has a multi-dimensional approach that Sidonie Reiss (1949) identifies,

> 1. It proceeds from the investigation of the physical and organic constitution (biological basis).
>
> 2. It investigates the psychic conditions under which an individual acts or refrains from action (psychological working method).
>
> 3. It takes the human being in contact with his fellows as the object of its researches (sociological method of approach).
>
> 4. It endeavours to attribute a meaning to human existence (metaphysical standpoint) (p.64).

Meta-Host

How would seeing the Bio-psycho-social-spiritual as an assemblage help acknowledge the differences of each concept that is plugged into the assemblage whilst recognising the entanglement changes each of them? The

hyphens are significant, in that they "show an entanglement or togetherness of concepts and/or bodies" (Kuby, 2019, p.130). They cannot be separated as they are entangled and constantly affecting the other.

Host

The idea of an assemblage is useful to recognise the intra-actions of the bio-psycho-social-spiritual assemblage. They are entangled and therefore perform differently than if they were separate parts. They "signal the entangled, intra-action of humans and nonhumans, unlike interaction which focuses on social human relationships" (Kuby, 2017). They have a more integrated and flowing nature of one affecting the other in my experience of my self-care. They cannot be separated as they are joined on a plane of immanence (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987).

Freebording in the Garden

Rather than looking at the biological, psychological, social and spiritual aspects of self-care as separate areas of the garden as I originally thought to do, I am going to bring together the bio-psycho-social-spiritual assemblage in one example of Freebording. A mountain becomes a different place to be for me when there is snow, skis and snowboards than when there is green grass and Freebords. When I plug into the Freebord assemblage it involves the pavement or road I am riding, the place, the Freebord I am riding, the people riding with me. "This approach necessarily requires a relational understanding of leisure as becoming for unexpected and new understandings to emerge and is in keeping with a realist emphasis on entangled social assemblage" (Stalker, 2019, p.361).

Freebording was an unexpected becoming for me. Initially, I had tried Freebording as a means of learning to snowboard and had not expected to continue with it. However, on a trip to San Francisco in 2013, I went from using the Freebord as a utility to learn to snowboard, to plugging into the Freebord assemblage of the people, places, and seeing the Freebord become the rider and the rider become the Freebord. I no longer saw it as a utility, but as an entangled social assemblage (Stalker 2019) that I was becoming. In the video, taken at the 2017 Lausanne Slopestyle, where around 100 Freeborders gathered over a weekend in July (Lausanne Slopestyle, 2017), I talked about my experience of the Freebord assemblage at 0:12.

Video   6   Lausanne   Slopestyle   Official   Video   (2017)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6KpQwTTtrA

I liken the Freebord community to a family, showing that the sport is much more than the riding itself. It's the relational experience of being with others who share the same passion. White (2015) identified that skateboarding "provides a supportive community" (p.13) which is the experience I found with Freebording. Freebording is a sport in its own right, however it has many similarities with skate culture. Romero (2020) suggests that the bonding that happens with skateboarding is derived from "enjoyment of skateboarding, skaters develop

both disdain for authority and compassion for other skaters, partly because they contend with similar attacks on their shared values (MacKay and Dallaire, 2012; White, 2015)" (p.235). I am certainly drawn to the freedom from the capitalistic norms that Freebording provides. White (2013) explains how skateboarding provides an alternative to capitalism; "skateboarding in city streets provides a glimpse of possible differential spaces or spaces where differences are valued and celebrated. Differential spaces are opposed to the abstract spaces of capitalism, which are homogeneous and controlled (Borden 2001)" (p.12). As I watch the video, I experience the people, place, riding, and inclusivity of the event, with the enthusiasm for the female and older minoritarian (Deleuze and Guattari,1987) riders represented.

At 4:04 (Lausanne Slopestyle, 2017) I talk about having the most girls together riding, how we have been encouraging each other to progress and how good that feels to ride together. Like many extreme sports, Freebording is mostly male-dominated. Jamie Perchie's research blog (2016) highlights the hypermasculinity in extreme sports. Freebording is not immune to this. I found myself arguing online against sexist or sexualised comments or images posted by Freeborders. However, generally the community is supportive and encouraging of female riders, as the inclusion of this segment in the video highlights.

Meta-host

I explained what Freebording means to me, but what does it do? I mentioned Freebording as becoming, Stalker (2019) says,

> *Becoming can be thought of as a change of relations to others and/or material objects that is generative of new ways of life. In a most affirmative manner, becoming may be a line of flight from*

marginalization, oppression, and erasure that allows a life to be

assembled and for its difference to be expressed (p.348).

What new ways of life have Freebording generated and how has that led to

differences that are anti-oppressive?

Host

What Freebording does for me is encourage my Crucial Cs of connection, capability, counting and courage (Lew and Bettner, 1996). I feel connected into a community of humans and non-humans where we join together the Freebord with me, working with the forces of gravity. I am only able to Freebord mindfully when I am fully present in the moment (Kabat Zinn, 1996), otherwise, I am likely to fall off and hurt myself. The video shows the connection between the people as we hug and ride together, and to the objects that everyone comes together to build and takedown. The temporary structures change the park into something different, into a Slopestyle course. The music, food, people and boards all transform the park into a different place for that weekend. The event is anti-oppressive through the inclusivity of the event (Huxtable and Whitehead, 2015), where everyone is encouraged to take part and the minoritarian groups are especially celebrated.

Maté (2019) says that "A fundamental goal of human development is the emergence of a self-sustaining, self-regulated human being who can live in concert with fellow human beings in a social context" (p.205). Adler (2005a) agrees that we thrive or fail based on our social interest, by which he means the empathy and striving we make for others, the degree we see ourselves as equal with others and can reciprocate and co-operate with them. For me, Freebording has generated new ways of living that, whilst they incorporate social interest, are more than human. I have a connection to places that is different than I had before, as now I see the space as a potential for riding. Romero (2020)

describes this affect as "once astride that board, there is no predicting what a skater will learn about themselves and their relationship to the ground beneath their wheels" (p.240). As a community, we work with the places to ensure they are kept clean and respected, so we can return year after year. Freebording has provided me with places to stay all around the world, as I stayed in fellow Freeborders homes and they have stayed in mine. Therefore, the connections are expansive, in that I feel connected wherever a Freeborder is in the world.

I feel that my capability increases over time. Other riders who are better than me share their learning, and give me tips and tricks to improve my riding. My bio-psycho-social-spiritual assemblage experiences neurogenesis where new brain neurons are created (Cortwright, 2015). I feel a sense of achievement as I improve and can enjoy more difficult places to ride. The Freebord becomes an extension of me and I become an extension of the Freebord, which grows the better I become at riding. There is an attunement that happens the more I ride (Bai, *et al.*, 2016, p.115).

I feel that I count because of the encouragement I receive from fellow Freeborders, by being asked to speak on videos such as the one I included. I feel the joy others express when I come to an event and they are so pleased to see me. Due to my commitment and investment in the Freebord community over the last six years, I became an ambassador for the UK which adds to the sense that I count to the wider Freebord community.

I feel my courage increases from Freebording, as it's a difficult sport to learn and master and is dangerous - falling on tarmac is painful and can cause serious injuries. Although I wear a lot of protection when I ride, I am always aware there is still inherent danger in the sport. As I progress and become faster and more technical in my riding, I am aware that my courage has increased, as when I

was beginning, I would not have been brave enough to go as fast or ride such a steep spot.

Equally, I can live my values fully. I can bring my teddies from the playroom with me on the Freebord trips I take.

 My value of love is becoming, as I host and am hosted at events and is an opportunity to show that love in action. Freebording allows me to

In the Playroom, I explain how my values are always in a process of becoming.

help and be helped, to be the best we can be at Freebording and as a community that is inclusive and welcoming of anyone who wants to be involved. That includes those who may not be able to ride because of the physical limitations of their body. Where possible Freebording has innovated to include those with physical limitations. The hooks on the board were designed for Tim Seward. "I originally was the first rider to mount what we now call S1 bindings to a Freebord. I did it because I wear a prosthetic leg and I couldn't feel my foot sliding" (Anderson, 2016). The online promotion of Freebording is inclusive of LGBTQ riders, global riders of a wide range of ethnicities and racial identities and riders are encouraged regardless of age or gender (Garel, 2020; Ishibashi, 2015; Deloumeaux, 2012; Lausanne Slopestyle, 2017). MacKay and Dallaire (2012) suggest "some aspects of lifestyle sports make them friendlier to girls and women than traditional sport – for example, they are cooperative, anti-competitive, a means of self-expression and self-control and free of rules and hierarchal structure" (p.176). Bordon (2018) claims "diversity is (skateboarding's) greatest strength", for me that is the same with Freebording.

Freebording enables me to play with my butterfly teddy hope by envisioning the improvements I want to make in my riding and how I want the events I run to go. However, I am also able to prepare for the worst that might happen; like myself or someone else being injured. Injuries happen at events, people are supported to get treatment, recover and where possible still enjoy the event, even though they might no longer be able to ride. Johnathon Deloumeaux expresses in the Slopestyle video, that it's "part of the sport" (3:12, Lausanne Slopestyle, 2017).

I play with my teddy lion, Justice, where all can participate regardless of race, gender, sexuality, age, disability or any other reason and to treat the human and more than human world in a way that is right and fair to them. Freebording may not seem to have much to do with justice, however the inclusivity of Freebording is a small form of resistance in a neoliberal, humanistic world (St. Pierre, 200) which can feel like these disadvantages prevent certain groups from participating in leisure activities (MacKay and Dallaire, 2012). However, for a small niche sport, Freebording is inclusive of race, with people from all around the world coming together as the Slopestyle video shows. I also ride with gay, transgender, male, female, younger, older and disabled friends. This is not to suggest that there are no barriers to access, "lifestyle sport practitioners are individuals who require agility and strength" (Rannikko *et al.*, 2016, p.1095). For example, there is currently no innovation to make Freebording accessible to people in a wheelchair. Rannikko *et al.* (2016) also found that although the rhetoric of lifestyle sports is to be inclusive, in reality those who take part are majority male, white, young and middle class. This would likely be the same for Freebording, and whilst these quantitative factors are problematic, I would argue that these are contextual. There are structural norms (MacKay and Dallaire, 2012) that discourage minoritarian groups to try Freebording. Therefore, films that

celebrate minoritarian groups such as the Slopestyle 2017 video are important to affect minoritarian groups to try Freebording and feel welcome.

When we have gone on road trips together, we are mindful to leave the place as we found it, so others can enjoy it. However, there is a sense of civil disobedience, as Freebording subverts the usual use of roads to be used for a Freebord. We tend to wild camp reclaiming the wild spaces to be free and open to be enjoyed and tend to keep costs to a minimum rather than everything being for profit, as is expected in a neoliberal structure (St. Pierre, 2011). Not to say that Freebording is not sold for a profit, but rather that the community keeps events cheap or free and once a board is bought there is no need for a lift pass, as there is for snowboarding or skiing.

I play with my teddy monkey, Participation, with the Freebord community. The Freebording community is a self-organising community, so there is not someone in charge, rather events happen as people come together and make them happen. All voices are of equal importance, unlike other sports where the better you are the more important you are. My experience is that everyone is valued and encourages everyone else in the community to thrive. It's not perfect and there are times when people fall out or offend each other, however, it's dealt with by the community. I find this lack of hierarchy liberating and at times frustrating, as there is no one to "sort things out'. Foucault (1988) believed that one task of the intellectual is, through such analyses, "to show people that they are much freer than they feel" (p.10)" (St, Pierre, 2011, p.386). The Freebording community feels like a place where more people than usual realise they are freer than other people feel. However, I often experience participating in events is like herding cats, as everyone has a greater awareness of their freedom to do what they want. Despite the chaos that sometimes ensues, I experience an increase in mine and others thriving. This

is not at the expense of the places we ride in, although it's often experienced with hostility by those who perceive spaces are only for particular activities (Vivoni Gallart, 2010) and can lead to people who feel they have a right to control spaces getting very upset (White, 2013). This can lead to caring-with-resistance, even though as a community we are extremely careful not to cause harm in the environments we ride in.

In a very different way from other areas in my life, I can experience caring-with-mutuality. As a community, we encourage each other, progress in our skills together, and challenge the boundaries of what is seen as acceptable uses of spaces (White, 2013). If I don't fall and hurt myself, Freebording is great for my wellbeing and wellbecoming (McPhie, 2016), recognising the assemblage as my wellbe(com)ing. An injury to myself or my partner reduces my wellbe(com)ing as I plug into a whole new assemblage of medical appointments, physio exercises and pain that takes over. However, there is still a process of becoming through caring-with-resilience in the time of injury, as I learn a lot about myself and my partner. What can I overcome? How resilient am I? How do I respond to this change in my way of being?

As with everything in my thesis home, there is no simplistic generalisable 'answer' and the same is the case with self-care. I am not using the example of Freebording as a suggestion that everyone should Freebord for their self-care. Rather I am using Freebording because it highlights what it does for my process of wellbe(com)ing to influence self-care to be viewed as a process of becoming. Stalker (2019) encourages the impact on self, others - human and non-human to be considered and the harm vs. benefit ratio. Maté (2011) describes the need for a Compassionate Inquiry to find what creates wellbe(com)ing for each of us, and my ideas may influence how you, the reader, may engage in their own self-care as they walk around my self-care garden.

