

# **An exploration of personal experiences of taking part in a digital storytelling project**

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This study explores the experiences of seven people who took part in a Patient Voices digital storytelling workshop. Digital storytelling involves writing and narrating a personal story, then illustrating it with photos, images and setting it to music. It is not explicitly covered within the psychological literature and as a result this study is exploratory and somewhat original. Using semi-structure interviews and a mixed method approach, five themes were identified, which form a narrative as follows: the participants wanted to produce digital story about their difficult experiences so that others could learn from these experiences; the process was emotionally difficult; and was possible because of the supportive context; the storytelling process enabled them to positively reframe these difficult experiences; which has subsequently had a positive impact on their lives in general. Due to the complexity of the digital storytelling process, it has not been possible to use a single psychological perspective. Consequently, the data were interpreted using a range of disparate but complementary perspectives: in particular, the life story model of identity (McAdams, 2008), the Dual Process Model of grieving (M. Stroebe & Stroebe, 1991), and constructivist conceptualisations of grieving (Neimeyer, Burke, Mackay, & van Dyke Stringer, 2010). Synthesising these perspectives suggests that during the workshop the participants were able to reflect on their past, present and future, then form a coherent story, experience changes to their narrative identity and make meaning out of their traumatic experiences. The current study is supportive of narrative psychology's claim that people's stories form an important part of their identity (McAdams, 2008); and the constructivist view that storytelling helps people make sense of their world (Neimeyer et al., 2010). The data clearly demonstrate that the participants found the workshop beneficial which, together with the increasing accessibility of digital media, suggest that the topic warrants further investigation.



## **Introduction**

The digital storytelling process involves writing and narrating a personal story which is subsequently illustrated with photos, images and set to music (Hardy & Sumner, 2008). The process combines aspects of personal reflection, multimedia production, creative writing and narrative therapy. Digital storytelling has been developed by the Center for Digital Storytelling based in California, over the last 20 years. It is used in the UK by Pilgrim Projects, who have developed the Patient Voices Programme to produce stories for use in developing health and social care services. People making and using digital stories consider them to be a powerful way of giving staff and managers insight into the experiences of people using their services. Storytelling features heavily in narrative psychology and so this literature is considered next.

### Narrative psychology and narrative approaches

Murray (1997) asserts that the task of narrative psychology is to explore stories for the insight they provide into the storyteller's experiences, their identity and their culture. Furthermore, according to narrative psychology, storytelling is an essential aspect of being human (Carr, 1986 as cited in Crossley, 2000). Narrative psychology developed in response to humanistic criticisms of positivist approaches which were seen as dehumanising and objectifying people (Parker, 2005). It consequently aims to capture the subjective nature of human experience and is concerned with identity construction and self exploration (Crossley, 2007). Thus narrative psychology highlights the relationship between storytelling and identity, which suggests that narrative methodologies can provide insight into the storyteller's experience.

Carr (1986) argues that human experience can be characterised by narrative because present moment events are experienced in reference to past experiences and anticipated future events (as cited in Crossley, 2000). In this context, narrative is 'an organised interpretation of a sequence of events in which agency is attributed and causes inferred' (Murray, 2003, p113). This definition implies that producing narratives requires people to develop coherent accounts of their experiences, and suggests that its study provides a way of investigating how people understand their worlds. By contrast, people can also be conceptualised as actively constructing their world through narratives (Sarbin, 1990). Thus ontologically, narratives can be seen as realist, ie. describing an objective world, and as relativist ie. constructing reality (Hansen, 2004). This apparent contradiction is resolved by conceptualising narratives as

multifaceted entities which can be perceived from both realist and relativist perspectives. Methodologically, they can be investigated using different methods dependent on the aspect of interest.

A relativist use of narrative is illustrated by Murray's (1997) study which shows women using narrative to construct their reality of living with breast cancer. He identified three storytelling stages which helped the women to make sense of and positively reframe their experience. Firstly, expressing the experience in words helped them to reduce its negative impact. Secondly, ordering historical events into a story with a plot, or 'emplotment', allowed the women to make sense of this crisis by relating it to other events, and adopt a more objective and healthier perspective (Ricoeur, 1998). Thirdly, using a progressive structure to organise their narratives helped them redefine the crisis as an opportunity for growth (Gergen & Gergen, 1986 as cited in Murray, 1997).

Although, narrative research can be criticised as lacking objectivity through privileging subjective accounts, this is only problematic if generalisations are made. If generalisability is required, a more objective approach should be used. By contrast, narrative research is well suited to providing insight into the participant's subjective experience, their identity and their specific cultural context. Consequently it provides a useful paradigm within which to analyse storytelling.

#### Pennebaker's theories on emotional writing

The digital storytelling process starts with writing about emotional experiences, and there is some evidence that this activity is psychologically and physically beneficial (Pennebaker & Seagal, 1999). Pennebaker's initial studies involved students writing emotionally about their most traumatic experiences for a trial period, eg. 15 minutes a day for 4 days (Pennebaker & Beall, 1986). The findings show that the benefits are contingent upon participants using emotional words, positive words and producing a coherent story (Pennebaker & Seagal, 1999). Pennebaker & Chung (2007) suggest the benefits cannot be explained by a single cause, but that three main processes are involved: positive reframing of past events; release from emotional inhibition; and increased social support.

Pennebaker's approach helps focus the current study on how people make sense of their past and form coherent stories which can be shared with others. However, there are several

important limitations. Firstly, despite the large number of studies, and replication across different groups, the evidence base is relatively poor: for example, recent meta-analyses show relatively small effects (Pennebaker & Chung, 2007); there is little support for the effectiveness of the Pennebaker writing paradigm in ameliorating the effects of grief (Baddeley & Singer, 2009; Stroebe, Schut, & Stroebe, 2005); and there is only evidence for a few outcome measures such as reduced visits to the doctors and better exam grades, but not for other physical and psychological health outcomes (Baikie, 2008). Secondly, there are significant differences between the Pennebaker writing paradigm and the current study such as group work, multi-media production and the existence of an audience. Thirdly, Pennebaker's approach neglects how storytelling fits into the person's overall life story. This is considered next.

#### McAdams' life story model of identity

McAdams' (1985/2008) life story model of identity suggests that narrative is a means of identity development. A key concept within the model is 'narrative identity' which refers to the 'internal, evolving story which helps integrate different aspects of the self' (McAdams, 2008, p242). The model conceptualises people as construing their lives as "evolving stories that integrate the reconstructed past and the anticipated future ... to provide life with some semblance of unity and purpose" (McAdams, 2008, p243). Thus the model emphasises the link between the stories people tell and their sense of identity. It suggests that the formation of integrative narrative identities helps people maintain a coherent sense of themselves and affirm life's meaning and purpose. For example, stories help people integrate different aspects of themselves and changes over time such as changing from being a wife to a widow. Although, McAdams (2008) implies that people can have many narrative identities, he does not discuss how these coexist, but simply suggests that storytelling helps people to integrate conflicting narrative identities into a single coherent narrative identity.

Of particular relevance to the current study are 'self defining memories' which are representations of vivid and emotionally intense experiences (Singer & Salovey, 1993 as cited in McAdams, 2008). McAdams (2008) asserts that 'self defining memories', such as traumatic events, are key components of narrative identity. According to the life story model, if a person changes their view of such events, their sense of identity will also change but through the use of narrative, they can maintain a coherent sense of themselves over time (Crossley, 2000; McAdams, 2008).

The life story model is also reflected in Parkes' (1998) concept of psycho-social transitions. According to Parkes, on the basis of assumptions, people build an internal model of the world which gives them a coherent sense of themselves and their place in the world. This model may be challenged by loss and to retain psychological sense of well-being, people must also change their model (Parkes, 2002). In narrative terms, they re-write their stories about the world. Parkes' approach suggests that well-being is contingent on understanding one's experience, and that changing one's view of the world is an important adaptive mechanism.

Importantly, the life story model captures the social nature of storytelling neglected by Pennebaker & Chung (2007). It recognises that when people tell a story, they tailor it to their audience. Pasupathi & Rich (2005) suggest that dialogue with the audience helps clarify the story's meaning. They showed that attentive listening helps to confirm the storyteller's interpretation of events and their self perception. Building on this research, this study considers the group context and the affect of the prospective audiences.

The life story model also reflects constructivist perspectives that people actively maintain psychological well-being by constructing coherent stories which help them to make sense of negative experiences (Bauer, McAdams, & Pals, 2008; Neimeyer et al., 2010; Skaggs & Barron, 2006). According to these perspectives, which underpin narrative therapy, disorganised and disrupted life stories can manifest as psychological problems, and storytelling can help people to reconstruct a coherent life story that 'affirms growth, health and adaptation' (McAdams, 2008, p248).

The model does however have limitations: principally, it appears to over-emphasise the importance of narrative identity, and neglect other perspectives on identity (McAdams & Pals, 2006). This is partially addressed by the 'integrative science of personality' which provides a wider perspective and integrates narrative approaches with evolutionary approaches, traits theories, characteristic adaptations and cultural approaches to personality (McAdams & Pals, 2006). This approach has been criticised as attempting to integrate personality theories which fundamentally conflict (Wood & Joseph, 2007). McAdams (2007) accepts this criticism, but suggests the 'integrative science of personality' still provides a useful way of organising the main approaches within personality psychology. With respect to

the current study, the debate suggests that a broader perspective is needed and consequently theories on group context and grief are now considered.