The Bonfire: Dangers of Burnout

In a corner of my self-care garden, I have a bonfire that lights if I don't manage to practice my bio-psycho-social-spiritual self-care. My storyteller began the tour of the garden and said I experienced symptoms of burnout. Burnout is not a new phenomenon. "Burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs frequently among individuals who do 'people-work' of some kind. A key aspect of the burnout syndrome is increased feelings of emotional exhaustion" (Maslach and Jackson, 1981, p.99).

My specific emotional exhaustion, in 2014, was triggered by having to deal with HR issues that made me feel stressed and disconnected from the cause of the charity I was running. I felt the processes of disciplinaries were inhumane, no doubt due to my lack of skill. This is an area for further research, as I have still not made much progress in creating humane processes to address unacceptable behaviour. Although I show improvement in dealing with uncomfortable conversations in the Office, the HR issues led to my emotional exhaustion. To regain balance for myself, I felt I needed an extreme change and was fortunate to be successful in convincing the trustees to give me a six-month sabbatical. I write about this in more detail in my 2015 paper (Hutchison, 2015) and would encourage anyone in a similar situation to consider a sabbatical before leaving a job you had loved, but have become discouraged in.

The hard practice came on returning from my sabbatical, to live with more balance between work and my self-care practices. Maslach (2013) says,

The basic message here is that giving of yourself must be balanced with giving to yourself. Making yourself strong, knowledgeable, and in good spirits makes you a better provider for those in need. Thus, it is sensible (not selfish) to take time off to relax ... If you recognize your limits and acknowledge your needs, you will be less likely to overextend yourself to the point of no recovery. This does not mean that you cannot go overboard at times when you think it is necessary; however, if you do so, then you need to do something extra to recuperate and restore yourself (p.266).

I certainly still had periods of going overboard when I returned, however I became much more balanced as a CEO, taking time for myself. I largely kept these self-care practices up over the last five years; however, I did stop having a regular specifically spiritual practice such as meditation and tai chi. I had lost some balance. Leaving my role as CEO had meant that the balance in my life went from lots of activity, exercise, friends and fun whilst away having adventures in my campervan, to feeling mildly depressed when at home and ending up waiting for the next trip. During the pandemic, lockdown awakened my sense of needing to return to my self-care practices, however with a greater emphasis on the spiritual practices of tai chi, meditation, yoga and journaling. My purpose on the tour of the garden is to introduce you to your own needs, as the reader, to find the balance in your own life and to leave you with the question; what would you like your self-care garden to look like and what do you want it to do?

I willl explore why my self-care practices became so important in the bedroom.

In the self-care garden, I used my practice of Freebording as an intra-acting bio-psycho-social-spiritual example of self-care which enabled me to experience caring-with-mutuality. I warned of the dangers of piling stress on the burnout

bonfire which can lead to illness if we fail to tend to the totality of our self-care garden.

Our tour moves to the bedroom next, to understand how some of the holes in my self-care have become apparent, as I made personal realisations about my most intimate relationships. I will show how these have helped me understand caring-with-mutuality and my post-living-contradictions more fully. I learnt my personal life has harboured caring-with-rescuing, rather than my ambition to be living caring-with-mutuality with my most intimate relationships. As it has become more obvious to me that I am my practice, I realised part of my post-living-theory meant addressing this post-living-contradiction and researching how I can come to live my values more fully in my personal as well as professional life. The process has helped improve how I practice personally and professionally.

Bedroom

A Personal Inquiry

Host

Welcome to my bedroom, this is the most private part of my inquiry and the conclusions in this chapter are all unexpected. I admit that the underlying story I aimed to tell when I moved into my thesis home was of a "victory narrative" (Lather, 2012; MacLure, 1996; 2002). I wanted my story of avoiding the usual outcomes of being a child in care, and being able to lead successful charities in times of austerity, to be inspiring to others and encourage people to aspire to greater things. I was happy to punctuate with a few difficult moments because I could show how I had overcome them. I was faced with researching "in the ruins" (Lather, 1997) of my victory narrative and recognised that some of my responses to my childhood weren't helpful. I recognised that I don't have all the answers, and tried to let go of the humanistic impulse to say I "can "get it right" once and for all" (St. Pierre and Pillow, 2000, p.4). I have come to take a posthuman/post-qualitative perspective that along with everyone and everything else I am in a process of becoming.

I thought my storyteller would tell the following tale: **Once upon a time there was a girl who had lots of hard things happen when she was little. She faced all the hardships and came out a strong and successful leader and lived happily ever after.** In the bedroom, I realised my story is much more complex, messy and entangled. I creatively responded to a lot of my childhood experiences in ways that have overcome the usual harmful outcomes of children in care, and that have been beneficial to myself and others. This is what Adler calls social interest (Adler, 1956). However, some events that have taken

place whilst living in my thesis home have led me to reflect and then diffract patterns of behaviours to see my responses differently. Through time spent reading, talking and writing, I re-turned "as in turning it over and over again" (Barad, 2014, p.168) to see there are problems with some of my responses to my childhood experiences that I had not seen before.

Skeletons in the Closet – Caring-with-rescuing Emerges

Storyteller

In 2020, the whole world was heading towards a scenario that no one knew how to handle. A worldwide pandemic led to never-before-seen responses to the lockdown of entire countries and calls for friends and family to social distance. At the same time, a series of events led me to a scenario I didn't want to face. I realised I could no longer ignore some problematic behaviours I was observing in how I intra-acted in my most intimate relationship. I came to face that I had some skeletons I had been hiding in my closet.

Host

I spent the pandemic undertaking a Contemplative (Haynes, 2005) and mostly Compassionate Inquiry (Mate, 2021) into my tendency of caring-with-rescuing. The skeletons that had been hiding in my closet were that I was rarely living caring-with-mutuality with my long-term partner. As with many women who come from families with neglect and substance misuse, I came to realise I tended to love too much (Norwood, 2009). I quickly realised that I could blame my partner every time I responded outside of my values or I could recognise that I had been a post-living-contradiction. I came to realise that the assemblage I was caring with was caring-with-rescuing for much of our relationship, rather

than caring-with-mutuality, which I had spent the last seven years researching in my thesis home. A personal and professional existential crisis collided.

My idea of caring-with-rescuing is based on Karpman's "drama triangle" (1968). I came to recognise that I had a habit of rescuing anything in our lives that was difficult. I had not been aware that is what I had been doing, or the disempowering effect of rescuing that can place the recipient into victim mode or persecutor mode. My realisation was counter to my strong belief in my work, that my role is to support people to do things for themselves rather than have them done to them - what Wilson *et al.* (2018) calls good help.

I had also been unaware of my desire to rescue. I had thought of it as just part of being a 'good' girlfriend. I had thought others who didn't do so much in their home lives were less caring and loving. I had also not been aware that it's the one area I felt able to let my rescuer go wild. I recognised, in my other relationships, my limitation to be able to 'fix' things for people due to lack of time with them, and so have been much less of a rescuer. Although I can now notice times when I have or had rescuer tendencies for friends and family. Adler identifies three life tasks of occupation, social co-operation and love relationships (Dreikurs and Mosak, 1966). My realisation of rescuing became apparent in my love relationship, there are also potential implications it can have for all three life tasks. I touched on my rescuing tendencies in the office, which have led to me avoiding conflict in the past.

I realised, that I had avoided the usual statistics of the children in care narrative, where "less than 1% of all children in England were looked after at March 2011. Compare this with the fact that up to half the children held in young offender institutions are, or have been previously, looked after" (Blades *et al.*, 2011, p.1). Also, "it is estimated that in many regions in England, up to half of the women involved in sex work have spent time in the care system as a child, and 25% of

the homeless population experienced care at some point" (Oakley *et al.*, 2018, p.16).

I had thought my ability to avoid such outcomes meant I had managed to avoid the effects and affects of being in care. I am referring to the affective turn "that the perspective of the affects requires us constantly to pose as a problem the relation between actions and passions, between reason and the emotions" (Clough and Halley, 2007, p.x). I had assumed I had avoided the problems of the physical and emotional consequences of being in care. As such, I thought my story needed telling to give hope and influence others to avoid these statistics. I now wonder if the story is different. Perhaps I was just as affected as those that are deemed to have failed in the care system, however my coping mechanisms were more socially acceptable. A desire to rescue others leads to over-helping at the expense of myself at times and the expense of another persons' autonomy and potentially their self-esteem. However, it's socially acceptable to help people, even until helping hurts (Spurgeon, 1994) and lead to overworking (Pine, 2019), which can be worn as a badge of honour in the helping professions. Rather than seeing overworking as a form of addiction, it's seen as commendable.

Maté (2008) talks about addiction being anything that someone does that produces some temporary relief but causes long term suffering and negative consequences. Therefore, by this definition rescuing fits this definition as do my workaholic tendencies. I currently find myself with only 24 hours of regular paid work a week, but am also a director of a social enterprise and two companies, an ambassador and partner with Freebord Europe; a chair of a charity and a social enterprise and trying to complete my PhD. Looking back by using an early recollection I can see how experiences in my childhood led to rescuing behaviour.

Storyteller

I had an unnerving time with my dad-b when he came to visit with my social worker. We had been allowed to go and walk around the garden. My foster family have a large country garden with a bluebell wood running across the bottom, my dad-b managed to walk away with me with no one noticing. He was 6 foot 7 inches tall and for a small person, I had to walk fast/run to keep up. I was a child and as he was an adult - I followed. He walked up a lane and took a route that as a small child meant I was not sure where I was. After a few miles, I saw a sign that pointed to my village, so I suggested we walked in that direction. It got us back on the main road and my eldest brother-f was driving past in the car. He calmly stopped and offered us a lift, which was a huge relief to me as I was tired and scared. I knew there was something wrong with being lost and no one knowing where we were. I also knew my dad-b was talking about unusual things that didn't make much sense and was hugely relieved to be taken home by my big brother-f.

Host:

As I did in the Playroom, I turned my memory into an Adlerian syllogism to see what I can take from the story to understand how it affects my current view of life. "Within a given recollection, how the individual responded to the situation is more important than the situation itself" (Ansbacher, 1973, p.135). The syllogism shows what I choose to take from the recollection.

> I am … running to keep up, I'm not sure where we're going
> Others are … making me do something I don't think I am supposed to do
> The world is … not like I am used to
> Therefore, I must … find a way to get back home

In the syllogism, I see it as my responsibility to find a way back home, whilst this shows my determination and resourcefulness, it also shows a tendency to feel it's my responsibility to rescue the situation. In this scenario, my dad-b should be responsible for getting us home, as he is the adult. However, he is the one who got us lost in the first place and has led to me feeling 'tired and scared'. I am not entirely the rescuer in the story, my big brother-f is the one that calmly picks us up and takes us home. My syllogism does not focus on this aspect of the story, instead, I remain focused on my need to find a way to get back home. I could have said, I must find someone to help me get back home to share the responsibility. My syllogism, as Ansbacher (1973) suggests, is a representation of how I respond in the present to challenges. My first thought is that I must find a way to solve the problem on my own and rescue the situation. It often takes someone else to make me aware that they could help me with the situation, as it often does not occur to me to ask for help. I will show later how this impulse to rescue myself, other people and things takes over through the story of a cooker that was delivered recently.

An area for future research, which I am unable to follow up here, is whether the drama triangle could help identify where a child in care is likely to have issues in later life. The drama triangle (Karpman, 1968) is a useful tool to understand propensities towards ways of acting and responding to circumstances. I am not suggesting that anyone always takes the position of rescuer, victim or persecutor, rather that the responses to situations in people's lives can lead them repetitively into one corner of the triangle, which can help explain problematic and harmful behaviours (Shmelev, 2015).

If people are more prone to rescuing, they are likely to be prone to co-dependency (Shmelev, 2015) which manifests in helping too much (Norwood, 2009), to overworking (Maté, 2019) and burnout (Pines, 1993). I looked at burnout and why helping too much is problematic in the tour of the self-care

garden. I now realise I have these tendencies and that is why I needed my self-care garden so much. Interventions might include teaching children how to take a self-care approach that enables rest. I talked about the bio-psycho-social-spiritual assemblage that I came to recognise as helping me, and yet additional knowledge about the drama triangle has helped me to recognise, even more, my need to find more healthy ways to approach relationships, especially intimate ones. The empowerment triangle (Maull, 2019) suggests that a more empowering alternative to rescuing is coaching. Coaching is not about being the one who knows, rather it's "using a flexible and relational approach that connects people with their own motivations for change" (Wilson, *et al.*, 2018, p.22). I found this useful to think through more helpful ways of responding when situations trigger my desire to rescue. Instead, I think about coaching others to do things for themselves, what Pound (2003) calls alongsideness, the ability to help others find their own solutions and journey with them rather than fix them (Maull, 2019).

For those children who are more prone to sit in the victim corner of the triangle, it would be worth seeing if there are danger areas for them. I suggest these might be more likely to be prostitution, suicide and addiction, as they may not feel they are worth protecting themselves and they see their lives as filled with suffering (Shmelev, 2015). They may also show co-dependency through abusive relationships. Helping children like these recognise their self-worth and building their self-esteem may be useful ways of avoiding these outcomes. The empowerment triangle suggests that trading seeing oneself as a victim for a co-creator (Maull, 2019) is a useful way to escape the drama triangle. It may help children see there are a multiplicity of creative choices that they can co-create with humans and non-humans, which may help them see that they are not stuck in their situation. For children who have been abused, trusting people may be a difficult place to start. Non-human co-creators may be easier. As a child, I found

my teddies were great friends and I co-created many responses to difficult situations with them. For example, when I broke my arm my teddy Patch came to the hospital with me. The staff gave him an identity band like I had and plastered his arm also. My friends at school signed my cast and my other teddies signed his. It provided me with a way to work through my fears and concerns of having to be in hospital and having broken my arm.