### Group context

The supportive environment of the digital storytelling workshop makes it similar to a self-help group and there is mounting evidence that these groups can be beneficial (Davison, Pennebaker, & Dickerson, 2000). For example, evidence suggests that bereavement support groups effectively support their members (Pietilä, 2002); being able to talk about loss with others who share that experience accelerates grieving (Walter, 1996); cancer self-help groups help people develop coping strategies, accept their illness and make friends (Mok, 2001); Carers groups provide friendship and support (Larkin, 2007); and suicide survivors groups provide positive role models and offer hope to their members (Clark & Goldney, 1995). Despite this evidence, measuring the effectiveness of self-help groups is complicated by many factors including their self select nature, diversity of illness, context, level of professional involvement and over-representation in the studies of people who find the groups helpful and hence continue their involvement. On balance the evidence suggests that self-help groups are beneficial for many people.

Although, there has been little research into how self-help groups actually help people (Dibb & Yardley, 2006), the above studies suggest a range of mechanisms. In addition, the storytelling workshop provides therapeutic conditions such as emotional support from the facilitators and other group members, and a safe context for people to discuss their experiences and emotions (Rogers, 1957); and the possibility of appropriating an empowering group narrative such as being able to help others (Rappaport, 1994). Overall, the evidence suggests that the group context is likely to be beneficial and has consequently been explored in the current study.

### Theories, models and perspectives on grief and coping with loss

Whilst at first sight, grief theories may not seem relevant, all the participants in the current study produced stories about either loss or recovery. Traditional bereavement theories, such as Freud's (1917/1953) 'grief work' approach, suggest that successful grieving is contingent on the bereaved person confronting the reality of their loss, revisiting memories and the possible trauma surrounding their loss, and finally loosening their attachment to the deceased (Rothaupt & Becker, 2007). However, these approaches fail to capture how the bereaved

person's view of the world changes to accommodate their loss. This aspect is addressed by attachment theory which, through considering changes in the attachment relationship with the deceased, has had a major influence on the field of bereavement (Stroebe & Schut, 1999). Attachment theory outlines the importance of the bereaved person changing their 'mental model' or representation of the deceased to allow the bereaved person to continue to relate meaningfully to the deceased (Bowlby, 1980). This approach emphasises the importance of bereaved person conception of their loss and how they relate to this concept. However, traditional approaches can be criticised on the grounds of poor evidence; failure to explain the range of responses to bereavement such as complicated or pathological grief (Stroebe & Schut, 1999); and evidence that many people adjust healthily to bereavement without doing 'grief work' (Baddeley & Singer, 2009; Stroebe & Stroebe, 1991).

The Dual Process Model of grieving was developed to address the weaknesses of traditional approaches and focuses on the process of coping with grief (Stroebe & Schut, 1999). It highlights the importance of respite from 'grief work' and has three main components. Firstly, 'loss oriented' coping describes the process of dealing with loss and reflects traditional approaches, eg. focusing on the past, pining over the loss and experiencing sadness. Secondly, 'restoration oriented' coping describes the process of dealing with the secondary consequences of loss such as loneliness or loss of financial support. Thirdly, the model suggests that healthy grieving involves oscillation between loss and restoration processes. Overall, the model builds on previous approaches, is reasonably well supported by evidence and can explain why some people struggle to adjust to loss (Parkes, 2002). With respect to this study, its main contribution is to contrast 'loss and restoration orientated' coping both during the workshop and in daily life. Unfortunately, the model has not been explored in relation to other loss experiences and crucially neglects the narrative aspect of the workshop.

Building on the Dual Process Model, a constructivist perspective on grieving emphasises that people try to reconstruct meaning in response to loss (Neimeyer et al., 2010). The perspective echoes Frankl's (1992) claim that mental health is contingent on being able to make sense of life's experiences ie. 'meaning-making' processes enable people to maintain their mental health. Whereas the Dual Process Model focuses on coping processes, constructivist perspectives focus on how loss changes the bereaved person's view of their world and affects their identity. Neimeyer et al. (2010) conceptualise grieving as a process of attempting to re-

establish a coherent 'self-narrative'. This concept expresses the idea that identity is a narrative achievement, ie. our sense of who we are reflects the stories we tell about ourselves and our worlds. It is similar to McAdams' (2008) concept of 'narrative identity' and provides an overarching structure which helps people to make sense of everyday events. Within Neimeyer et al.'s (2010) model, 'grieving involves reconstructing a view of a meaningful world after this view has been challenged by loss' (p73). From this perspective, loss challenges 'core beliefs', such as a deep seated view that the world is fair, which provide a sense of coherence to a person's self-narrative. Neimeyer et al. (2010) do not clarify whether self-narratives are singular or plural. However, their analysis implies that a person's self-narrative may become fragmented if their core beliefs are challenged by loss. In other words, loss may result in several competing self-narratives, making it harder for people to make sense of the world and function normally. This conceptualisation echoes attachment theory's personal 'mental model' (Bowlby, 1980) and Parkes' (2002) conceptual assumptive world, but emphasises the role of narrative in the construction of these models.

Neimeyer et al. (2010) suggests that people can adjust to loss by one of two meaning-making processes. Firstly, they can 'assimilate' the loss into their pre-loss core beliefs and self-narrative by reconstructing their understanding of the loss to make it fit these beliefs. Secondly, people can 'accommodate' loss by changing their core beliefs and self-narrative to embrace the reality of the loss, eg. they may see the loss as an opportunity for personal growth. This is similar to loss and restoration oriented coping in the Dual Process Model but Neimeyer et al. (2010) emphasise the importance of meaning-making and of having an ongoing story which incorporates the loss into one's self-narrative. Unfortunately they do not discuss whether one process is more effective than the other, but the Dual Process Model suggests that oscillation between the two processes is important for healthy grieving (Stroebe & Schut, 1999); and Park (2010) suggests that these processes often occur simultaneously.

Looking beyond bereavement studies, there is evidence of consensus within the constructivist literature that finding meaning in negative events is important for subsequent well-being (Gilbert, 2002; Park, 2010; Skaggs & Barron, 2006). For example, Skaggs & Barron (2006) distinguish between 'global meaning' to refer to general 'beliefs, values, and goals'; and 'situational meaning' to describe the meaning an 'individual attaches to a situation' (p559). They conclude that being unable to reconcile situational meaning with global meaning leads to distress. They suggest that in response, people may attempt to change the meaning an

event has them personally, or change their beliefs to be congruent with the event's perceived meaning. These processes are similar to 'assimilation' and 'accommodation'. This conceptualisation is also consistent with the idea that 'attaining a sense of closure', ie. resolving confusion, predicts psychological well-being (King & Hicks, 2006, as cited in McAdams, 2008). This consensus suggests that a constructivist perspective to grieving can usefully be applied to other types of loss. Despite this consensus, attempts to integrate constructivist approaches into a single analytic framework have proved problematic (Park, 2010). To reflect this position, rather than using a single approach, the current study uses a range of constructivist and other approaches as outlined above.

A constructivist conceptualisation of grieving also emphasises the importance of interpersonal communication. Walter (1996) highlights that although traditional grief theories (Bowlby, 1980; Freud, 1917/1953) emphasise the importance of detachment from the deceased, they also suggest that an ongoing relationship with the deceased can assist grieving. However, this second aspect has been ignored by many grief therapists. Walter (1996) suggests that being able to talk about the deceased with others that knew them and being able to create a story about the deceased that integrates their memory into the bereaved person's own ongoing life story can help the grieving process. Although this work is based on anecdotal evidence, it identifies congruence between traditional theories and more recent narrative approaches. Furthermore, there is support for this claim from evidence that listeners can facilitate development of a coherent self-narrative by verifying the storytellers account (Pasupathi & Rich, 2005).

However, constructivist approaches have several limitations. Despite theoretical congruence, they cannot replace other approaches within the current study, as other approaches are more pertinent to specific aspects of the storytelling experience. For example, the narrative approach outlined by Parkes (1997) highlights specific storytelling stages which help people cope with loss which are not covered by Neimeyer et al.'s constructivist approach. Unfortunately, from an empirical perspective, the systematic evidence for constructivist approaches is weak and generally relates to poor adjustment to loss (Park, 2010). For example, a range of evidence suggests that failure to make meaning from loss experiences predicts post-loss distress, chronic grief, and complicated grief (Neimeyer, Baldwin, & Gillies, 2006; Currier, Holland, & Neimeyer, 2006). Furthermore, the evidence that successful meaning-making leads to healthy grieving is predominantly based on clinical

anecdote (Neimeyer et al., 2010). On balance, constructivist approaches provide a useful additional means of investigating loss experiences in this context.

In conclusion, this review shows that a range of disparate psychological approaches are relevant to the study of digital storytelling. The review shows that a range of psychological processes can help people successfully adjust to loss and trauma. These include reflecting on the past, present and future; forming a coherent story which integrates views of loss, world and self; making meaning out of the loss by finding some positive outcome; and sharing the story with others. Although there is evidence that these approaches are congruent, because of their differences in theoretical orientation, it has not been possible to integrate them into a single approach. Consequently, the current study uses different approaches complementarily to investigate different aspects of the participants' experiences. Taken together, the above approaches provide a useful set of concepts and frameworks for investigating digital storytelling.

### **Aim and objectives**

The study aims to explore the experiences of people who took part in a Patient Voices digital storytelling workshop during which they produced digital stories about emotional and traumatic experiences. The study is concerned with the participants' experiences before and during the workshop, and its subsequent impact. The workshop is a complex process and has consequently been investigated from several disparate but complementary psychological perspectives. These approaches include narrative psychology (Murray, 1997; McAdams, 1980), grief theories (Stroebe & Schut, 1999) and constructivist perspectives on grieving (Neimeyer et al., 2010). Synthesising these approaches, the current study investigates how the participants make sense of their traumatic experiences through producing coherent stories, and the underlying processes which help them to construct meaning from these experiences. The study focuses on how the storytelling workshop affects the participants views of their loss or trauma, their 'core beliefs' about the world and consequently their sense of themselves, or 'self-narrative'. Although, the study is concerned with individual subjective experiences, it aims to reflect the group context and identify common themes across the participants' experiences.

### **Methodological rationale**

The study's focus on meaning-making and subjective experience sits comfortably within the paradigm of narrative psychology (McAdams, 2008; Murray, 1997). Its novelty and broad ontology suggest methodological flexibility. Within this, a qualitative approach is more appropriate for interpreting subjective experiences within a specific context, than a quantitative approach focussing on the strict quantification of observations (Ponterotto, 2005). Semi-structured interviews are considered to be appropriate as people's talk in interviews provides insight into how they understand themselves and their world (Murray, 2003). Several other methods were considered and rejected, for example: focus groups may not allow the researcher enough control over the data collection and are considered inappropriate for narrative and phenomenological analysis; questionnaires and quantitative methods, such as rating scales, do not allow issues to be explored in sufficient depth (Howitt, 2010). Consequently, semi structured interviews were undertaken.

Despite the broad ontology, social constructionist approaches, such as discourse analysis and discursive approaches, are considered inappropriate as they problematise the existence of an underlying reality (Coyle, 2007). Thematic analysis is more appropriate as it is ontologically flexible, and acknowledges the active role of the researcher and the subjective nature of data interpretation (Braun & Clarke, 2006). However, semantic thematic analysis may neglect the complex psychological processes which grief models suggest may be taking place (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) which focuses on personal perception of the meaning of particular events is able to capture this depth (Smith & Eatough, 2007); and narrative approaches are consistent with the storytelling nature of the workshop (Murray, 2003). Consequently, a mixed method incorporating these approaches is considered appropriate.

This mixed method reflects that the interviews themselves are not narratives in the strictest sense, ie. the participants are not viewed as telling a story about their experience; but the interview content reflects narrative processes, ie. storytelling. Thus it is important to look beyond the semantic themes to an overarching narrative (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Murray, 2003). This approach also reflects the range of theoretical perspective outlined above (Murray, 2003). Subsequent studies may adopt a narrative or phenomenological approach from the outset.

## **Method**

This research focuses on the experiences of seven people who took part in the Sheffield Carers Voices digital storytelling project which took place in June 2009. The stories can be found on the Patient Voices website at <http://www.patientvoices.org.uk/sheffcc.htm>, and on the DVD in Appendix 1.

### **Interview preparation**

The researcher wrote to all nine people who took part in the Sheffield Carers Voices project. They were invited to be interviewed about their experience of the project and sent a Participant Information sheet (Appendix 2). This approach resulted in a good response rate; the intention was to interview five people, but in practice, seven people were interviewed. The interviews took place in April 2010 in a meeting room at Sheffield Hallam University. All interviews were conducted by the researcher and were recorded digitally.

### **The interviews**

At the start of the interview, the participants were made to feel comfortable, given an overview of the project and had an opportunity to ask questions. The participants were asked to sign a consent form (Appendix 3).

An interview schedule was used to ensure that the interviews covered the main issues identified in the initial literature review (Appendix 4). Questions included general questions, such as “how did you find the process overall?”, and questions related to theory, such as “did the workshop help you see your experience in a new light?” The interviews were ‘guided conversations’ rather than question and answer sessions and the approach reflects that recommended for IPA (Smith & Eatough, 2007). Each interview lasted between 20 and 45 minutes.

With respect to ethics, the BPS ‘Ethical Principles for Conducting Research with Human Participants’ was followed (British Psychological Society, 2009). The risks of harm through participation in the study are considered to be no higher than those normally encountered. Anonymity was offered so that the participants would feel comfortable talking about sensitive issues. Consequently, pseudonyms are used in this report. After the interviews, the participants were debriefed and given a debriefing sheet (Appendix 5). Some of the

interviews involved talking about difficult emotional experiences and the researcher outlined the importance of seeking support after the interview as appropriate. The participants were sent a summary of the study findings (Appendix 6).

**Mixed method analysis**

A mixed method analysis based on thematic analysis but incorporating a narrative approach and aspects of IPA was carried out. Themes were identified using three main stages. Firstly, the interviews were transcribed orthographically, with some exchanges simplified eg. overlapping text is not shown, and some non words, such as ‘umm’ and ‘ahh’, are omitted as these details are not required (Howitt, 2010).

Secondly, the themes for each interview were identified separately using first and second order coding as exemplified in Table 1(Smith & Osborn, 2003). An inductive approach was taken and theme descriptions emerged from the data (Kissling, 1996). Appendix 7 contains all the interview transcripts with coding and themes. The interviews were wide ranging and the transcripts contain irrelevant data which was not coded. All the data is presented in Appendix 7 and is consequently available for further analysis.

Table 1: Example of analysis - Betty

Transcription	First order coding	Second order coding	Interview theme	Dataset theme
my main reason for going in was because of the mistakes made by services during my son’s care and more than I could actually put in the story	Wanted services to learn from mistakes with son’s care	Utility of story important	Utility of story	Wanting their stories to help other people

Each interview was summarised as suggested by Murray (2006) for a narrative approach (Appendix 8). The themes were checked against these summaries and amended to ensure they accurately reflected the data.

In the third stage, the dataset themes were identified. The interview themes were tabulated with information from the interview summaries. This revealed consistency across the dataset

and seven themes were initially identified (Appendix 9). These were revised down to five dataset themes which were re-checked against the interview summaries, themes and second order codes (Appendices 10 & 11). Several amendments were made eg. the description of theme 5 changed from ‘positive impact on mental health’ to ‘positive impact on life in general’. The final themes with main second order codes are shown in Appendix 12.

Several of the final themes contain subthemes relevant to about half of the participants, despite this, the data within each theme are considered to cohere together meaningfully, and the themes are distinct (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Less important issues are not reflected in the final themes, which are however the result of a thorough iterative process. On reflection, the themes could have been validated through discussion with the participants to reduce the influence of the researcher (Howitt, 2010). However, the themes were discussed with the project supervisor and validated this way. Overall, the themes are considered to capture the main issues and be sufficiently robust for this level of analysis.

### The participants and their stories

Reflecting a phenomenological concern with context, this section gives an overview of the participants and their digital stories (Smith & Osborn, 2003). All the participants were health and social care service users, carers or employees.

Martin is a long term mental health service user and was involved in the SHU Users and Carers Project. Martin made two digital stories: one in 2008 about his struggle to overcome his anti-social personality disorder; and the second story describes the therapeutic impact of the first story, and how consequently he is now looking forward to a brighter future.

Ruth cares for her two autistic children and was involved in the SHU Users and Carers Project. Ruth made two digital stories: one in 2008 which focussed on how she had lost her sense of identity as a result of being a carer; her second story describes how whilst making her first story she had experienced some sort of epiphany and is now able to respond to life’s challenges more creatively.

Betty cares for a son with psychosis. Her story describes his first major psychotic episode. During the storytelling process she became liberated from unconscious feelings of guilt which she had experienced for many years.

Tina also cares for a son with psychosis. Her story describes how she feels her son is dying over and over again. In the interview she describes how difficult she finds it to talk about herself, and her feelings of guilt and grief.

Clare's son suffered from depression and he took his own life in December 2006. Her story describes the circumstances leading up to his death. She was motivated to make the story so that services could learn from the mistakes that she feels were made with his care.

James had a near fatal industrial accident in 1999 and has subsequently suffered from post traumatic stress disorder and depression. His story describes his accident and subsequent struggles. The workshop helped him to make sense of these events and he found the experience very therapeutic.

Julie's story describes her mother's life and eventual death. Whilst producing her story she realised how she had blamed herself for not being with her mother when she died. As a consequence she was able to see herself more positively and found the process cathartic.

### **Analysis and Discussion**

The themes identified through the analysis of interview data fit together to form a coherent narrative (Table 2). Although the themes did not emerge from the data in temporal order, they are presented in this way for clarity. The final section provides a perspective across the whole dataset to reflect narrative and phenomenological approaches (Murray, 2003; Smith & Osborne, 2003).