Children who are more prone to respond to circumstances by taking the persecutor corner of the triangle may also have outcomes that they are more prone to. I suggest these might be a tendency towards violence and crime as they fit with the types of actions pursued by a persecutor (Shmelev, 2015). They may also show co-dependency by finding a victim they can pressurise, force and persecute, which may or may not include violence. Children might be helped to escape sitting in the persecutor corner of the triangle by interventions such as helping them manage their anger and learning to compromise and empathise with others. The empowerment triangle suggests a more empowering response than persecuting is challenging, where they can suggest areas that will benefit from change without being aggressive or resentful (Maull, 2019). Instead, they could be a catalyst for change within their relationships and environment.

My understanding of my rescuing tendencies has helped me to improve my practice by being more aware of my motivations for helping others. I will show how this has changed how I respond in my relationship with my boyfriend and why I think the implications of this personal discovery is important for professional practice as we tour the bedroom.

Meta-host

Are there ways posthuman/post-qualitative approaches could develop these ideas? The Drama Triangle is a humanist idea focusing on the human in the drama, whereas non-human elements like I described with my teddies may also play a part. Can integrating more non-human elements develop these ideas? What would that do?

What other post-qualitative concepts would expand these possibilities? "An assemblage is precisely this increase in the dimensions of a multiplicity that necessarily changes in nature as it expands its connections" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.6) I suggested children realising there are a multiplicity of creative choices that could help them, are there different assemblages that expand these possible connections further?

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) use geographical metaphors to look at how things might continue becoming. In an example of a wasp and an orchid they say, 'each of these becomings brings about the deterritorialization of one term and the reterritorialization of the other; the two becomings interlink and form relays in a circulation of intensities pushing the deterritorialization ever further' (p.10). What does it do if the concept of a triangle becomes a 3D landscape which is territorialized, deterritorialized and reterritorialized? What about the lines of flight that leak from these concepts and do they help to find new potentials?

Host

I mentioned above that non-humans are involved in the process of co-creating. For example, my laptop is helping me co-create this thesis home, I am constantly writing in Microsoft Word and then switching to my browser to look up a paper that might expand what I am saying, or search my documents for a paper or book, or going to my bookshelf and flicking through a book I have previously read. Or I might re-watch a video from a conversation I had

previously or watch a video to expand my ideas on something I am writing. Newitz (2007) describes the assemblage with a laptop as "practically a brain prosthesis. Sometimes I find myself unable to complete a thought without cracking it open and accessing a file of old notes, or hopping online and Googling a fact or two" (p.88). Taylor (2013) asks the question "What do things do?" (p.701) My laptop changes how I engage in my research as I can flick between tabs on my browsers of various authors and my writing and videos. I think with my laptop in a way I am not able to without it.

The thesis home is in a constant process of becoming in assemblage with humans and non-humans that are influencing what I am writing. A multiplicity is a recognition that people and things are not singular, I am made up of many human influences, from the people I know, things I watched and read, as well as non-human entities like the gut bacteria which are currently telling me they are hungry. Assemblages are the coming together of multiplicities (Currier, 2013). I am a human-laptop assemblage typing this sentence. Assemblages can plug together in more and more complex systems (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987).

I described my experience with my teddy coming to the hospital with me. Children are constantly engaging with non-humans in their play such as teddies, toys, trees and climbing frames, to name a few. Play therapy is an example of how non-human influences can help children to work through challenges they may be facing. The therapist makes use of many non-human artefacts and from a search of the literature is an area where a posthuman perspective of play therapy has not been explored. Children are in a more obvious process of becoming as they are physically growing and are in full-time learning settings. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call them the becoming-child, therefore there is an opportunity to support that process of becoming, and to find ways to process

the losses and abandonments that going into care create into new opportunities for becoming. To recognise the new assemblages of the foster family, new home and belongings that provide an opportunity to form new identities in a process of becoming.

New meanings are created when I use Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) ideas of territorialization, which means to add new territory to what already exists. Deterritorialization means separating social, cultural and political practices (such as people, objects or traditions) from a place. Reterritorialization means the restructuring of somewhere that has experienced deterritorialization. Let me use these concepts concerning the experiences of children in care to bring them to life.

In a very real way being taken into care is a reterritorialization of the child's world as they seek to find a new space to inhabit. The old ways of accepted behaviour shift into the culture of the new family. If this were more consciously considered, more support might be provided in the child's ability to move from their family of origin where they had a territorialized space. They had a home with its own culture and norms to a new reterritorialized space where new cultures and norms take over. As many children are moved into several homes, there may be a process of deterritorialization, where they have to lose the cultures and norms they had learnt, and reterritorialization, where they have to relearn a new set of culture and norms. Each time, a consciousness of the adults around that child to support them in those processes may lead to improved attachments and responses to their situation. Being able to shift from cave to cave (as in Plato's cave in Plato, 1991) could be seen as a strength if the child is supported in that process and helped to be resilient, agile and in their process of becoming.

The concept of the drama triangle could be mapped onto these territorialising processes, to help the child see where they are positioning themselves in terms of the moves they are making. If they map themselves to feeling out of control and 'done to', like a victim, how can they map themselves to a more co-creative space? If they are getting angry and frustrated and are mapping themselves as a persecutor, can they be supported to reterritorialize the space in a way they can make meaningful challenges and have their voice heard in the process? If they are responding by being helpful, trying to make everyone happy and looking after everyone else in the process, it may be they are mapping themselves out as a rescuer in the spaces they are occupying. Can they be supported to reterritorialize a space where they can coach themselves and others to look after and take responsibility for themselves?

Lines of flight are what escape from assemblages, not necessarily neatly but may leak or seep from them and can "have both a creative and a destructive capacity" (Thornton, 2018, p.14). The processes of deterritorializing and reterritorializing might allow lines of flight to emerge where children in care not only experience the new norms and culture of their foster home but might be supported to leak in the positive experiences of their family of origin. Where the leaks are more challenging or harmful, could they be supported to make choices about what they bring with them and what they are supported to let go of? Rather than punishing these processes, these could be seen from the perspective of a compassionate inquiry where there is genuine curiosity (Maté, 2011) and exploration of what could be done differently in their process of becoming. In the process encouraging their Crucial Cs of feeling they have capability, connection, a sense of counting and having courage (Bettner and Lew, 2005).

Returning to my inquiry, I identified that the type of co-dependent behaviours I was noticing in my relationship was a tendency to try to fix things single-handed, not to work together. I realised I tried Instead to do too much myself, and to make sure everything was always 'good'.

Storyteller

A simple scenario that encapsulates my rescuing tendencies was getting a new cooker delivered. Our old cooker was worn out and couldn't be fixed, so we bought a new cooker. When it arrived, I went into overdrive trying to remove the old oven on my own and being determined that I could fit the gas and electrics myself, even though I have no knowledge of how to do that. When my partner gently suggested that we should perhaps try and get someone to help, I responded angrily, "What are we going to do, leave the oven in the box in the middle of the room?" He very calmly suggested that would be fine. I had to leave and think about it and it slowly dawned on me that actually, I didn't have to fix the oven situation that day and that nothing would happen if the oven stayed in the box for a few days. I also realised I had no idea how to safely fit electric or gas pipes and was, in fact, not going to fix the situation but could instead put us in much more danger.

Host

Fortunately, this scenario took place after I had an awareness of my tendency for caring-with-rescuing and I was able to stop before I had already disconnected the cooker. Although not before I had moved the cooker and so we had a rather wonky cooker for a couple of days, as I had affected where it had been mounted. In times gone before I would have forged ahead on my own without my partner and caused him to feel undermined. That could have led to him feeling like a victim of my actions or so frustrated that he would get cross,

leading me to feel as though I was being persecuted for trying to do my best. Before I had come across the drama triangle, I was unable to recognise common behavioural patterns of victim-persecutor-rescuer (Karpman, 1968). At the first realisation, I had the temptation to hide the skeletons in the closet, close the doors and not bring it into my tour. However, as I started to open the doors and take a compassionate inquiry (Maté, 2021) into my post-living-contradiction of caring-with-rescuing, I came to work in the ruins (MacLure, 2011). MacLure highlights,

> ruin is just one term in a wider lexicon of uncertainty and disappointment that has emerged across the humanities and the social sciences, whose entries might include: ruin; disappointment; failure; entanglement; disconcertion; getting stuck; unintelligibility; getting lost; bafflement; abjection; stuttering; rupture; haunting; trouble; mourning (p.997).

Many of these words summarise my feelings as I realised that I had not come out of care completely unscathed; rather some of my responses are well known for children who have difficult starts in life. I came to realise that my attempts to rescue led to co-dependent tendencies. Co-dependents often stem from dysfunctional families where there is substance misuse (Irvine, 2000). I felt a sense of failure that I had not been able to create a healthier response as a child and had created a response that was vulnerable to co-dependency.

My initial feelings were of disappointment for not recognising these behaviours in myself and in 'the system' for not trying to prevent them as they are well known. I began to recognise some of my behaviours in Robin Norwood's book *Women Who Love Too Much* which was originally written in 1985 when I was 6 years old. This has led me to write this chapter with the hope to influence more resources to be targeted at preventing some behaviours that are common amongst children who grow up in difficult family circumstances. Rather than suggest a one size fits all solution, my suggestion is that schools, social workers

and charities that are working with such children might be influenced to consider what preventative responses they could provide to help children in such circumstances identify more useful responses. Therefore, this chapter is fuelled by a desire to advocate that all children in care or with trauma in their childhood need more guidance about how to deal with their trauma, to avoid what I now realise are common pitfalls.

I came to realise my caring-with-rescuing was making me feel good about myself but may not be so useful for the person being rescued. The Adlerian Crucial Cs (Lew and Bettner, 1996) provided a useful way to see how this can affect each person in the dynamic. My Crucial Cs were being encouraged in that I was the one getting things done single-handedly and when I failed, despite not allowing him to help, I was able to blame my boyfriend for not helping, so I felt capable. I felt I was fixing things for someone else, so I felt connected and I was the hero of the piece coming in and rescuing and so I felt like I counted. As I saw myself as the person that needed to fix everything it made me courageous to make things better. However, as I explored my behaviours more, I can see that for the other person involved it can make them feel incapable because I am taking over and being the fixer, suggesting I think they are broken and can't help themselves. It can make them feel disconnected because I am not including them in finding the solution but doing things single-handed. That can make it feel like they don't count because I am not seeking their ideas or opinions and that can reduce their courage as they can come to start believing they are unable to do the things I am doing for them.

I also came to realise that not only was I trying to help others, but I was not accepting help myself, adding to the sense of undermining others by insinuating they are not capable and that I am doubly capable, that I can do everything for myself and others. I had developed a superhero complex that I can save the

world and a belief that I had super-human powers to continue without the help of others. Having a superhero complex is referred to in the helping professions literature (Cowen IV, 2015, p.66; Gemignani and Giliberto, 2019, p.10) and in those who have had to overcome adversity (Kelly, 2018, p.12).

Kelly (2018) identifies that a superhero complex can get in the way of a person seeing their weaknesses and therefore not being able to improve. Adler calls it superiority, in the subconscious attempt to overcome the risk of inferiority (Kfir, 2011). This had been the case, as I was working so hard to be the superhero in my home life that I was not seeing the pitfalls of my approach. However, as discussed in the Playroom and the Office, I have a strong growth mindset (Dweck, 2006). Since recognising my tendency of caring-with-rescuing I set out to address my post-living-contradiction and gained some therapy, support groups and literature to improve the way I relate in my home life.

Meta-host

It sounds as though my rescuer has been turned back on myself, I am now working in overdrive to fix myself. Although I suggested I am seeking improvement which is always a process of becoming there is a danger I am looking for the static experience of being fixed. Todd May suggests that Deleuze's philosophy is concerned with asking "How might one live?" (2005, p.3). It sounds like I am still asking the same questions philosophers asked in both Socratic times of "How should one live?" (May, 2005, p.4) and more modern times, "How should one act?" (May, 2005, p.4). These questions May (2005) suggests are about seeking to conform; to be good in the ancient philosophy and to act in the right way under the hierarchies of society. It sounds like my existential crisis made me lose my confidence in my ability to carve out my ideas of how I might live. 'I' in a Deleuzian decentred sense in that my 'I' is

a multiplicity and that there are many different ways 'I' might live and those can be simultaneous and always in a process of becoming.

Host

My feeling of having a professional and personal existential crisis, where I felt I was not living my values as I had thought I had been, and found myself not living caring-with-mutuality with my partner for much of the time, made me lose confidence. I sought answers from elsewhere with the hope of fixing myself and sought outside help to do that, however I don't think these have to be mutually exclusive, as no one has told me what to do. My meta-host's questioning is making me rethink how much I was looking for a solution that is ready-made and is conforming to social norms. I recognise there is part of me that has a desire for me to return to a victory narrative, where I can say I came out of care and despite a moment of "getting stuck" (MacLure, 2011, p.997), I am now feeling more successful in my personal relationships as well. However, I know the therapy, literature and support groups haven't given me an easy answer, even if it may sound like they are a return to how one should live. Instead, the help I sought has been more like my meta-host, causing me to question myself and see myself differently. For example, the literature I read has caused me to question whether I see myself as having control and power over others. Power and control may end up dominating the other, as the rescuer assumes a position of knowing and taking power and control over the other. Therefore caring-with-rescuing may be more harmful than caring-with-mutuality, which is more equitable.