Table 2: Dataset themes

Theme 1	Wanting their stories to help other people
Theme 2	Very difficult emotional experience
Theme 3	Supportive context
Theme 4	Positive reframing
Theme 5	Positive impact on life in general

## **Theme 1 – Wanting their stories to help other people**

The first theme summarises how the participants described their reasons for taking part in the storytelling workshop. All the participants talked about wanting to make stories that would help other people:

‘I wanted to do it to help me and help other people’ James [114]

‘I thought if this can help anybody in anyway, I’m just going to go for it’ Betty [58]

Within this theme there are three sub themes which were equally represented within the data, with some participants’ experiences being reflected in several sub themes.

### Sub theme – wanting to improve mental health services

Some participants wanted service providers to learn from past mistakes and thereby improve mental health services:

‘I just knew at that stage that so many things had gone wrong with Joe’s life and his death and his experience of the psychiatric service ... lessons needed to be learnt’ Clare [8]

‘My main reason for going in was because of the mistakes made by services during my son’s care ... not to blame anyone but that services will learn from the mistakes and also to help other carers and the people they care for’ Betty [10,14]

### Sub theme – wanting people to understand the impact of mental illness

Several participants wanted clinicians and the general public to have a better understanding of the impact of mental illness on patients and carers:

‘So it was about trying to ... spread a much wider understanding in society at large’ Tina [38,42]

‘So the guy (psychiatrist) learnt a lot that day about what it’s like to be a carer’ Clare [30]

### Sub theme – wanting to offer hope to others

Several participants described being motivated to produce stories which offered hope to people in a similar position to themselves:

‘I hope through the stories that people see is the fact that there is progression even for somebody as far down the line as me’ Martin [175]

‘Hopefully it will give some hope to other people’ James [122]

This theme emerged at the start of the analysis which reflects that it was one of the first interview questions. However, it is logical to present the themes in this order as it produces a coherent narrative and the first theme provides a context for subsequent themes. The existence of three subthemes reflects the range of participant experiences and broadness of the main theme.

The theme reflects the aim of the workshop and so is not surprising. Using a narrative perspective, Gergen and Gergen (1988) suggest that a good self-narrative needs a guiding reason or ‘story goal’ (cited in Pennebaker & Seagal, 1999). All the participants described their goal as wanting to help others. In addition, a constructivist perspective suggests that, although it may not be explicit, the participants also have a goal of making meaning from their loss or trauma (Neimeyer et al., 2010; Walter, 1996). The analysis below suggests that helping others provides a way for the participants to construct meaning from their traumatic experiences and assist their recovery from these experiences (Frankl, 1992). Overall, constructivist perspectives suggest that wanting to help others could also help the participants make sense of their traumatic experiences. The next section considers the actual workshop experience.

## **Theme 2 – Very difficult emotional experience**

All participants described the workshop as emotionally very difficult using terms such as ‘very painful’, ‘exhausting’, ‘upsetting’, ‘unsettling’ and ‘very traumatic’. In the workshop, most of them found talking about their experiences difficult:

‘We were told that some people would feel it was like a cathartic experience ... at the time it didn’t seem like that, it just seemed as though I’d been through hell and back again’ Clare [58]

‘Emotionally a really challenging journey ... this felt really painful because you’re taking the plaster off ... getting to the very root cause of what’s going on’ Julie [4,16]

‘I found it very difficult to talk about my experience’ Tina [8]

Martin and Ruth who were making their second digital stories placed less emphasis on its emotional difficulty. However, they both described the first workshop as difficult: Ruth

described feeling ‘really exhausted for a long long while’ after wards; and Martin talked about being ‘frightened to death at the end of the first one’.

#### Sub theme – distress at hearing other people’s stories

Three of the participants also emphasised their empathetic response to other people’s stories:

‘I know I’ve had a terrible ... accident but listening to some of the other people ... and what they’ve been thru’ ... well I were in tears meself for them as well’ James [26–30]

‘It was emotional, heart tearing really, hearing some of the other people’s stories, some a lot worse than mine’ Betty [2]

‘Other people’s experiences really cut me up’ Tina [6]

This theme reflects emotions such as sadness, despair, anger, frustration and helplessness in response to stories about loss and trauma. These responses are consistent with grief theories and thus to be expected (Bowlby, 1980; Freud, 1917; Stroebe & Schut, 1999). However, it is interesting that the participants felt able to experience and express these emotions despite not being in a formal therapeutic group and being with strangers. These experiences can be understood using the Dual Process Model which suggests that generally the participants live most of their lives with a restoration orientation, but in the workshop they are able to adopt a loss orientation (Stroebe et al., 2005). Alternatively, narrative perspectives conceptualise the participants as revisiting dysfunctional life stories ie. looking back to a world which doesn’t make sense and experiencing the resultant feelings of loss and confusion (McAdams, 2008). Finally from a constructivist perspective, the workshop is not simply a difficult experience, which they endure, but part of an ongoing process of constructing meaning (Neimeyer et al., 2010). All these perspectives suggest that reflecting on loss and trauma is difficult emotional work, and provide a range of different ways of understanding this theme. Furthermore, they predict that this process is potentially beneficial which links this theme with the final theme. These perspectives seem equally useful and the analysis below shows that the different perspectives are relevant to different data.

Taking a narrative approach shows this theme in the context of a coherent story which runs through the dataset (Murray, 2003). The data suggest that difficult life experiences motivated the participants to help others with similar challenges (theme 1); revisiting these experiences

was emotionally difficult (theme 2); and was possible because of the supportive context (theme 3); the whole process enabled them to positively reframe these difficult experiences (theme 4); which has subsequently had a positive impact on their life (theme 5). The next section shows that the difficult emotional nature of the workshop reflects the supportive conditions.

### **Theme 3 – Supportive context**

All the participants described the workshop context as very supportive. They described support from the facilitators and the rest of the group, feeling safe and being listened to attentively and empathically. These factors help to explain why people were able to experience and express the difficult emotions described above (Rogers, 1957; Pasupathi & Rich, 2005). The data suggest that they were able to have their experiences understood and validated by the facilitators and other group members which is considered to be beneficial (Pasupathi & Rich, 2005; Pietilä, 2002).

‘I’ve got wonderful support from that, it was really like a support team and Pip and Tony ... were marvellous and they were so sensitive and supportive and they do seem to have some insight into people’s grief you know very supportive and gentle about that’ Tina [64]

‘I felt very very safe’ Julie [72]

‘I think it’s because people were that interested in me and what had happened to me ... I think the group we were in really cared about each other ... I thought they was absolutely fantastic ... you couldn’t wish for a better group of people to do anything like that with so they just made you feel at home’ James [184,190,192,194]

‘Although we’d all got different experiences we were sort of in the same situation in a way and it made it easier to talk and knowing that you wasn’t the only one who was being emotional and it felt a very safe place to be’ Betty [90]

‘To have people listening and being supportive was a wonderful experience ... and I think that was the only time I’ve ever had that ... so it was good, yes, it was very positive’ Tina [144,146]

Although the workshop is not offered as a form of therapy, it meets many of the conditions found in therapeutic self-help groups, such as shared objectives, emotional disclosure, clear boundaries, empathic listening and opportunities for members to compare their experiences

with others, and see that they weren't alone in struggling with challenges (Davison et al., 2000). Several of the participants contrast the experience with forms of therapy:

'I'd had ... loads and loads of therapy ... I've had gestalt therapy where you ... do lots of creative things but not in as a concentrated powerful way' Ruth [122,128]

'I did cognitive behaviour therapy and I did a lot of writing about ... from when I were born and it didn't work ... so I think that had more of an impact' James [168,170]

'I'd seen a psychologist ... for almost a year so I understood what was causing the problems ... I was encouraged to write something mainly for me ... I wrote pages and pages of the stuff' Martin [29,31]

It may seem surprising that many participants found that the workshop more beneficial than formal therapy. However there is mounting evidence that this type of context is beneficial. For example, there is evidence that support groups are effective for people dealing with bereavement (Pietilä, 2002) and other challenges (Clark & Goldney, 1995; Larkin, 2007; Mok, 2007); talking about loss with others who share the experience is beneficial (Walter, 1996); and producing personal narratives can be therapeutic, (McAdams, 2008; Neimeyer et al., 2010). However, there are some significant differences between the workshop and self-help groups, particularly duration, intensity and motivation for involvement. It is speculated that these factors may contribute to the different outcomes.

Returning to a narrative perspective, Murray (1997) suggests that people are natural storytellers. But the difficulty that the participants describe outlined in the previous theme, suggests that supportive conditions are necessary for storytelling in this context (Rogers, 1957; Pasupathi & Rich, 2005). From this perspective, the participants could also be conceptualised as appropriating an optimistic group narrative that empowered their storytelling efforts (Rappaport, 1993; Neimeyer et al., 2010).

In summary, all the participants described how much they valued the support from other group members and the facilitators, and how this helped them to tell their story. Although the workshop is ostensibly focussed on producing digital stories, the above analysis demonstrates that a supportive context is not only fundamental to the process, but an important outcome in itself. Unfortunately it has not been possible to disentangle the complexity of the group situation and its possible therapeutic effect. Despite this, there is evidence that the workshop

offers many of the benefits of self-help groups, possibly in a concentrated format. Moving away from the group context, the next section looks in more detail at the storytelling process.