Being and Becoming

Let me return to the incident with the cooker. In this incident, I assumed I had power and control over the material object of the cooker, despite my complete lack of knowledge of fitting gas and electrics or my body's incapability of lifting the cooker on my own. My superhero complex had kicked in, as I must have imagined that I had previously unknown superhuman strength and ability to read minds, which would enable both these issues to be resolved. I also attempted to take the control and power away from my partner by trying to fit the oven without his help. He had a useful input of sensible advice to get someone who had the strength, skills and qualifications to fit and move the cooker.

I agree that seeking off-the-shelf solutions can fail to identify new, previously unthought-of possibilities (St. Pierre, 2018). I was certainly feeling lost and baffled as Maclure suggests, however instead of staying in that place, I was trying to bring myself back to certainty and comfort (St. Pierre, 2014). Taking a post-qualitative approach is uncomfortable because there are no absolutes, no right answers, and no solidity as everything is always on the move. When I am struggling, I still have the humanist tendency to want to feel I know who I am and to hold on to that. The idea of freedom, experimentations and becoming (Fox, 2002, p.355) sounds exciting when I feel good about myself. However, I feel insecure when I feel lost, which leads to me giving power to formulas that claim they know and can generate new self-stories that will make me feel comfortable again (Irvine, 2000). This process of researching my practice with a post-qualitative inquiry pushes me to constantly re-question when I feel I 'know' something or have become comfortable.

Touring the bedroom has begun to feel like my thesis home is in a state of continual flux. It feels like The House of Cedar and Pine in the 12 Monkeys TV series (2015-2018) which exists both in a dream state (located in the Red Forest) and in the real world at 10 Old Pines Road in Binghamton, New York.

In the series, it holds significance as both a home where the characters are happy and settled and as a house that seems haunted by a presence which talks by writing on the walls. The happy home is a potential escape from the nightmare of facing their quest to try to end the apocalypse, however the settled life is not to be and their continual battle to try to thwart the apocalypse continues. The house then loses its reality and becomes, as if in a quantum unstable state, in the dream world of the Red Forest. However, it's in the Red Forest that new knowledge is to be found and staying in the settled home would mean never finding the answer to ending the apocalypse. This is how I feel about leaving humanism where it feels like a warm, comfortable home, where I feel I can change a little bit, but not have to continually be on the move. I can just be. "Identities have become sedimented in our philosophical views not because they reflect the ways things really are but because our history or our fears or our language has placed them there" (May, 2005, p.18).

That is perhaps why I attempted to clean and prepare humanism and qualitative approaches with posthumanism and post-qualitative approaches. Perhaps, ontologically I am too secure in humanism to leave it completely and yet my security means I am comfortable to question what I think I know. I am happy to be a part-time nomad but leaving the security of my home completely is currently a step too far. Perhaps that is why posthumanism is not widely accepted, as the jump to a Deleuzian ontology is not just about removing hierarchies and injustices which I am attracted to, but is also about leaving any form of security of what I think previously knew.

I find it exciting to think new thoughts, however, to not return to well-trodden pathways is also scary. I managed to shift to be a digital nomad, meaning that all my work can now be done online except for negotiated face-to-face meetings. Before the pandemic, that had enabled me to spend months at a time

travelling in my van around Europe and during the pandemic to at least have some escape from being in the house by staying in my van. However, that nomadism is tempered by having a brick-and-mortar home to come back to.

My use of posthuman/post-qualitative (posts) approaches in this thesis has continually tried to question "depth and hierarchy – first, that there is a primary, originary reality out there to be found and, second, that language can accurately represent it" (St Pierre, 2013, p.649). My reading of the posts has made me sure neither of these is possible. However, I feel like Cypher in the Matrix who says, "You know... I know this steak doesn't exist. I know that when I put it in my mouth; the Matrix is telling my brain that it is juicy and delicious. After nine years, you know what I realize? Ignorance is bliss" (The Matrix, 1999). Having been exposed to the posts is a bit like discovering that we all live in the Matrix. In the film, some humans have managed to escape the virtual world where human bodies are being used to power the machines. I feel like I realise my desire for simple solutions is not really possible and is therefore a fictional reality I seek. I feel like studying the posts is like waking up in the Matrix, realising my desire to hold on to simple solutions and fix things is the simulation, not the much tougher reality that life is more complex. Or like the story of Plato's Cave (Plato, 1991) that I looked at in the bathroom, where prisoners are born in chains fixed to looking at the wall of a cave. The only reality they know is the shadow characters their jailors project onto the wall of the cave from the fire behind them. I feel like I am both the prisoner who escaped and realised that there is a 'real' world that is making the shadow, and I am also the prisoners who want to remain in their cave because it's comforting to cling onto the shadows being the reality. It's useful to deconstruct what I think I know, but sometimes I just want to lie on my bed and go to sleep and not worry about whether the bed is not really a solid object. I don't want to think about the quantum states of everything that makes up what I consider reality. I don't care if I am an assemblage with

the bed I am sleeping in. I just want to be and not be concerned with my becoming. It's perhaps why I simultaneously increased my meditation and mindfulness practices to give myself a break and just be in the present moment.

Meta-Host

Deleuze argues, there is never such thing as a present moment, as "it divides itself into future and past, and no longer the present" (Deleuze, 1990, p.147). My past means as a white, western, able-bodied person, I am privileged relative to the majority of the world, despite having the disadvantage of growing up in care. Collins (2018) says, "regardless of the type of privilege an interventionist has, she or he must be aware of it to counteract negative consequences that can flow from it" (p.48). The literature on how my intersecting privileges identify ways they may influence my thinking and actions. "White privilege should be viewed as a built-in advantage, separate from one's level of income or effort" (Collins, 2018). Having grown up in care does not cancel out my white privilege (Eddo-Lodge, 2017). I still carry around my white privilege knapsack of "special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks" (McIntosh, 1989, p.10). In addition to my white privilege, I have western privilege. Griffiths (2017) says "The imperative for western academics is to think through issues of postcoloniality, to recognise the privilege we carry and to consider our advantageous positions in the context of historical cleavages" (p.5). Not only is my skin colour and geography an unearned privilege, but I also experience life as an able-bodied person. Barad (2017) says "The luxury of taking for granted the nature of the body as it negotiates a world constructed specifically with an image of "normal" embodiment in mind is enabled by the privileges of ableism" (p.159).

How am I taking into account the privileges that allow me to just be and not have to worry about becoming? Not everyone has the privilege to not have to

fight for their becoming every moment. Are my recommendations based on my privileges, which negate the disadvantages of others that don't have the luxuries I have? How do the privileges influence my research and how do these show the weaknesses of humanistic approaches that are self-referential?

Host

I understand my privilege gives me the ability to just be and not have to fight for every moment of my life. I attempted to decentre myself and therefore my privilege, however I recognise there may be points where I failed, and therefore not all of my findings relate to everyone. I don't want to perpetuate the inequity created by my privileges. It's not enough for me to just acknowledge my privileges, therefore I will take the recommendations of Collins, Griffiths, and Barad and address the issues my built-in advantages have and what my research might be able to do to address these.

Warfield (2020) found herself having to deal with her own privilege in her thesis, saying "I was pitying myself, a white, able-bodied, privileged, successful, and financially secure academic. Cry me a river" (p.179). I don't want to claim that being in care means I am not privileged. I want to acknowledge the privilege without justifying or minimising the benefits I gained. Warfield (2020) found her way to reframe her thoughts and feelings was to use posthumanism. She says,

> My privilege demanded of me response-ability, and it was that moment that the sadness evolved into feeling of deep conviction. The self-pity turned into deep responsibility, the jarring and reframing of myself as not singular, but as an assemblage intra-acting among various forces networked among systems of privilege that enabled this sort of program to exist (p.179).

I am not separate from the systems that create these privileges, I am an assemblage and I aim to influence improvements that create greater equity. To

take that response-ability I recognise my actions affect and effect these systems as I am in an assemblage with them. My ability to have time to contemplate is certainly privileged, and as a result I take response-ability for that privilege by making sure what I do with it's for the mutual benefit of those who don't have the same privileges. Caring-with-mutuality is not a way to benefit those who are the same as me, rather to recognise that my story is unique, and caring-with-mutuality comes from that unique experience. I aim to influence the practice of those who can make a difference to those experiencing such discrimination and create a more equitable society.

I can appreciate mindfulness has become a middle-class trend and can laugh at the more extreme practices (Hazeley and Morris, 2015). Nevertheless, contemplative inquiry (Haynes, 2005) allows me to take time to consider all the theories and practices that I am bringing into my thesis home. The tree of contemplative practices (CMind, 2021) shows practices that assist such inquiry. I drew my own tree to show the practices I incorporate into my life. Often, in these processes, I can come to new connections and realisations within my inquiry.
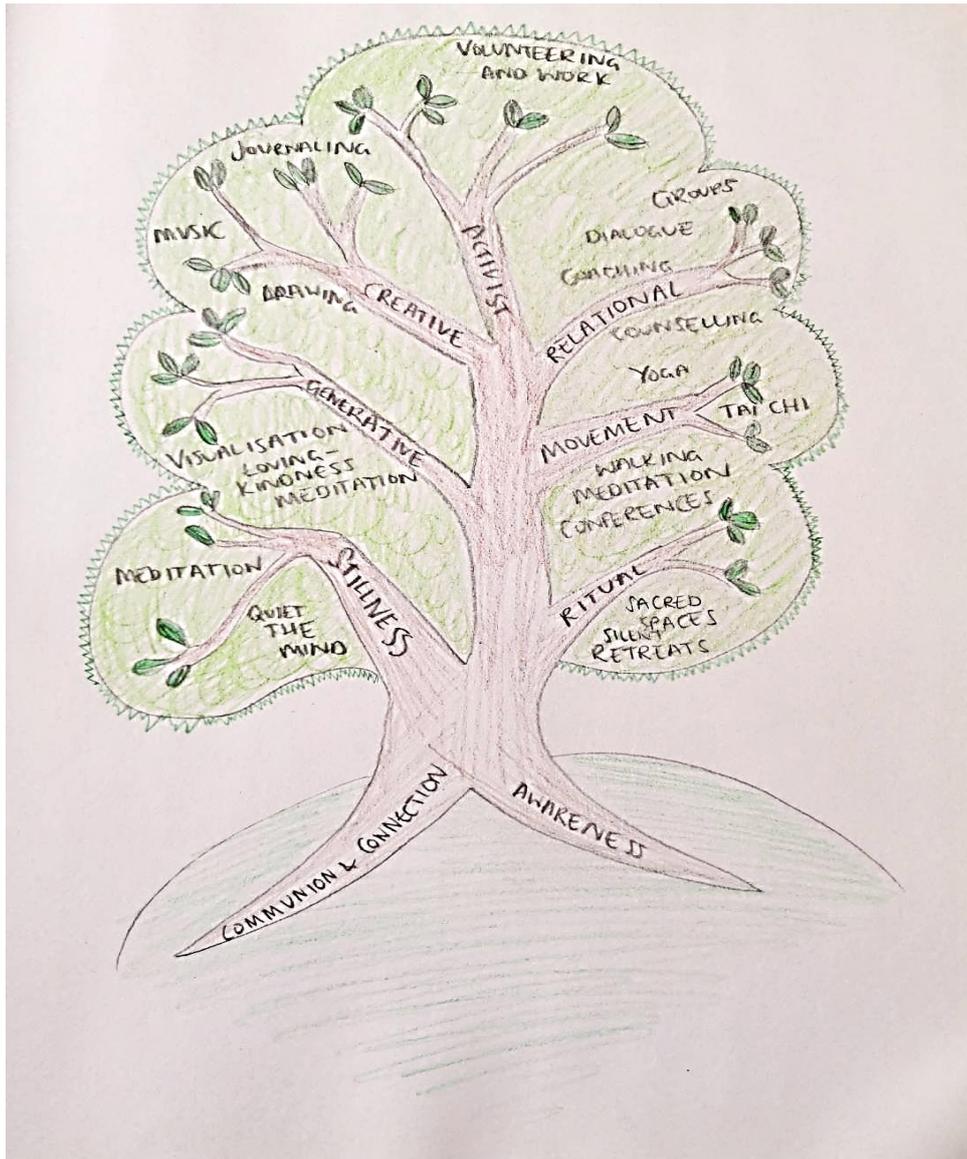
Image 14 My Tree of Contemplative Practices

I conducted a contemplative inquiry (Haynes, 2005) through these practices, I came to realise that I am not my thoughts and that I can choose to let things go and not cling to them. Clinging to thoughts can lead to increased suffering (Hagen, 2012). This has helped me when I found it emotionally and physically draining in my process of becoming. Finding myself as a post-living-contradiction where I was living caring-with-rescuing led to an intense and emotional process to understand this tendency. Being able to let go provided a protective factor and ability to heal and restore, which I found necessary.

Taking a compassionate inquiry approach, which Maté (2011) describes as being curious and kind to oneself when trying to understand oneself, has also been a protective factor. Maté (2011) says, "Asked in a tone of compassionate curiosity, … questions can help to illuminate much that has been murky and dark… Always there is some valid reason, or was when the particular attitude or behavior was first adopted" (p.273).

My tendency to make grand claims, generalisable fixes and humanistic responses could be seen as a reason to give up on trying to take a posthuman/post-qualitative approach. However, with a bit of compassionate curiosity, I can recognise that as Maté (2011) says, "we cling most ferociously to aspects of ourselves that remain hidden to us and whose power we do not comprehend" (p.273). Engaging my meta-host has helped to shine a light on my tendencies for such behaviours. I was able to take new views and gain different insights. It may be as time goes on, I can shed my storyteller and host voices completely and immerse myself in a posthuman/post-qualitative ontology. However, certainly for this tour of my thesis home, I remained honest to my process which has been a mixture.

Therefore, I tried to make a compassionate inquiry that can be curious, as I come to greater understandings from the ruins of discovering my post-living-contradictions. This Understanding has been important in catching myself enacting caring-with-rescuing. Influenced by Living Theory I asked how can I improve my practice? In this case, the practice I am improving is my practice of being a girlfriend to my partner.

Meta-Host

Improving practice as a girlfriend has intonations of being a 'good' girlfriend, which I mentioned before as what I thought caring-with-rescuing was. Nijjar

(2019) identifies the dangers of trying to be a 'good' wife/daughter in law/daughter, and one of her participants Tia suggests women should "resist performing roles as it reproduces unrealistic "good" gender roles" (p.76). Rather she advocates that women should "speak back to power and resist gender roles that cast "good" women as superior over others" (p.76). Is there a danger by naming the practice improvement of being a girlfriend it performs as a gender stereotype, the language of a partner is gender-neutral, would that perform differently?

Host

This brings up an internal debate I am having with myself. I was advised by a charity I work with that adding the pronouns I like to be described as, identifies that I am trans-friendly. I am a strong supporter of transgender rights and support people to be able to identify however they feel comfortable. I am, therefore, very motivated to show my support in any way I can. However, I resisted adding the pronouns I want to be described as, even though I am a woman and therefore am female. The debate I am having is that I don't want to be confined to the gender I find myself in. I may not have dysphoria, however I am triggered by how "our language conventions are embedded with sexist and cisgenderist assumptions" (Galupo *et al.*, 2020, p.205). My attempt to show my practice improvement as a girlfriend is embedded in those sexist and cisgenderist assumptions, which I want to avoid and challenge. Therefore, the practice improvement is of being a partner to my partner. Which gender, I or my partner is, are of no relevance as the improvement is a process etched out by each of us as we seek to be better every day.

The incident with the oven was not trying to reproduce what our culture might suggest are 'good' gender roles. Rather it was a learning opportunity for me to understand that by taking over and trying to fix the situation I was caring-with-

rescuing which had the effect of disempowering my partner and potentially endangering our lives. By working on the problem together, we were able to increase our experience of caring-with-mutuality. We encouraged our Crucial Cs by creating a greater sense of each other's capability, connection, counting and courage in our relationship. Rather than reinforcing gender stereotypes, gender was not important; working together to find a safe and effective solution was.

Meta-host

Could this incident be viewed from a more posthuman perspective? How would the oven be included in the practice improvement – by looking at the event as an assemblage does it change the view of practice improvement? What lines of flight do the values take in this example?

Host

Absolutely. If I were to enact my value of love by being compassionate to my partner and the oven, I can see that both want to be safe and therefore seeking a solution that ensures a safe installation of the oven is best for all. Finding the best possible future is engaging my value of hope. Trying to engage justice in this scenario is about being fair to myself, my partner, the oven and potentially a trained fitter. Being fair to myself is recognising that I need help and am unable to do it myself, being fair to my partner is accepting that he can help and has useful ideas that can improve the situation. Being fair to the oven is about recognising it's a complex system that has to be installed with specialisms of understanding gas and electricity. Being fair to the potential installers is to recognise their expertise which has been gained through many years of study and not assuming that if I watch a quick YouTube video, I will gain their level of knowledge. Finally, participation is recognising that all the parts of the assemblage have their role to play, and that by rescuing I am attempting to cut

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off the roles each is playing and will end up with a malfunctioning oven-Sonia-Ben assemblage and potentially blow up the entire assemblage - quite literally!

Therefore, caring-with-mutuality allows the human and non-human entities in the assemblage to intra-act in a way that allows them to thrive. I use intra-action rather than interaction to recognise the joining together of the oven-Sonia-Ben assemblage in this scenario, thus the actions are within the assemblage. The oven-Sonia-Ben assemblage is working well as is the multiplicity of the oven, myself and Ben as each are thriving. The oven is now installed and thriving as it's cooking amazing meals with us; my partner is thriving as he has a working oven that he knows he inputted into ensuring it was safely installed; I am thriving knowing that all is safe and working. The assemblage has continued the process of becoming by becoming a joyful cooking assemblage of oven-food-Sonia-Ben. The assemblage queers the sexist and cisgenderist issues (Nijjar, 2019; Barad, 2014) I had unintentionally introduced by my use of the word girlfriend. The oven-food-Sonia-Ben assemblage challenges the binaries of the male and female gender (Lishman, 2007) of my partner and me, as we become something different.

Meta-host

Like Kumm and Berbary (2018) I will finish the tour of this room to ask why? Why does it matter how I intra-act with my partner? How people conduct their personal relationships, as long as they are within the law, is surely a matter for each relationship. It would be quite within reason to say this chapter is beyond the scope of academic research and to question if there is a significance to a feminist posthuman 'I'. Perhaps I wandered off into self-therapy?

Host

I would argue there are several reasons it's important to include in the tour of my thesis home. Firstly, I made the point that there are potential implications for practice when considering the impacts of taking children into care. I recognise this area needs more research; however, I made some suggestions that practitioners working with children in care might take forward in their practice and research. These ideas might influence practitioners to consider greater support for the transition's children face and to view what is important in those transitions differently.

Secondly, as I considered whether to include this chapter in my tour, I grew an idea that has come to change the nature of my inquiry and has ethical issues for practitioner-researchers. I came to realise that practice is not just what I am paid to do. A dominant understanding of practice is "reflected in a historically developed tradition of action that grows up around producing products that satisfy a generalized need" (Chaiklin, 2011, pp.233-4). However, I came to understand practice more broadly. I am practicing when there is no production of a product. Practicing being a better partner does not necessarily have a product, however I feel it's still a valuable area of practice not just for my partner and me to thrive but because the practice of becoming a partner intra-acts with a multiplicity of relationships and assemblages. If I am acting on an immanent plane, I cannot separate how I am acting in one relationship with another. They are entangled and affect one another.

Not living professional values in private has been shown to be problematic. Recently, senior Oxfam workers were found to be involved in a scandal in Haiti where they were hiring prostitutes. This led to resignations, investigations and funding being pulled because the charity didn't live up to high ethical standards (BBC, 2018). Oxfam was affected by the scandal with a loss of income and personnel and damning findings of the "serious problems with the culture,

morale and behaviour" (Ratcliffe, 2019). This incident shows that personal and professional life are not neatly separated and that ethical conduct inside and outside of the work arena has consequences for society. Therefore, I feel that considering my process of becoming in all spheres of life is my practice, not just in my work life, is an important social justice issue. I have, therefore, come to consider that I am my practice which takes my post-living-theory beyond the meaning of Living Theory when Whitehead (1989) poses the question "How can I improve my practice?" to entangle my professional and personal life.

Posthuman/post-qualitative inquiry widens up the concept of the 'I' to be a decentred 'I'. My 'I' is a multiplicity and creates many different assemblages in the process of my many practices, as I showed with the oven. Inquiring into the multiplicities and assemblages can be considered as part of the practice improvement of my post-living-theory. Moving from a singular 'I', to an 'I' that is entangled with other humans and non-humans informs my practice improvement, as part of my process of becoming.

Finally, including this chapter is important for the consideration of my post-living-contradiction of caring-with-rescuing, which highlights another assemblage of caring that can be disempowering to others involved. It acts as a juxtaposition to caring-with-mutuality which is considered and how caring-with-mutuality is more nurturing of the humans and non-humans involved. I show how taking a caring-with-mutuality approach improves my practice and leads to thriving for all. However, as with the other post-living-contradictions there may be times when caring-with-rescuing is the best course of action. For example, as a short intervention caring-with-rescuing may help someone survive a moment when they are disabled from helping themselves, such as an incident where someone is in imminent danger and needs someone who can take them to safety.

It's time to leave the bedroom now that my skeletons in the closet have well and truly been let out. We now move, to the dining room where the post-living-theory meal has simmered and the aromas have infused the entire thesis home. We can sit down with some of the key thinkers who have entered my thesis home to consider how these often-contradictory thinkers have brought new insights to the tour, in an intra-active literature review.

Dining Room - ~~Literature Review~~

Host

Welcome to the dining room. The post-living-theory meal has infused the dish and the fragrances have filled the house as we have taken our tour. I invited the more influential thinkers in my thesis to come to sit down and eat and discuss how the tour and the meal have come together. There are ontological and epistemological differences between us, that are important to address as we sit down to eat. I borrowed McPhie and Clarke's (2019) technique of using quotes from published materials, to give voice to each participant. I will allow my guests to speak using their own words and intra-act as an assemblage with this meal, which has been cooking throughout the tour of my thesis house, as an intra-active literature review.

It has been suggested to me that these are unwitting guests, however each of them has published their writings which have been used to create the conversations around the dinner table. In the same way, as I acknowledge that once I have written my thesis, it is the death of the author, birth of the reader (Barthes, 1977). These guests have been born into my reading of them. I have chosen to use their words to converse with to help increase my understanding (and hopefully yours, as the reader) of the literature in a more interactive way than traditional literature reviews.

I will introduce my guests and refer to them by their first names, to help us all feel comfortable as we sit down to eat. My first guest, Jack Whitehead, is the reason I came to do a PhD. I was attracted to Living Theory because I wanted to be able to share my story to influence others to improve their practice, particularly from my experience of being in care, which less than 1% of the population experiences. I also wanted to share my expertise in working and

leading charities. When I was unable to understand what I needed to do to meet the criteria that a Living Theory thesis needed. I took myself in a new direction to spend more time using Adlerian ideas to answer my questions and understanding a Deleuzian ontology to improve the creativity and criticality, that was missing in my first draft (Hutchison, 2018). Thinking with Adlerian ideas has increased my vulnerability to recognise that I had skeletons in my closet that I discussed in the Bedroom. Thinking with a Deleuzian ontology has improved my ability to be critical and feel free to unleash my creativity in my thesis home, and move from Living Theory to create my post-living-theory. I am now more aware of my fallibilities as I researched in the ruins (Lather, 1997) of that first attempt at a thesis (Hutchison, 2018). I identified my fallibilities in different assemblages of caring and the effects and affects they have. Caring-with-resilience helps me overcome traumas but can lead to me becoming self-focused at the expense of others' needs. Caring-with-resistance enables me to stick to what I want to do; however, I leave others behind. Caring-with-authority may get things done; however, it leaves me feeling uncomfortable with exercising power over others, and others feel less invested in any changes made, and may even feel resentful. Caring-with-rescuing makes me feel as though I am being useful, whilst others can feel disempowered to find their own solutions. Despite these post-living-contradictions, or perhaps because of them, I was able to incorporate my diverse interests into my thesis home. Enabling me to include the influences of being a child in care on my adult ways of being and becoming and leadership practice. As Jack takes a seat, I will introduce my other guests.

Thinking with Adlerian ideas has led me to invite Alfred Adler to the table, as his theories on how people make use of their heredity and environment has helped me to understand the influence of my childhood in developing my values. His ideas have helped me to answer the question of how I came through my

childhood with useful approaches to make my life, and others' flourish. They also helped me understand when I had less useful approaches which were more harmful. I also found early recollections useful to understand and explain these influences.

I invited Gilles Deleuze to the table to gain a greater understanding of his ontology. However, I also invited some of the feminist new materialists who have provided me a greater understanding of his ontology and their takes on feminism, which have been influential in my thesis home. I invited Elizabeth St. Pierre, Maggie MacLure, Lisa Mazzei, Karen Barad, and Katie Warfield, as they have been influential in my ability to question, to be critical and to push forward in new ways in my process of becoming during my stay in my thesis home.

I invited some key thinkers who have helped me develop my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality; Viktor Frankl, Carol Dweck and Robert Merton. It's a large crowd even before considering that each thinker has their own multiplicity of thinkers whom they also bring to the table. I could have invited many more, however, I felt these guests provided a varied and representative conversation of the influences in my thesis home. Initially, I struggled with how to give each thinker a voice and began by trying to orchestrate the conversation. I began searching for specific things I wanted my guests to say and looking for them to say the words I was looking for in Google Scholar. They would not converse with me that way. In the end, I allowed them to speak and see where the conversation leads. The conversation flowed easily once I realised, they had already spoken to me on first reading of their texts, and I had taken what resonated or influenced and written it in my quotes book. I gathered all the quotes together and started the conversation around questions and searched from the quotes and so the conversation began.

Ok, let's all take a seat and I can serve up, eat, and talk over the experimental food fusion I created.

Jack, as I serve the starter, it seems fitting to start the conversation with you, as it's where my PhD journey began. I sought to take responsibility for my thesis home in this tour to tell my story as I experienced it, whilst taking a critical and creative approach. What do you think about this, as I know others around the table have their own ideas?

Jack

"I always stress the importance of (practitioner's) personal responsibility for telling the truth as they see it, in terms of Polanyi's (1958) post-critical philosophy. In this philosophy, an individual decides to understand the world from his or her point of view "as a person claiming originality and exercising … judgement responsibility with universal intent" (p.327). In other words, enhancing reflexivity involves both a personal and democratic commitment to being critical" (Whitehead, 2014, p.83).