#### **Theme 4 – Positive reframing**

There is clear evidence in all the participants' interviews of varying degrees of positive reframing. This theme emerged as one of the initial seven themes across the dataset. Subsequently, some of the data initially coded to a theme of 'empowering process' was recoded to this theme. Although such decisions could suggest that the themes are arbitrary, this analysis suggests that they work as a way of making sense of the data. Furthermore, the themes allow established theory to be applied to digital storytelling in an original way, and provide useful insights into the participant's experiences.

The data provide good examples of the storytelling process helping people to make sense of their worlds (Murray, 2003). In particular, the stories focus on 'self-defining memories' which have a significant influence on a person's narrative identity (McAdams, 2008). The analysis shows how narrative approaches (McAdams, 2008; Murray, 1997) and grief models (Stroebe & Schut, 1999) can add to a semantic thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Reframing took different forms for each participant and is illustrated by the following four examples.

#### Example 1 – Applying the Dual Process Model of Grieving

Julie talked about blaming herself for not being with her mother when she died. The workshop gave her a rare opportunity to reflect on the events surrounding her mother's death, during which she developed a more positive view of herself and no longer feels burdened by guilt. In the context of Dual Process Model (Stroebe & Schut, 1999), Julie usually adopts restoration orientated coping and is busy getting on with life:

'We lead such busy lives, that I had time to focus on me, which is very rare' Julie [6]

Reflecting on her mother's death can be interpreted as loss oriented coping:

'It felt very cathartic cos I always felt as though I hadn't cared for mum enough ... it's only when you do have time to reflect otherwise you always think I could have done better, I could have done it this way, I should have done that and its only afterwards you think I wasn't so bad' Julie [104,106]

As a consequence she comes to more a positive interpretation of events:

‘Cos I can see ... it really feels like the huge amount of guilt I felt, cos I wasn’t there (when she died) ... that making the film just helped me reflect on the positive which I think ... is just ... tremendous cos I just always viewed me as such as baddy who wasn’t there for mum’ Julie [166,168]

Interpreting the data in the context of Stroebe & Schut’s (1999) Dual Process Model helps to explain why the process had a positive effect of Julie’s self view. The model provides a better description of the emotional processes which take place in the storytelling workshop than traditional grief models (Freud, 1917/1953; Bowlby, 1980). The process of oscillation between loss and restoration orientated coping can be seen in data, eg. switching from focussing on the past to creating the story in the present (Stroebe & Schut, 1999). It could be speculated that successful oscillation explains why the workshop had more impact for some participants than traditional grief work which they may have undertaken (Freud, 1917/1953). Overall, the model has good explanatory power with respect to the emotional processes described by the participants. However, it neglects the narrative element of the workshop, which is considered next.

### Example 2 – A narrative approach

Applying a narrative approach suggested by Murray (1997) highlights how James positively reframes a traumatic event. Murray (1997) identified three storytelling stages which help people to positively reframe traumatic life events: firstly expressing the experience in words; secondly emplotment; and thirdly using a progressive structure to organise the narrative.

Firstly, putting his experience into words helps James develop hope about the future eg.

‘12 months ago I didn’t want to do out, I didn’t even want to wake up in the morning and I want to live a bit now’ James [222]

‘But it had such a big impact that I turned a corner ... now let’s get on with life’ James [246,248]

Secondly, James describes a process of bringing order to the crisis. (Ricoeur, 1998) described this as a process of ‘emplotment’ through which, in this case, James is able to gain a more objective perspective on his accident:

‘Doing a process like that helps you get it all into sequence’ James [128]

‘I’d got a big box of things stuffed away, they were all over the place ... and I took that lot out and I’ve dealt with that bit and I think that’s what’s helped me move on’ James [256,258]

Thirdly, the data show that James’ narrative has a progressive structure and is used to redefine a crisis as an opportunity for rebirth and development (Gergen 1986 as cited in Murray, 1997):

‘My main objective now is to keep helping people ... it’s made me more want to help people as well’  
James [306,308]

Murray’s (1997) narrative approach focuses on narrative content and in this example provides insight into James’s experience. This analysis also reflects that putting events into a coherent life story helps people to make sense of them (Pennebaker & Seagal, 1999), and affirms life’s meaning and purpose (McAdams, 2008).

### Example 3 – Narrative identity

In these excerpts, Ruth relates how she realised that she had lost her previous identity as a result of continually telling her children’s story, rather than her own. She had become consumed by an identity of being their carer, and comments that this story had the power to control her for the rest of her life:

‘You realise that you can let your story control you for the rest of your life ... but I suppose that as carers we rarely ever get the chance to tell our story, there’s hundreds of opportunities to tell their story and it’s a necessity, and so perhaps that’s one of the reasons why you lose touch with yourself as well’  
Ruth [78-80]

This illustrates how telling stories can contribute to a sense of narrative identity (McAdams, 2008), or self-narrative (Neimeyer et al., 2010); and that stories can be an essential part of being human (Carr, 1986 as cited in Crossley, 2000). Prior to the first storytelling workshop, Ruth’s identity revolved around being a carer. Producing her first digital story helped her rediscover her previous identity:

‘I suppose that having the opportunity to have a voice about that, have it out ... helped me move on because I could let go of it ... it was powerful like that and that was the healing for me ... the experience

showed me that I was missing out on living ... I would say it was like my first waking up and since then I do feel like I'm living differently' Ruth [26-30]

Narrative psychology suggests that under normal circumstances, people are able to make sense of their experiences by relating them to one another to form a coherent narrative (Crossley, 2000). By contrast, caring for autistic children, with unpredictable behaviour, may make it difficult for the carer to predict what is going to happen in their own life. From a life story perspective, prior to the workshop, Ruth's narrative identity was 'swamped' by her children's narratives. According to McAdams (2008), this suggests either competing narrative identities or a single incoherent narrative identity. From this perspective, the storytelling workshop enabled Ruth to rebuild a coherent narrative identity which enabled her to grow personally. Alternatively, Ruth can be conceptualised as changing her view of herself and her model of the world to regain a coherent sense of herself which Parkes (2002) suggests is an effective adaptive mechanism. Thus the data illustrates consensus within the perspectives about the impact of narrative on identity.

#### Example 4 – Making sense of loss

Betty realised that she had been carrying hidden feelings of guilt about her ability to bring up her children. The workshop helped her to see that in response to her son becoming ill, she had had to be strong. This realisation improved her self confidence. She now feels liberated from feelings of guilt and is consequently happier:

'And it wasn't 'til weeks later that I realised that I had been carrying guilt feelings around with me ... and it's released me of that ... I think I'd buried those feelings and hadn't dealt with them ... but doing that made me realise that, and I felt freer than I have in a long long time' Betty [34-38]

'People used to say you're a strong person and I never used to believe them ... but looking back I must have had to be pretty strong and that reinforced that for me ... so it gave me a bit more self belief' Betty [112-116]

Using a constructivist perspective, it is speculated that prior to the workshop, Betty made sense of her son's illness by developing a self-narrative as an inadequate mother which enabled her to maintain core beliefs that the world is fair (Neimeyer et al., 2010). The workshop helped her to see more of her positive qualities which enabled her to develop a more positive self-narrative. This would have required her to adopt new core beliefs to reflect

a world in which bad things happen to decent people, such as herself, through no fault of their own. The process gave meaning to her experience as a carer, eg. an opportunity to care for her son and for personal growth. The workshop allowed her to review her loss, re-establish a coherent self-narrative and integrate these revised views with her core beliefs about the world. A constructivist perspective suggests that these changes predict subsequent well-being (Neimeyer et al., 2010), eg. Betty describes how she is now more confident at standing up for herself:

‘Oh a lot more open ... I don’t hesitate to say I’m a carer for someone’s who’s mentally ill ... yeah it has changed in that at one time if people had come back with something negative I would have just shut up ... I challenge that now and say it could happen to anyone’ Betty [174]

In summary, a range of analytic approaches have been used to reflect the range of experiences and this approach revealed common themes across the dataset, namely: all the participants described loss oriented coping (Stroebe & Schut, 1999), forming a coherent story (Murray, 1997), changes to narrative identity (McAdams, 2008) or self-narrative and core beliefs (Neimeyer et al., 2010), and meaning making (Neimeyer et al., 2010). These findings demonstrate that these approaches can complement each other.

Overall, there is evidence that the workshop helped the participants to positively reframe negative experiences. However, there are examples of where positive reframing was less successful and these are discussed in the next section which considers the longer term impact of the workshop

### **Theme 5 – Positive impact on life in general**

All the participants described how the process had generally had a positive effect on their lives in the nine months since the workshop. There is consensus within the above theories that being able to positively reframe difficult experiences, however that process is conceptualised, is beneficial (eg. McAdams, 2008; Neimeyer et al., 2010). Although the existence of this theme provides some support for the above theories, the depth and longevity of the change is unclear and could be explored in subsequent studies.

For several participants, the experience was life changing and helped them break out of a long term period of negativity. The participants generally described how negative events in

their past had less power over them now than before the workshop. The following extracts illustrate the range of ways that the participants feel affected by the workshop.