Host

I certainly took responsibility for telling the truth as I see it through my storyteller's voice. My host has then taken a reflective and reflexive approach to be critical in my writing, as I positioned my writing in the socio-historical and cultural situation I found myself in, as I grew up in care in the UK and went on to take leadership roles in charities. However, my meta-host added a diffractive perspective, where my criticality has not sought to find easy answers that reflection and reflexivity kept leading me to. Moving my host to become more diffractive. Elizabeth, you have some views on this from a post-structural perspective.

Elizabeth

"Poststructural feminists believe that the comfort of imagined absolutes and deep structures allows us, women and men, to avoid responsibility for the state of the world. When we say "that's just the way it is," when we place responsibility on some centered presence, some absolute, foundational principles outside the realm of human activity, we may, in fact, be acting irresponsibly" (St Pierre, 2000, p.484).

Host

I recognise that in my own research, I often felt that was just how it is in a patriarchal, capitalist society. However, I also had to be careful not to come up with easy answers, as I discovered my tendency to have a superhero complex and to think I could fix everything. I found that I oscillated between these feelings and that sitting in the uncertainty was challenging. Katie, I know you thought about these tensions when writing your thesis, what was your experience?

Katie

"Adopting a posthuman ontology means adopting a deep adherence to what Karen Barad calls response-ability. This term, in short, means the ability for mutual response—that the force or forces acting are also acted upon. In producing my novel methodology, Reading the Cuts, then, it was important for me to not just proclaim a methodology, but to describe its becoming. Describe how in making it, it also made me, a researcher. It became increasingly important for me to describe the moments when in test driving the methodology, the participants forced me to rethink the methodology, redesign it, and reimagine it" (Warfield, 2020, p.19).

Host

I relate to that feeling, it was not a one-way process, I didn't just create my thesis home, it also continually re-created me as a researcher and practitioner. It was a process of becoming and at times it was so intense, I needed time to just be. Elizabeth, you have a lot of ideas about becoming in your work, what do you think?

Elizabeth

"Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987) refused the verb, to be, which establishes identity, stability, and closure (this is that) and preferred the conjunction, and, which indicates ongoing relation, becoming (this and this and this and . . .). Foucault (1971/1972), too, questioned the stability of what exists and asked, "what special status should be given to that verb to be?" (p.85). In an ontology of immanence, one becomes less interested in what is and more interested in what might be and what is coming into being" (St Pierre, 2019, p.4).

Host

I certainly am more interested in what might be and what is coming into being and that has been exciting in the process of this tour of the thesis house. However, I haven't been able to let go of my need for moments of stability and the need to be. Taking moments to contemplate on the rush of becoming and being still for a moment has given me the energy and courage to continue on the process of becoming.

Let's move on to the main meal and I can explain how my thesis developed. I had started with my living-theory of caring as mutuality (Dyke and Hutchison, 2017) being something I felt I lived most of the time. I expected the tour of my thesis home to be lots of examples of me living my values as fully as possible, as I showed what *caring as mutuality* meant to me. I realised that by seeing the

caring <u>as</u> something else I was giving a hierarchy to the something else. I realised that the caring remained as important and yet changed in nature so I amended my wording to caring with mutuality which reflected the equity of the caring and the mutuality. Finally, I realised I need the hyphens to highlight the entangled nature of the caring I was expressing as I began to develop a post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality. However, many post-living-contradictions have come up, as I realised that I am living different entanglements of caring when I find my values or Crucial Cs not being experienced or encouraged by myself or others.

This process of becoming was often painful and uncomfortable. In the kitchen, I found myself living caring-with-resistance as I stood my ground to continue to develop Living Theory, which allowed space for my post-living-theory to emerge in my thesis home's own becoming. Caring-with-resistance has allowed me to achieve building my thesis home using my own academic freedom, however the process of changing chefs has been more defensive and less generative than caring-with-mutuality would have allowed. I have realised caring-with-mutuality requires a willingness from both sides of the relationship, and I cannot control the other side of the relationship to want to seek mutuality. Caring-with-authority emerged in the office when I allowed my values to be negated due to my lack of confidence to lead HR processes in line with my own values. In this instance, it was my fear of getting things wrong that prevented me from caring-with-mutuality initially. I was able to return to caring-with-mutuality eventually. The process helped me to realise that although there are times when caring-with-authority seems attractive, can get results and may be necessary at times, my experience is that it disempowers others in the relationship; that it was at the expense of the morale of the team. In the bedroom, I realised I had been living caring-with-rescuing which encouraged my Crucial Cs, however it discouraged my partner's Crucial Cs. It also often left me with solutions that

were not as good as they could have been if they had been created with caring-with-mutuality.

How do you see that process of becoming in research Elizabeth?

Elizabeth

"Th(e) inquiry is always becoming in the same way that "writing is a question of becoming, always incomplete, always in the midst of being formed, and goes beyond the matter of any liveable or lived experience" (Deleuze, 1993/1997, p.1). Thus, the post qualitative inquirer does not know what to do first and then next and next" (St Pierre, 2018, p.604).

Host:

Indeed, that did become my experience when I was able to let go and let the reading, writing and my inquiry take me where it wanted. As I admitted in the bedroom, I had the secret intention of writing a victory narrative to begin with, however, as I let the writing form, it has taken me in different directions. By bringing in my meta-host voice, I was constantly reminded to look beyond my liveable or lived experience by thinking in different ways. My meta-host has diverted me over and over again in unexpected directions or lines of flight. Maggie, I know you have thought about the danger of smooth stories of self, which I had been allured by and my meta-host has saved me from. What are your thoughts from a teacher perspective?

Maggie

"Lather (1994) has noted that the narratives of educational research (and not just action research) are usually victory narratives. She wonders what it might mean to rethink research as a 'ruin', in which risk and uncertainty are the price to be paid for the possibility of breaking out of the cycle of certainty that never

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seems to deliver the hoped-for happy ending … But I wonder whether it's worth considering other ways that interviewees and interviewers might collaborate in the telling of life stories. The aim would not be to try to get more coherent and 'disinterested' narratives … The point might be to resist resolution, to live 'at the hyphen' as Fine (1994) puts it, between those boundaries that are inevitably implicated in narratives of becoming an action researcher. Might we be cyborgs, hybrids or tricksters, whose business is to prevent solutions to the problem of getting safely across the boundaries of teacher/academic, personal/professional, being/becoming? … what must we have forgotten in order to tell these smooth stories of the self? For instance, about the impossibility and the necessity of leaving the 'island', or the Garden, of teaching, and the discomforts of being 'haunted' thereafter by the spectre of practice; about the way in which the poles of the 'inside'-'outside' dualism reverse themselves, valorising first one term, then the other, in a movement which is never fully or finally arrested" (MacLure, 1996, p.283).

Host

I embraced research as a ruin, particularly in the bedroom, as I realised myself to be a post-living-contradiction in my personal life. My three voices have helped me to take a hybrid approach to question my smooth stories. I felt my 'self' be deconstructed in the process of my research, which has been haunting at times. I talked about trauma in the kitchen and personal and professional crises in the bedroom. It has certainly been uncomfortable at times and from my critical friends' feedback, I haven't hidden the discomfort in my tour. However, discomfort is the reality of the ruins. They are constantly in movement which I also tried to show through my three voices. I wanted to be careful to ensure that my research didn't just become navel-gazing, which is why I worked to create my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality in my thesis home. Extending my antimethodology (Nordstrom, 2017) with posthuman/post-qualitative

approaches has added criticality and Adlerian Early Recollections have helped in my explanations. Jack, can you explain to everyone what creating a living-theory can address?

Jack

"Creating a living-educational-theory can address the notion of self in ways that go beyond navel-gazing in both improving practice and generating knowledge in making scholarly, academically legitimate, and original contributions to educational knowledge' (Whitehead, 2014, p.81) … a living-educational-theory is the unique explanation produced by an individual. I shorten living-educational-theory to living-theory" (Whitehead, 2014, p.82).

Host

Improving practice and generating knowledge is what attracted me to creating my own living-theory, to move from abstract thoughts to generating my own unique knowledge. Not to provide <u>the</u> answer, but to provide an educational explanation of my own unique knowledge that could influence others professionally and personally to transform what they are doing to help themselves and others thrive. However, I came to see problems with the humanistic and qualitative ethico-onto-epistemological basis of Living Theory, which continues to lead back to binary thinking. I had thought living contradictions, through their process of recognising the differences and the learning that comes from the differences, were a way of addressing such issues. Jack, would you like to explain what living contradictions mean for you?

Jack

"Experiencing oneself as a living contradiction is the experience of holding together one's values and their negation. I continue to experience myself as a living contradiction. I value the response of my imagination to this experience in

creating an imagined future that seeks to resolve the contradiction in living more fully the values that I use to give meaning and purpose to my life and professional practice in education. This enables me to explore the possibility of moving my practice in the direction of living my values more fully" (Whitehead, 2019, p.5).

Host

However, I see the binary thinking this holds as suggesting it's always 'right' to live values fully. However, my post-living-contradictions show that whilst they can be useful for creating practice improvement through living my values more fully. That is not always possible or preferable. In the playroom where caring-with-resilience helped me overcome my adverse childhood experiences; in the kitchen where caring-with-resistance was the only way I could find to continue; in the office where I was allured by caring-with-authority; in the bedroom where I found myself to be caring-with-rescuing. I also think the shifts and changes that post-qualitative inquiry has brought, has resulted in my ability to remain longer in the discomfort of post-living-contradictions and not trying to immediately return to caring-with-mutuality. Instead, I remain with the post-living-contradiction where the differences are areas of learning. Karen, you suggest how to avoid binaries, tell us what you think.

Karen:

"How can we understand this coming together of opposite qualities within, not as a flattening out or erasure of difference, but as a relation of difference within? Anzaldúa addresses this by proposing an antidote to homophobia–fear of going home, the inability to go home – namely, mestiza consciousness, having a queer political identity – 'one that slips in and out of the white, the Catholic, the Mexican, indigenous, the instincts … It is a path of knowledge – one of knowing (and of learning) the history of oppression of our *raza*. It is a way of balancing,

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of mitigating duality'. Living between worlds, crossing (out) taxonomic differences, tunnelling through boundaries (which is not a bloodless but a necessary revolutionary political action), Anzaldúa understood the material multiplicity of self, the way it is diffracted across spaces, times, realities, imaginaries. (Barad, 2014, p.175) The self is itself a multiplicity, a superposition of beings, becomings, here and there's, now and then's" (Barad, 2014, p.176).

Host

So many interesting ideas there Karen, I always feel I need to understand your terms, which as a quantum physicist come so easily to you and to find out who the people are you are talking about. Gloria Anzaldúa was a scholar of Chicana cultural theory, feminist theory and queer theory (Capan, 2021). I hadn't heard of Chicana, the term 'refers to women of Mexican descent who are born and/or raised in the United States' (Smith, 2017). A superposition is a process that happens during diffraction where instead of having two possibilities, a binary, there is a multiplicity of possibilities; to link this with beings, this moves beyond the human to posthuman. I see how Gloria used this when thinking about her sexuality and culture, which still preserves the differences within those communities.

I enjoyed the quantum metaphors in posthuman/post-qualitative theories as they have acted as reminders that my simple answers, where I slip into assuming that I have the answer, are simply an answer. Rather the general, forthright statements I find myself making are a sign that I have slipped back into humanistic, dualistic thinking. Rather than just being reflective or reflexive, being diffractive reminds me to acknowledge the differences, rather than just look for patterns of similarity. It has been challenging not to create a single, tidy story from childhood to adulthood. I had to question my influences.

Robert Merton, I remember reading your paper and feeling vindicated for wanting to tell my story of an adult who has achieved a level of success in my adulthood despite my childhood in care. Tell us how you put it?

Robert

"In the world laboratory of the sociologist, as in the more secluded laboratories of the physicist and the chemist, it is the successful experiment which is decisive and not the thousand-and-one failures which preceded it. More is learned from a single success than from the multiple failures. A single success proves it can be done. Thereafter, it is necessary only to learn what made it work. This, at least, is what I take to be the sociological sense of those revealing words of Thomas Love Peacock: "Whatever is, is possible" (Merton, 1948, p.210).

Host

That's right, I remember feeling there was a reason I should research my story in that statement. I fear your idea encouraged my desire to tell a victory narrative and caring-with-rescuing appeared in my research, as I thought I could save others in care from the negative outcomes being in care stubbornly continues to create if only I could learn what made it work for me. You also believed, if it were realised, that what has gone before does not mean it will follow.

Robert

"It is only with the rejection of social fatalism implied in the notion of unchangeable human nature that the tragic circle of fear, social disaster, reinforced fear can be broken" (Merton, 1948, p.210).

Host

My research certainly identifies that there is no such thing as unchangeable human nature, as I think everyone around the table agrees in their own way that

we are all in a process of becoming, that we can improve and grow. However, my research has identified post-living-contradictions. My success story has not been so straight forward and recognising the ruins has been an important realisation in my research. Luckily, my growth mindset has seen these realisations as learning opportunities, however painful they might have been. Carol, tell us about your idea of growth mindset as it has played an important part in my thesis.

Carol

"The passion for stretching yourself and sticking to it, even (or especially) when it's not going well, is the hallmark of the growth mindset. This is the mindset that allows people to thrive during some of the most challenging times in their lives" (Dweck, 2006, p.7).

Host

I am not quite sure I felt like I was thriving in the midst of some of the struggles and realisations when I found myself a post-living-contradiction. However, I came through and have been able to show both the thriving and the difficulties in this tour.

Carol

"The other thing exceptional people seem to have is a special talent for converting life's setbacks into future successes. Creativity researchers concur … there was wide agreement about the number one ingredient in creative achievement. And it was exactly the kind of perseverance and resilience produced by the growth mindset" (Dweck, 2006, p.11).

Host

Well, it will be up to you, the reader, to decide if I created something exceptional! However, I certainly have produced a creative thesis through my metaphor of the tour of my thesis home. That has emerged after perseverance to continue despite my first attempt not meeting the mark, and resilience to carry on, despite feeling lost, which I felt several times. Personally, as a child in care, as I sought my identity growing up; professionally, when I found myself caring-with-authority; personally, when I found myself caring-with-rescuing. I responded creatively to create my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality not as a living-theory with a single clarified statement, rather as changing examples throughout the tour of my thesis home, to point to where caring-with-mutuality emerges. I did this to maintain the becoming nature of caring-with-mutuality, that cannot be fixed.

Alfred

"A variety of experiences provides the power to adapt and overcome. The task for the individual, therefore, is to be embedded in everything that humans become and in all that they do; this task underlies every human being, each of whom demonstrates through his behavior and with his life his greater or lesser aptitude and adaptability. In this process, the uniqueness of every human lifestyle is formed neither by heredity nor by the influences of the environment, but by the goal-striving and fulfilment-urging of the individual" (Adler, 2005a, p.21).

Host

I find great comfort that my heredity and environment haven't meant I am stuck being one way or another, and it's why I was attracted to your ideas, Alfred. Both the ideas of growth mindset and goal-striving are key for me as I worked towards a perceived goal, whether professionally, personally or in my research. Using early recollections has helped me understand the experiences that have

supported me to adapt and overcome the harmful aspects of being in care, however, I also used them to explore where I thought I created a useful response. I have discovered that there are harmful aspects to my adaptions, such as highlighted by caring-with-authority and caring-with-rescuing. Both of which are disempowering to others even though they may still get things done. These reflections on my childhood have helped explain my adaptions, how they have both helped me overcome and where they have been less useful.

Karen

"Crucially, there are epistemological, ontological, and ethical issues at stake. This applies both to the practices that are being observed (e.g., laboratory practices) and to the knowledge-making practices that contribute to the science studies literature. But the mere acknowledgment of the fact that science studies scholars are actors involved in performing their own set of practices doesn't go nearly far enough. Turning the mirror back on oneself is not the issue, and reflexivity cannot serve as a corrective here. Rather, the point is that these entangled practices are productive, and who and what are excluded through these entangled practices matter: different intra-actions produce different phenomena. ... one can't simply bracket (or ignore) certain issues without taking responsibility and being accountable for the constitutive effects of these exclusions" (Barad, 2007, p.58).

Host

In my draft thesis (Hutchison,2018), I felt reflection and reflexivity worked as I was trying to create a clarified statement of what my living-theory of caring as mutuality was. I was trying to fix the meaning, so I could defend it. In the writing of this tour, I realised caring-with-mutuality is always on the move. It's different in each instance and creating different effects and affects, for which I am responsible. Early recollections have an element of reflection, however, Alfred

recognised memories are not fixed, rather we remember the things that help us to approach life with an already tested plan of action, however, when we realise our approach is not working, we can adjust our approach, and this can cause us to change our memories. Therefore, I haven't used early recollections for their accuracy, rather I used them to gain insight into how I perceived my life: To reflect on how this has helped me develop my values and approaches to my life and how I can continue to change when they are not working. Jack, you also have thoughts about the difference.

Jack

"A distinction is also drawn between reflection and reflexivity. By reflection I mean a process of consciously thinking about our experiences, feelings, actions, and responses through which we learn in self-study-enquiries of the kind, "How do I improve what I am doing?" By reflexivity I mean a process through which we clarify and communicate the ontological values we use to give our lives meaning and purpose, and which form the explanatory principles and living standards of judgment in our explanations of educational influence in self-study enquiries of the kind "How do I improve what I am doing?"" (Whitehead, 2014, p.82).

Host

Jack, you talk about meaning and purpose, before I go on to talk more about what you have said, I want to bring in Viktor, as his book *Will to Meaning* had a great influence on me. I resonated with his ideas that having meaning and purpose is important for overcoming adversity. I felt my values that developed in childhood led to me living a life that has given me meaning and purpose through the work I do.

Viktor

"There are some authors who contend that meanings and values are 'nothing but defense mechanisms, reaction formations and sublimations.' But as for myself, I would not be willing to live merely for the sake of my 'defense mechanisms', nor would I be ready to die merely for the sake of my 'reaction formations'. Man, however, is able to live and even to die for the sake of his ideals and values!" (Frankl, 1992, p.121).

Host

That fits well with what Jack is saying about values being something we live by and fortunately, I haven't been in a position where I would need to die by them, as Viktor, you experienced in the concentration camps.

Living Theory is a process of clarifying the unique constellation of values that create a person's living-theory through a process of reflexivity, after reflecting on practice. However, there seems to be a living contradiction in the attempt to clarify values to a fixed meaning. Moira Laidlaw (1996) makes the point that values are living, therefore I am concerned that the process of clarifying could end up solidifying them when they are always in a process of becoming. That is why I took a posthuman approach and moved to a post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality, where I decentred myself and included both the human activity and the non-human. I recognised that there has been mutuality with the objects in my examples of my teddy coming to the hospital with me, the laptop helping me create my thesis home and the cooker showing me my post-living-contradiction of caring-with-rescuing. Let's move onto the pudding course.

Katie

"When both the researcher and participants are recast as assemblages in motion—entanglements of becoming resulting from past collective material-discursive forces—notions such as voice, data, and classic processes of

analysis must also be rethought as being more complex, more layered, unbounded, and always shifting. When the subject is decentered, multiple, nomadic, and changing, when agency is spread along material, discursive, and affective tendrils, then what constitutes data, what comprises "voice", and the linear and bounded first-person structure of an autoethnography all become complicated—they all must be rethought in a posthumanist manner that aligns with a posthumanist ontology. The first-person voice of the self may become multiple, fragmented, or incomplete and in motion—that is, uncertain. It may slip backward in time to former situated and knotted moments of subjectivities where different material, discursive and affective forces flowed. It may reflect on research reflexivity in a posthuman manner, incorporating thoughts on the forces of production of the text itself—a sort of posthuman cracking of the 4th wall as the text itself comes to reveal its own becoming (Lenz Taguchi, 2012; Warfield, 2018).

Further, since agency emerges no longer from the singular self, then space must be made for other "things" to speak: vital matter (Bennett, 2010), what we may call objects, spaces, multiple media broadly (the materiality of discourses), like scripts but also mass media, songs, poetry, visual and performance art, memories (Fox, 2016), diaries and memoirs, bodies and body parts (Raun, 2016), technologies (Warfield, 2018), text messages, social media posts, online forum postings, and all sorts of ways that feelings (Kuntz and Presnell, 2012) entangle with, through, and in relation with these material and discursive assemblages" (Warfield, 2020, p.167).

Host

Certainly, in my tour of my thesis home, I tried to let many "things" speak from different parts of myself, to bring a multiple and fragmented voice to continually complicate my first-person self-study. This is to show that I didn't have a single,

fixed perspective, but that it was constantly shifting and being questioned. I tried to let the non-human speak, as well as the human, as I realised the examples I give are entangled, not just with the people involved, but also the non-human. I feel this has brought richness to my thesis home as the objects brought into my thesis home had a voice as well.

Gilles

"It is always a multiplicity, even within the person who speaks and acts. All of us are "groupuscules" (Foucault (in conversation with Deleuze), 1996 p.206).

Host

Absolutely, I certainly felt myself as a multiplicity on this tour as I am continually finding myself drawn to humanistic, dualistic ideas and then having my meta-host voice complicate and question. I changed my mind and confused myself continually as I wrote, moving from the comfort of certainty to the discomfort of confusion and uncertainty.

Maggie

"Post modernism refuses to choose between, just as it refuses to choose between theory and practice, nature and culture, 'man' and machine, progressive and traditional education, school and work etc., so it also refuses to say yes or no to the question of its own relativism. By saying yes and no" (MacLure, 2002, p.70).

Host

That's how I feel about my thesis home, I refused to choose between humanism and posthumanism and qualitative and post-qualitative, being and becoming. Instead, I acknowledged all of them and recognised the difference it makes

when I go towards one or the other. I tried to wash and prepare my ingredients to address the ethico-onto-epistemological problems and yet embrace the differences. I held onto the lack of certainty, whilst I guided you, the reader, to the influences I want to make; for children in care in the playroom and bedroom; charity leadership in the office; self-care in the garden; the importance of paying attention to living our values in personal as well as professional relationships in the bedroom. I am aware there is no more I can do and have left it to you, the reader, to be influenced in your own process of becoming. As my critical friends have read my work, the influence has often been different than I expected and that has been fulfilling. As I said in the introduction, I realise that as soon as I wrote this tour of my thesis home, I am no longer in control of how it's interpreted. It's the death of the writer and the birth of the reader (Barthes, 1977).

All my guests have finished their meal and it's time to make a move and leave, not only the tour but also to move out of my thesis home, as this process is coming to an end. Before we finish, I would like to say a few words as we make the eternal return (Pearson, 1977) to the entrance hall to prepare to leave. Not a conclusion, but rather as Deleuze and Parnet (1987) say there is always and, and, and…

The Eternal Return to the Entrance Hall - ~~Conclusion~~

Meta-host

> *Nietzsche explicitly denies that the eternal return is a circle which makes the same return. The eternal return is the strict opposite of this since it cannot be separated from a selection, from a double selection. Firstly, there is the selection of willing or of thought … only will that of which one also wills the eternal return … Secondly, there is the selection of being … only that which becomes in the fullest sense of the word can return, is fit to return … We can thus see how the eternal return is linked, not to a repetition of the same, but on the contrary, to a transmutation. It is the moment or the eternity of becoming which eliminates all that resists it. It releases, indeed it creates, the purely active and pure affirmation (Deleuze, 1983, p.xii).*

What has this process of becoming done? What has changed since we were last here? What movement has taken place since I moved into my thesis home? What is still moving as I prepare to leave my thesis home?

Host

Although I returned to the entrance hall where the tour began, it's the eternal return. I was in a process of becoming writing this tour, as it has become and has taken you, the reader, on this process with me, with the hope that I influenced your becoming. Therefore, the entrance hall is no longer the same and nor are we. We haven't returned to the beginning because that no longer exists, instead, everything has been on the move (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012), and is still moving. As a result, these are not final conclusions, rather they are fleeting attempts to capture the movement, momentarily, of my becoming whilst living in my thesis home and taking you on this tour together. I offer my

contribution of post-living-theory and post-living-contradictions to think with as a practice, and a way to practice differently, for posthuman/post-qualitative scholars. Although I was influenced by Living Theory, the concepts I created are different to the humanistic/qualitative approach that Living Theory adopts.

I feel like St. Pierre "I (am) not surprised by my inability to perform a conclusion, for I had not yet finished. Indeed, I wondered whether I could ever finish" (p.261). Although the words will end on the page and I will hand in this document as my completed thesis, it's not finished and I will never finish it, as there is no final moment only "the eternity of becoming" (Deleuze, 1983, p.113).

Storyteller

My mum-b calls to see how my writing is getting on. She knows I am working on getting my first full draft to my supervisors today. I was planning to go for a walk, so I stop writing and talk to her whilst I walk. I am not sure how we get on to it, but she starts telling me about the day I was born. She tells me I was born at seven in the morning and that they had to wrestle the gas and air away from her because she didn't want to feel the physical pain of childbirth. She tells me how they took me away from her, cleaned me up and dressed me, but left her in the bed where she gave birth until they let her see me. It seems fitting to talk about the day of my birth, as my thesis has been a birthing process for me. I feel like I needed the gas and air of humanism wrestled away from me and have certainly had the birth pains of labour, as the contractions of learning have taken hold. Some days my head has hurt trying to understand the complexities of posthuman/post-qualitative inquiry and the challenges to my worldview. I also experienced the pain of one miscarried thesis.

It's nice of my mum-b to call to wish me luck. As I continue my walk after she's hung up, I wonder what she'll make of her only granddaughter, my thesis. I worry about how I portrayed my mum-b. Have I expressed her love for me accurately or has it been lost in the stories I told of her illnesses? Will she love her granddaughter or would she have preferred I'd done what most people do and birthed a flesh and blood baby, rather than this strange creature I created?

Then, as I did countless days, I turn on the app, PocketBook, to read my latest readings. Today St. Pierre (2000) is talking to me about Inquiry in the Smooth Spaces of the Field: A Preface. And I continue birthing my thesis, as I walk and she starts writing herself (Tarbett, 2020), as I think with the theory of nomadic inquiry and smooth spaces.

Host

Perhaps I am mixing too many metaphors, however, the metaphors each do something different. My thesis has been my home and my foetus. A home, in that I inhabited my research, and my foetus, in that I created a new life. Sarah Whelan Curtis (2019) did a photoshoot with her thesis as if she were holding her new born child.

Image 15 Sarah Whelan Curtis Photoshoot with Her Thesis

She describes it as the longest labour ever, which captures the pain, pleasure and exhaustion of birthing a thesis. Many of the comments criticise Sarah for likening her thesis to a human baby. Dr Laura Richmond (2019) commented, "it's problematic & potentially very hurtful to people in a variety of circumstances. A PhD is an ordeal (finished mine a couple of years ago) but not comparable in any way. Please reconsider". However, I feel this shows the humanist tendency to privilege human over non-human. Therefore, I have used this metaphor as I feel creating new knowledge is a birthing process, albeit to a non-human baby. However, I am not intending it to be hurtful or seeking to minimise anyone's experience of childbirth or miscarriage.