Firstly, Betty describes how the workshop liberated her from feelings of guilt. In terms of the life story model of identity, these excerpts suggest that Betty's self-narrative changed from one of inadequacy to confidence (McAdams, 2008). She can be conceptualised as moving from being positioned within her life story as 'weak and vulnerable' to 'brave and courageous' (Thorne and McLean, 2003 as cited in McAdams, 2008):

'I used to feel a bit guilty sometimes ... having time for myself ... but now I feel fine about it and I know it's necessary for me as well' Betty [120-126]

'So it gave me a bit more self belief actually' Betty [116]

Martin describes how his identity is linked with his past reflecting narrative psychology's claim that identity is a narrative achievement (McAdams, 2008; Neimeyer et al., 2010). From this perspective, the data suggest that his self-narrative and core beliefs have changed and that there is greater coherence between these beliefs. Martin's improved well-being can be linked to his ability to make more sense of his world (Frankl, 1992; Neimeyer et al., 2010).

'It's just the confidence I've got from it ... brilliant innit' Martin [23]

'I've actually broken the chains ... they were sort of holding me back from doing what I wanted to do' Martin [71-73]

'Now there is a better tomorrow, it might not be ideal ... it's better than what I've had' Martin [81-83]

'It doesn't bother me about the trauma ... I just accept it for what it is' Martin [93,99]

'I felt more comfortable with myself about it ... the tug of the chain wasn't there anymore, it's gone' Martin [167]

Julie commented less on the workshop's positive impact. This could be taken as the norm but seen alongside the rest of the dataset probably reflects that she has fewer mental health issues than the other participants. It does however suggest that positive reframing is contingent upon having a traumatic experience to reflect on. Overall, Julie still talked very positively about the

workshop. As outlined above, Stroebe & Schut's (1999) Dual Process Model helps explain why Julie found the process beneficial.

'I feel that it was really worth doing' Julie [102].

Ruth found both workshops very therapeutic and describes some of the ways in which it has affected her life. As outlined above, the data illustrate how producing the stories helped Ruth rebuild a coherent self-narrative which enabled her to grow personally (McAdams, 2008).

'Very very helpful, very healing' Ruth [4]

'I feel like I live in the moment more ... and that feels creative' Ruth [62,64]

'I don't feel the enormity of responsibility that I did ... I feel liberated from the drama of it' Ruth [152-156]

'I used to worry about the future all the time... now I don't ... I'm a lot more at ease' Ruth [176-180]

James describes how since the workshop he spends less time dwelling on his accident and although he is struggling, he is more positive about his future. The data suggest that prior to the workshop, James was predominantly loss oriented, and is now predominantly restoration oriented ie. focuses on the present and future. According to the Dual Process Model this oscillation between loss and restoration orientation is predictive of successful recovery from loss (Stroebe & Schut, 1999). This is evident in James's description:

'Looking back it's done me good 'cos ... I'm not dwelling so much on the accident now' James [92]

'I feel a lot better for doing it, I'm glad I did it' James [108]

'I don't shudder so much when I say to people I've had a fall at work and I can just talk about it now whereas before I used to cover up about it' James [156]

'I'm not as bad as I were cos I was on verge of committing hari kari, I'd had enough ... and I'm not like that now ... I'm struggling but I'm not like that' James [212]

Clare was very positive about the workshop but is still struggling to make sense of her son's death. She describes an incoherent self-narrative with respect to feelings of guilt (Neimeyer et al., 2010):

'I think it was one of the best things I've ever done in my life' Clare [4]

'And you think well I hope I've managed to put that in a box and finished with it now but of course nothing's that simple ... but it was better' Clare [108-110]

"Rationally you know ... you shouldn't feel guilty but actually it keeps bubbling through the cracks you've papered over ... you do feel incredibly guilty, so those are the demons that one keeps trying to cope with really" Clare [120]

Tina was also very positive about the experience. However, she still has bouts of depression, and wants to make another story focussing on herself rather than her son. The data suggest that she struggles to adopt a loss orientation which may explain why she struggles to adjust to her son's illness (Stroebe & Schut, 1999). A constructivist perspective suggests that her difficulty talking about herself suggests that she has been unable to develop a coherent self-narrative which integrates her core beliefs with her views of loss (Neimeyer et al., 2010).

'I wish I'd been able to do it years ago because then it would have been actually marvellous' [84]

'Yes, very beneficial' [94]

'I think that was one of the few times I've ever really been able to share it, so that was very good, I thought it was good for Ted to see that' Tina [120] referring to her story

'I really think I could do with doing another one to tackle some of this other stuff which is much more about me but which I had never taken on' Tina [126]

The above interpretations help to explain why the storytelling process had a positive impact on the participants' lives in general. However, the use of symbolic representations, such as personal photos, may also be relevant. Using the emotional writing paradigm, Pennebaker & Chung (2007) found that cognitive processes involved in translating emotions into language contribute to health benefits. Although the evidence for the emotional writing paradigm is weak (Stroebe et al., 2005), there is evidence that photos can also help people explore

meaning and memories (Martin, 2009); reflect on past experiences and relationships (Stewart, 1979); and communicate difficult experiences (Thompson et al., 2008).

Furthermore, the data suggest that images and music can be personally meaningful and so assist the meaning-making process. For example, Martin describes “pictures of chains” as being “very symbolic” and that their inclusion in his story was personally meaningful; Tina and Julie both included old photos of their loved ones when they looked well which may have helped them to have a more positive ongoing attachment relationship with the people they had lost through illness or death (Walter, 1996). In contrast, images can also be upsetting and the above analysis suggests that they need to be used in a supportive context to be beneficial. Whilst the evidence is inconclusive, it is speculated that the cognitive processes involved in selecting pictures and music contribute to the therapeutic impact of digital storytelling. These findings suggest this aspect of digital storytelling is worthy of further investigation.

In conclusion, the variety and prevalence of data supporting this theme demonstrate that this is an important theme (Braun & Clark, 2006). Although the participants are very positive about the experience, the positive impact does appear to be contingent upon having psychological difficulties to work on. Furthermore, the analysis is not able to address the sustainability or depth of the workshop’s effect.

The positive impact of the workshop has been interpreted using different perspectives. These emphasise different psychological processes and use a range of concepts to reflect the diversity within the study but, as outlined above, are generally complementary. Synthesising these perspective suggests that the positive impact of the workshop is due to a range of factors. These include a supportive context in which people can reflect on their loss, core beliefs and resultant self-narrative, and develop a coherent story which made sense of life’s challenges (Neimeyer et al., 2010; McAdams, 2008). Having considered the themes individually, the next section reflects a narrative approach and integrates the themes into a coherent narrative which provides a wider perspective across the dataset (Murray, 2003).

### **A narrative perspective across the whole dataset**

For most participants, their ‘storytelling’ story started many years before the workshop. Traumatic events, such as loss and illness, shattered their lives and deeply affected them. A constructivist perspective suggests that to reconcile these events and assimilate the loss into

their core beliefs, the participants changed their self-narrative to one which incorporated a greater sense of vulnerability than before (Neimeyer et al., 2010). This allowed them to maintain core beliefs that the world is fair. These experiences motivated them to try to improve health and social care services which helped to give meaning to their experiences and, according to Frankl (1992), may have been part of their recovery. The workshop allowed them to re-examine their self-narrative and see how they had developed personally to overcome life's challenges. This process led to a more positive self-narrative incorporating a greater sense of strength and resilience. Through reflecting on their own experiences and listening to other people's experiences, the participants' core beliefs changed to provide greater coherence within their self-narrative (Neimeyer et al., 2010).

The analysis suggests that having a coherent story in their mind, on DVD, and having shared their story with an empathic audience enabled them to share their story with other people (Pennebaker & Chung, 2007). Whereas previously they may have kept their feelings secret, through fear of burdening others or facing discrimination, they could now find it easier to gain emotional support from others and experience release from the emotional strain of inhibition (Pennebaker & Chung, 2007). As a consequence of the workshop, the participants are more able to perform this narrative in front of others, and it is speculated that this process helps to strengthen positive aspects of their narrative identity with subsequent beneficial impact (Walter, 1999; Pennebaker & Chung, 2007).

This approach demonstrates that the themes are contingent upon each other. In particular it suggests that the positive impact of the workshop is due to many interconnected factors. This approach reflects both the complexity of processes taking place and the consistency across the dataset. The analysis also illustrates that a narrative approach (Murray, 2003) provides a more comprehensive explanation of the participants' experiences than a semantic thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). On the downside, issues which were only important to one or two participants are lost. These are outside the scope of the current study and could be explored in a study with a stronger ideographic focus.

### **Reflexive analysis**

To reflect the relativist aspect of the narrative ontology, this section explores how I may have influenced this study (Burr, 2003). My interest in the topic arose through commissioning a digital storytelling project in a previous work role. I inevitably influenced the analysis, for

example by asking certain interview questions and the data is clearly jointly constructed by myself and the interviewees (Gilbert, 2002). To minimise the effect of my expectations and preconceptions, I took an inductive approach grounded in the data and theoretical perspectives. With respect to theoretical questions, I carefully worded my questions impartially to avoid influencing the participants' responses. But where participants described experiences similar to those outlined in the theories, I sought clarification, eg. in response to James describing that it's 'like opening a box up', I suggested that 'you face them and work thru them and make a bit more sense out of it'. I also avoided trying to demonstrate that the workshop was therapeutic. However, when this was described by the participants, I sought clarification. Although the data is influenced by the theoretical underpinnings, at the time of the interviews, I had only undertaken a brief literature review, which should have limited this effect.