What have I birthed? Certainly not what I expected when I began. This thesis is very different from the "victory narrative" (MacLure, 1996) I had expected, where I would show how I came through care with a degree, studying my PhD and having a meaningful and successful career. Instead, there are narratives of ruin

(Lather, 1997), as I miscarried my first thesis and out of the ruins of that experience, have birthed another very different thesis. I shifted ontologically, from a perspective of thinking a purely humanistic methodology that would have enabled me to research my learning journey and provide a narrative of social justice to influence others to improve their work, to a posthuman/post-qualitative questioning and problematising ontology that prevents me from making a smooth, linear story of my life (MacLure,1996) and findings from my research. However, I have also not been able to let go of humanism completely, as I still find many concepts useful and so have created an unholy agreement (Nordstrom, 2017) and at times disagreement.

Through the ruin, failure, bafflement, stuttering, disappointment, getting stuck and lost (MacLure, 2011) my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality has emerged. Moving from a living-theory with a clarified statement to a post-living-theory in motion which point at examples that capture the essence, recognising that caring-with-mutuality is always on the move (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012), always in a process of becoming and can never be fixed or clarified. Lord Business in The LEGO® Movie (2014) said "People everywhere are always messing with my stuff. But I have a way to fix that. A way to keep things exactly the way they are supposed to be permanently". The temptation to be like Lord Business and glue everything down so no one can mess it up is something I was allured by. However, it's neither possible nor desirable as the consequences would be no change, no growth, no learning. Just as with The LEGO® Movie, the ability to make new and different things is what makes everything awesome, not being told what to do and fixing everything down. That means embracing the mess, as McPhie (2014) realised that he became Mr Messy in a moment of existential clarity, as far preferable to Mr Neat and Mr Tidy. "And from that moment on, *he* chose *her* own (never-ending) story, fully embraced transgressive philosophy and became a nomad because they are

always 'in the middle'!" (p.85). So here I am, not at the end, but rather in the middle because "Nomads are always in the middle" (Deleuze and Parnet, 2007, p.31).

I am both a digital nomad, working from wherever I can get internet signal, and also feel like St. Pierre (2000) - "This nomadic writing journey … has been both gruelling and exhilarating. This story has no beginning and no end but has always been, and I slip into it over and over again in different places, and it is as if I too have always been there" (p.276). I will review all the different places my caring assemblages have emerged, their affects and what they do – the difference they make. Not to create a definitive list of what must be included, rather to map the affects, differences and repetitions (nod to Deleuze and Guattari's *Difference and Repetition, 1994*), and thus to provide the possibility to think with post-living-theory to provide new lines of flight.

I added Word Clouds of the affects of my assemblages of caring, to provide an affective visual - not to contain or code, rather to feel the affects differently.

And, and, and … (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987).

Image 16 Caring-with-resistance Affects – Word Cloud

In the kitchen, caring-with-resistance emerged as I sought to find a way to develop my thesis. The affects were defensiveness, stubbornness, discouragement, pain, discomfort, ruin, frustration, anger, not accepting any limitations, control or domination. The difference it made was that I went on to create my thesis as I wanted to, and have pursued more liberating lines of flight. I have a greater awareness of paradigms and what happens when they clash. I experienced trauma which I found a way to overcome.

Later in the Kitchen, caring-with-mutuality emerged in my supervision session with Jamie McPhie and David Murphy. I identify the thisness (Kim and Bianco, 2007) and affect (Clough and Halley, 2007) of caring-with-mutuality as generativity, excitement, enjoyment, development, confusion, stimulation, usefulness and encouragement being present. Experiencing caring-with-mutuality with my supervisors allows me to learn and develop my ideas, take risks and work through my confusion.

And, and, and …
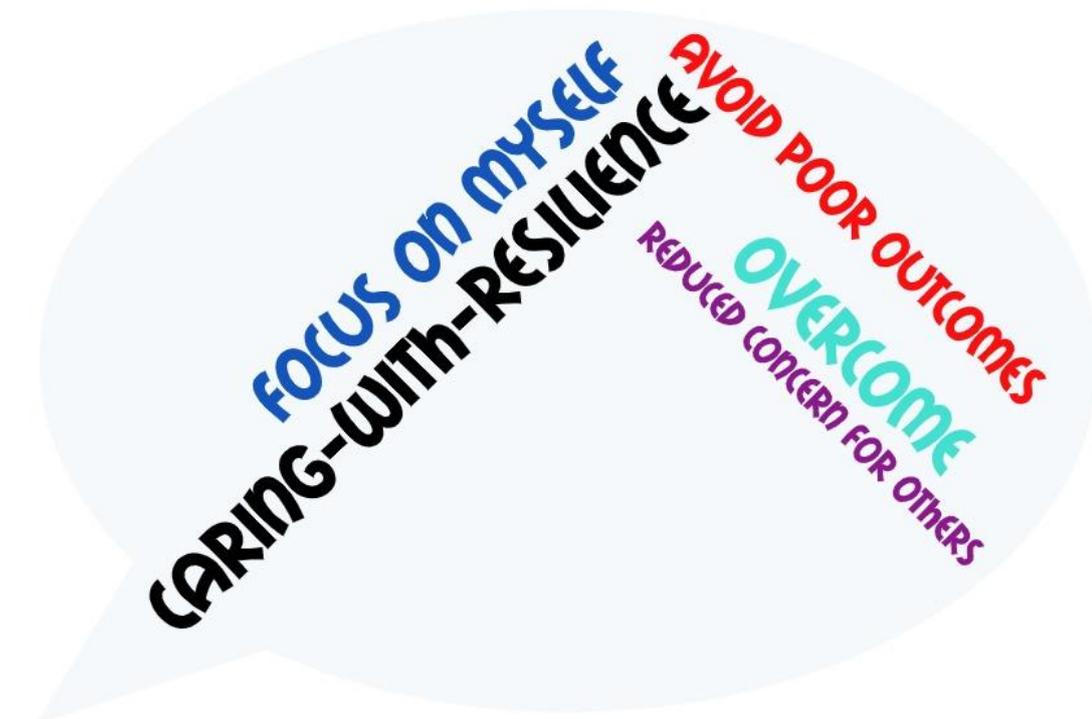
Image 17 Caring-with-resilience Affects – Word Cloud

In the Playroom, caring-with-resilience emerged, which had the affect of helping me overcome my situation whilst avoiding the usual poor outcomes experienced by most children in care. However, caring-with-resilience meant my focus was on my ability to overcome and could mean I was not concerned with others' challenges. However, my values, especially of justice and participation helped me develop early attempts at caring-with-mutuality as I was motivated to reduce others suffering by sharing my own experiences to help others overcome.

In the Playroom, two of my social workers displayed what I now recognise as caring-with-mutuality. The affects I experienced were feeling seen, heard, counted, connected, capable, courageous, loved, hopeful, fairly treated, considered and listened to. What this did for me was to make me feel more empowered, be able to achieve, identify poor practice, have an expectation to

be heard when decisions affect me and helped them make better and more informed decisions for my care.

And, and, and …

In the Office, caring-with-mutuality emerged when encouraging people to grow and learn in a safe environment, where blame was not apportioned. I give the example of how I used carers' complaints to improve my learning, the learning of the people involved in the complaints and the organisation. The thisness of the example is; mistakes being seen as learning opportunities, how to improve things in the future, growth, development, improvement, pleasure, flourishing, process of becoming, listening, reassurance, apology, expression of being wronged and transformation. The differences it made and affects it had were to enable people to learn from mistakes and those who had been wronged to feel they had improved the very thing that had wronged them. There was learning, growth and development for the people involved and the organisation.

And, and, and …

Image 18 Caring-with-authority Affects – Word Cloud

In the Office, I give an example of a restructure at the start of the process caring-with-authority emerged. I tried to push through a solution taking a paternalistic and hierarchical approach. This performed differently than I wanted, the affects were that I felt uncomfortable, staff felt excluded and fearful, scapegoating, operating in a values vacuum and came from me feeling tired, overstretched, busy, intimidated and insecure. However, I was able to move towards caring-with-mutuality. The affects were moving towards feeling informed, involved, meaningful contributions, change, learning, working differently in future, collaborative change, values-based and co-creation. The difference it made was the process made people feel more involved, but also that the learning continued to affect me as I become entangled in the learning as it continued to affect future practice.

In the Garden, I experienced caring-with-mutuality through Freebording as the Freebord, place and people create an assemblage. I took a posthuman

approach, which meant not just thinking about my wellbeing, but also considering the wellbecoming (MacPhie, 2016) of myself and the more than human actors in that process. The affects were a feeling of community, encouragement, skills progression, challenging boundaries, wellbe(com)ing, resilience, self-care, Crucial Cs encouraged, values being lived, danger, joy, learning, welcome, improvement, inclusivity, civil disobedience, liberation and self-organised. I find the differences Freebording makes is improving wellbeing and creating a process of wellbecoming and an assemblage of wellbe(com)ing; encouraging Crucial Cs; connection with people and places; giving motivation and energy to put into other areas of life; decentred my needs (Warfield, 2020). Self-care emerged as important in my ability to prevent burnout (Maslach and Jackson, 1981).

And, and, and …

Image 19 Caring-with-rescuing Affects – Word Cloud

In the bedroom, I often found myself to be caring-with-rescuing with my partner which I experienced as a personal and existential crisis. I realised whilst I had been feeling all of my Crucial Cs being met, caring-with-rescuing disempowered my partner and discouraged his Crucial Cs. I found rescuing was not an unusual response to adverse childhood experiences (Norwood, 2009).

I explain with an incident of fitting an oven how I moved from caring-with-rescuing to caring-with-mutuality which created a joyful oven-food-Sonia-Ben assemblage. The differences made were that my partner was able to input which led to us all being safe. We could thrive by cooking amazing meals rather than blowing us all up by fitting something I had no expertise in.

Image 20 Caring-with-mutuality Affects – Word Cloud

I give these, not as a form of coding, where the data is used to find patterns of sameness, but rather to show the lines of flight by allowing you, the reader, to track "intensities, flux, and movement" (Lather, 2000, p.303). Rather than show

sameness, I gave these examples to show the differences and also the repetitions (Deleuze, 1994) of how caring-with-mutuality is experienced and what it does. I show these examples, to show caring-with-mutuality is always on the move (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012), and in a process of becoming. "What matters is the difference between the present and the actual. The actual is not what we are but, rather, what we become, what we are in the process of becoming" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.112). However, there is enough thisness to recognise caring-with-mutuality and I offer it to provide new ways of thinking, for you, the reader, that might make a difference to your personal and professional practice, to create new lines of flight and becomings. As Stalker (2019) says "difference emerges through becoming" (p.348).

And, and, and …

I offer my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality to influence the care system – you only need one person to see you, (Hagen, 2012) believe in you, to believe you are ok (Sissay, 2019 Cherry, 2013). I provide new lines of flight that social workers might take to think differently about the tools they might use to support children in care and traumatised children. I think in new ways about avoiding usual responses to the drama triangle (Karpman, 1968), by introducing how they can use Maull's (2019) empowerment triangle, helping develop their Crucial Cs (Lew and Bettner, 1996). Engaging children on a Compassionate Inquiry (Maté, 2020) to help them understand their responses. Recognising that human and non-human resources can help them with their process of becoming.

And, and, and …

I offer my post-living-theory of caring-with-mutuality to influence charities and charity leaders. To encourage a values-based approach where people's Crucial Cs are encouraged by encouraging each person's feeling of capability, counting, connection and courage (Lew and Bettner, 1996). I recognise other assemblages of caring as post-living-contradictions. I offer them to influence others to think how different assemblages of caring perform and can make a difference to the affect (Ticineto Clough and Halley, 2007) on our relationships. Other assemblages of caring may be necessary at times; however, they can lead to an egotistical focus which can lead to binary thinking (Waterhouse, 2011) and the inequity that results. Assemblages of caring are offered to encourage others to pay attention to how caring performs in their practice, to think differently – to think what they do.

And, and, and …

Creating a post-living-theory has corrupted (Chambers in Briganti, 2020) Living Theory to territorialize new territory by decentring myself and taking a posthuman/post-qualitative approach which addresses ethico-onto-epistemological inequities and adds criticality. "The first-person voice of the self (has) become multiple, fragmented … incomplete and in motion—that is, uncertain" (Warfield, 2020, p.167).

Therefore, creating a post-living-theory, unlike a living-theory, is not clarified, which I argue performs in a way that might fix the meaning. Rather post-living-theory points to affect and difference which performs differently, as they are always on the move (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012). Assemblages of caring-with emerge that are not repeatable, but may influence other practitioners to notice if they can see their practice doing similar things or if they are practicing caring-

with something else. I hope they might think with post-living-theory and map the affects and differences to create new lines of flight and new becomings.

And, and, and …

I came to recognise that practice is not just professional but is also personal, as they are on an immanent plane (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). I cannot separate how I am acting in one relationship with another and it has an effect and affect on the public and personal planes. I am my practice means I attempt to take response-ability for how I intra-act (Barad, 2007), in all areas of my life.

With the turning and re-turning of my learning from my thesis in the eternal return of this Entrance Hall, it's time for us to depart, although we will never really leave as we are always in the middle (Deleuze and Parnet, 2007). However, I am looking for a new home to inhabit and so will take my leave, whilst knowing, I will both, be here, and not be here, in the diffraction patterns to become (Barad, 2007).

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