I knew all the participants, having met them professionally several times before the interviews. As a result the participants trusted me and I was quickly able to build rapport in the interviews which enabled in depth discussions. Furthermore, we shared an understanding of the workshop and the stories. I also attended a separate digital storytelling workshop so that I could understand the process and consequently relate better to the participants. However, there is also a risk that the participants talked about the workshop more favourably as they knew that I had commissioned the project and had a stake in the current study. To mitigate this effect, I encouraged the participants to be open and honest in their responses. However, despite my best endeavours to minimise distortion and loss of content, it is acknowledged that a different researcher may reach different conclusions. To reflect this situation, the findings should be viewed as one of many possibly equally valid interpretations.

### **Concluding Remarks**

The current study set out to explore the experiences of seven people who took part in a Patient Voices digital storytelling project. Although digital storytelling is now widespread, its use in health and social care services has not been explored within the psychological literature. As a result, the current study is original and difficult to ground in a single perspective. Semi-structured interviews were carried out to give data which whilst describing narratives, are not strictly narratives themselves (Murray, 2003). To reflect this ontological

uncertainty, a mixed method approach was adopted. There was a good response rate and seven people were interviewed.

This approach resulted in rich data and five themes were identified which form a coherent narrative, as follows: difficult life experiences motivated the participants to make a digital story so that others could learn from their experiences; the process was emotionally difficult; and was possible because of the supportive context; the storytelling process enabled them to positively reframe these difficult experiences; which has subsequently had a positive impact on their lives in general. Although these themes could have been predicted, the strength of the themes is surprising and this is particular clear from the positive descriptions of the workshops and its subsequent affect. Rigorous cross checking with the data suggests that these themes are robust for this sample.

The data revealed a wide range of personal experiences and complex processes which contrasts with the homogeneity of the overarching themes, but is still consistent with them. This pattern is reflected in the range of disparate but complementary theoretical perspectives which have been used. For example, narrative approaches have been used to reflect the storytelling processes (Murray, 1997); grief theories to interpret how people deal with loss and trauma (Stroebe & Schut, 1999); constructivist perspectives to reflect how people construct meaning from life's challenges (Neimeyer et al. 2010); and theories on psychotherapy and group work to reflect the context (Rogers, 1957; Pasupathi & Rich, 2005). The analyses demonstrate that, in this context, these approaches complement each other. Synthesising these perspectives suggests that the participants undertook loss and restoration oriented coping (Stroebe & Schut, 1999), were able to form a coherent story (Murray, 1997), experienced changes to their narrative identity (McAdams, 2008) and were able to make meaning out of their traumatic experiences (Neimeyer et al., 2010).

Reflecting its novelty, the current study has been unable to look in detail at many aspects of the participants' experiences. Subsequent studies could focus on specific aspects of the workshop; use longer term follow up to investigate the longevity of the benefits; or take more traditional narrative or phenomenological approaches from the outset. Furthermore, the lack of relevant psychological research means that speculation has been unavoidable. As a result, there are many areas worthy of further study, four of which are considered below.

Firstly, considering the reasons for taking part, it would be interesting to investigate how the way in which the stories are used by the storytellers and in services affects the storytellers. The above data could be triangulated with analyses of the digital stories themselves and the views of other people involved in the process to provide a more complete picture. Secondly, the current study has not investigated the use of photos and other forms of symbolic representation but has speculated about their therapeutic value. Hence further investigation of this aspect of digital storytelling could be fruitful. Thirdly, it would also be interesting to investigate the group context in more detail as the current study suggests that it is beneficial but has not investigated it in depth. Fourthly, reflecting its subjective focus, the current analyses are based on the participants own descriptions of their thoughts and feelings. In this respect, interviews are considered performative, ie. participants do not present information objectively but manage their image to create an intended impact (Goffman, 1959 as cited in Howitt, 2010). Future studies could use other methods such as observation of the workshop itself, group discussions and possibly quantitative measures to provide a more complete picture of the participants' subjective experiences.

In conclusion, all the participants talked positively about their experiences of digital storytelling and how they had subsequently benefitted. Many of the participants are consequently more optimistic about their future. By contrast, they also found it a difficult experience. The current study has not investigated whether these benefits can be sustained over the longer term, and for several participants the benefits were relatively short lived. Synthesising the above perspectives, the analysis suggests that during the workshop the participants were able to reflect on their past, present and future. They were then able to form a coherent story, experience changes to their narrative identity and thus make meaning out of their traumatic experiences. The current study is supportive of narrative psychology's claim that people's stories form an important part of their identity (McAdams, 2008); and the constructivist view that stories provide an important way for people to make sense of their world and reconstruct a view of a meaningful world after it has been challenged by loss and trauma (Neimeyer et al., 2010). The data clearly suggests that the participants found the workshop beneficial at the time, subsequently and potentially in the future. These findings, together with the increasing accessibility of digital media, and the lack of an appropriate integrated theoretical framework, suggest that the topic warrants further investigation.

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## **List of Appendices**

- 1 DVD of Sheffield Carers Voices Digital Stories
- 2 Participant information sheet
- 3 Consent form
- 4 Interview schedule
- 5 Participant debriefing sheet
- 6 Summary of study finding for participants
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- 9 Initial seven themes mapped against interview summaries
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## **Appendix 2: Participant Information sheet**

### **An exploration of personal experiences of taking part in a digital storytelling project**

#### **An MSc Psychology Research Project**

Please will you take part in a study about the experience of taking part in a digital storytelling project. This study is being undertaken as part of an MSc in Psychology. It is being carried out with the support of Pip and Tony at Pilgrim Projects. I am asking you as you took part in the Sheffield Carers Voices project in 2009. I aim to interview about five people and your involvement is totally voluntary. This briefing tells you more about what you will have to do if you agree to take part in this study.

Thank you

Mark Shea

- 
1. What will I be required to do? You will be required to take part in an interview in which you will have an opportunity to talk about your experience of digital storytelling. Questions will relate to your reasons for taking part, expectations of the process, your experience of making a digital story and how this has had an impact on your life in general.
  2. Where will this take place? Interviews will be carried out in a confidential setting at the Sheffield Hallam University Collegiate Crescent campus.
  3. How often will I have to take part, and for how long? The interview is anticipated to take about half an hour, but there will be flexibility around this timing. You will also need to allow time to prepare for the interview, debriefing after the interview and to read through a transcript of your interview. It may also be necessary to follow up a few issues with you after the interview has finished, but this should be minimal.
  4. When will I have the opportunity to discuss my participation? You will be able to discuss your participation at any point during the study, but in particular will be briefed before the interview and debriefed after it.
  5. Who will be responsible for all of the information when this study is over? The data and study will be the property of the researcher and Sheffield Hallam University. A copy of the report may be published on the Pilgrim Projects website. A one page summary will be produced and sent to all participants. Findings from the study may be used in further research or in teaching situations.
  6. Who will have access to it? Members of Sheffield Hallam University and the general public will be able to read the dissertation report.
  7. What will happen to the information when this study is over? The raw data will remain the property of the researcher and Sheffield Hallam University but will not be

used for further research unless consent for this purpose is gained from the relevant participants. The data will be stored for 5 years in a locked cabinet, after which time it will be disposed of using normal university procedures for confidential waste.

8. How will you use what you find out? The findings will be written up as a dissertation report which will be submitted as part of an MSc in Psychology. The findings may be used by other people with an interest in this area, such as Pilgrim Projects.
9. Will anyone be able to connect me with what is recorded and reported? The data will be presented anonymously; pseudonyms will be used. However, people who have seen your digital story may be able to connect the study data to you if your identity is clear from your digital story. However, you have previously had control over the level of anonymity in your digital story.
10. How long is the whole study likely to last? The interviews are being planned to take place in March and April 2010. The dissertation is due to be written up by the end of August 2010.
11. How can I find out about the results of the study? You can receive a copy of the dissertation report by contacting the researcher. A one page summary will also be produced and sent, or emailed, to all participants.
12. What if I do not wish to take part? Participation is totally voluntary.
13. What if I change my mind during the study? You will have the right to withdraw at any stage of the process up until the interview and subsequent debriefing; and to withdraw all or part of the data arising from your interview up until 7 days after receipt of the transcript.
14. What if I have any other questions?

If you have questions please contact the researcher, Mark Shea by email at [mark.shea@student.shu.ac.uk](mailto:mark.shea@student.shu.ac.uk)

If you have any concerns about the project, you can either contact:

Mark using the above contact details

Mark's supervisor, Rachel Abbott on 225 5951 or by email at [R.L.Abbott@shu.ac.uk](mailto:R.L.Abbott@shu.ac.uk), or by post at Room 109, Department of Psychology, Southborne, Sheffield Hallam University, Collegiate Crescent Campus, Collegiate Crescent, Sheffield, S10 2BP;

If your query relates to your digital story, please contact Pip Hardy at Pilgrim Projects, on 01954 202158, or by post at Pilgrim Projects, The Barn, 1, Corbett Street, Cottenham, Cambs, CB24 8QX or by email at [pip@pilgrimprojects.co.uk](mailto:pip@pilgrimprojects.co.uk)

**Appendix 3: Participant Consent Form**

**An exploration of personal experiences of taking part in a digital storytelling project**

**An MSc Psychology Research Project**

*Please answer the following questions by circling your responses*

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| Have you read the information sheet about this study?  | YES | NO |
| Have you been able to ask questions about this study?  | YES | NO |
| Have you received answers to all your questions?       | YES | NO |
| Have you received enough information about this study? | YES | NO |

Who have you spoken to about this study? .....

Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from this study:

- At any time up until or during the interview and subsequent debriefing interview without giving a reason? YES NO
- And to withdraw your data up until 7 days after the receipt of the transcript of your interview without giving a reason? YES NO

**Do you agree to take part in this study? YES NO**

Your signature will certify that you have voluntarily decided to take part in this research study having read and understood the information in the sheet for participants. It will also certify that you have had adequate opportunity to discuss the study with the researcher and that all questions have been answered to your satisfaction

Signature of participant:..... Date:.....

Name (block letters):.....

Signature of researcher: ..... Date:.....

Please keep your copy of the consent form and the information sheet together.

Thank you for your participation.

Mark Shea

## **Appendix 4:**

## **Interview schedule**

How did you find the process overall

Did you have any particular reasons for taking part /

What were your reasons for taking part

Did you have any expectations of the process /

How did these compare to the actual experience

How did you feel during the process

And immediately after it was over

How about now

Has it had an impact on your life in general

Why do you think that was

Was there anything about the process, experience, context or how you used your story that stood out

Has it been useful

If so how

On reflection, how would you sum up the experience

### **Pointers from theory**

Pennebaker

Inhibition - Experience of disclosing feelings / sensitive information / personal info, opening up

Cognition - Making sense, coming to terms with, looking back, different perspective, seeing things in a new light, cognitive restructuring

Social support - being able to talk about, being listened, listening to others, normalisation, universality

Relating to group therapy

Shared experiences and feelings

Helping each other

Hope gained from seeing others overcoming difficulty

Imitating / learning from others eg. opening up, self efficacy

Catharsis – release of emotional distress thru’ free expression of emotion

Increased self awareness thru’ interaction with others

Self understanding – insight into own situation

Other factors

Public resource / potential audience

Group activity

Not explicitly therapeutic

Narrative approaches

Grief models

## **Appendix 5: Participant Debriefing sheet**

### **An exploration of personal experiences of taking part in a digital storytelling project**

#### **An MSc Psychology Research Project**

Thank you for taking part in this study and talking about your experience of digital storytelling. I hope that you have found the process interesting.

After the interview you will have an opportunity to discuss your participation. This process is known as debriefing. It is an important part of the research process and helps to ensure that you do not leave with unanswered questions or concerns.

There is a small risk that participation could bring up disturbing emotions. If this happens I'd encourage you to discuss this either with myself, Pip at Pilgrim Projects, or with someone else such as a family member, friend or health professional.

You will have the right to withdraw at any stage of the process up until the interview and subsequent debriefing; and to withdraw all or part of the data arising from your interview up until 7 days after receipt of the transcript. I am planning to have the transcription complete by the end of June, and apologise for the delay.

If you have questions, please contact me by email at [mark.shea@student.shu.ac.uk](mailto:mark.shea@student.shu.ac.uk) or by phone on 0114 258 2319 or 07963 375 962.

Or my supervisor Rachel Abbott on 225 5951 or by email at [R.L.Abbott@shu.ac.uk](mailto:R.L.Abbott@shu.ac.uk), or by post at Room 109, Department of Psychology, Southborne, Sheffield Hallam University, Collegiate Crescent Campus, Collegiate Crescent, Sheffield, S10 2BP.

If your query relates to your digital story, please contact Pip Hardy at Pilgrim Projects, on 01954 202158, or by post at Pilgrim Projects, The Barn, 1, Corbett Street, Cottenham, Cambs, CB24 8QX or by email at [pip@pilgrimprojects.co.uk](mailto:pip@pilgrimprojects.co.uk)

Finally, thank you once again for your participation. It is very much appreciated.

With best wishes,

Mark Shea

## **Appendix 6: Summary of study findings for participants**

The current study set out to explore the experiences of seven people who took part in the Sheffield Carers Voices digital storytelling project. Semi-structured interviews were carried out and the data analysed to identify five common themes as follows: difficult life experiences motivated the participants to make a digital story so that others could learn from their experiences; the process was emotionally difficult; and was possible because of the supportive context; the storytelling process enabled them to positively reframe these difficult experiences; which has subsequently had a positive impact on their lives in general.

The data revealed a wide range of personal experiences and complex processes within these broad themes. To reflect this, a broad range of theoretical perspectives were used to interpret the data. For example, narrative approaches were used to reflect the storytelling processes; grief theories to interpret how people deal with loss and trauma; theories on meaning-making to reflect how people make sense of life's challenges; and theories on therapy and group work to reflect the context. Synthesising the above perspectives, the analysis suggests that the workshop provided a supportive context in which the participants were able to reflect on their past, present and future. This helped them to form a coherent story about difficult life events, and make sense of their traumatic experiences, perhaps for the first time. Being able to make sense of these difficult experiences helps them to understand other life experiences and has had a positive impact on their lives in general.

Unfortunately, the current study has been unable to look in detail at many aspects of the participants' experiences such as the sustainability of the benefits, the use of photos and the group context.

In conclusion, all the participants talked positively about their experiences of digital storytelling and how they had subsequently benefitted. By contrast, they also found it a difficult experience and for several participants the benefits were relatively short lived. Many of the participants are more optimistic about their future as a result of the workshop. This digital storytelling workshop clearly provided a context for the participants to produce and share meaningful stories. Furthermore, the experience appears to have had a positive impact on their lives in general since the workshop and consequently warrants further investigation.

## Appendix 7: Interview transcripts with coding and themes

Page number	Interview transcript
1	Betty
9	Clare
19	James
34	Julie
44	Martin
59	Ruth
70	Tina

## Appendix 7: Interview transcripts with coding and themes

### Betty transcript analysis

Section		First order coding	Second order coding	Interview themes
1	Int	Right so to start with how did you find the process overall?		
2	Betty	I found it (.) it was emotional (.) heart tearing really hearing some of the other people's stories err some a lot worse than mine but there was a lot of support and help there and err I think the fact that it was in nice surroundings helped a lot	Emotional Heart tearing Hearing other people's stories	Utility of stories Support
3	Int	Yeah yeah		
4	Betty	Nice calm surroundings green environment that helped a lot eh Pip and Tony and Jo they were all brilliant	Calm surroundings Brilliant facilitators	Support Supportive environment
5	Int	Right good		
6	Betty	Ehh (.) I struggled with the technology side obviously but there was the support there	Struggled with technology Support	Challenge Support
7	Int	Mmm good		
8	Betty	(laughter)		
9	Int	(laughter) so emm (.) did you have any particular reasons for taking part?		
10	Betty	My main reason for going in was (.) because of the mistakes made by services during my son's care and ehh more than I could actually put into the interview	Wanted services to learn from mistakes with son's care	Utility of story important
11	Int	Ok		
12	Betty	Because of them having to be so short		
13	Int	Hmm		
14	Betty	Err not to blame anyone but that services will learn from the mistakes and also to help other carers and the people they care for to get a better deal from this	Didn't want to blame services Wanted to help services improve	Utility of story important
15	Int	Right ok (.) so it was just to inform the people delivering the services what it was really like		
16	Betty	What it was really because (.) they don't know (1) what a carer goes through (.) a carer doesn't chose to care (.) one day they're just an ordinary person the next day bang there's been a crisis and they've found themselves caring for somebody (.) but (.) my story was based around the first incident	Wanted services to know what it's like to be a carer	Utility of story important
17	Int	Right yes		
18	Betty	With my son (.) and (.) I know my son (.) and (.) when I told services this and that I thought he	Strain of carer	Challenge of
				Positive

		should be in hospital and I was just told they'd come back the following day and then he went walk about and were missing all night and I just can't tell you what I went through	Being ignored by services	caring Voice ignored	reframing
19	Int	No			
20	Betty	But (1) telling my story (1) has made me feel free	Telling story made me feel free - liberating	Liberation	Liberation
21	Int	Right ok			
22	Betty	And I can go into further detail if you want me to about that			
23	Int	Yes			
24	Betty	When (.) a long way down the line because Andrew didn't get the help and support that he should have done and I had to go to my MP to get it and eventually (.) err early intervention came along but this was a year and a half after Andrew had been ill	Having to fight to get good services for her son	Challenge of caring	Positive reframing
25	Int	Right			
26	Betty	And (.) the CPN (.) interviewed Andrew in the kitchen and I was taken in the room but the social worker at my house			
27	Int	Right right			
28	Betty	And we had a chat and I was asked if I had any guilt feelings and I said no because I know this is just one of the things that happens and it wasn't 'til (.) I was asked (.) if I want well was I asked if I could take photographs along	Looking back on past events	Looking back	Positive reframing
29	Int	Right			
30	Betty	I realised I had not looked at			
31	Int	Photographs of Andrew			
32	Betty	When I asked Andrew some he put on one side but he let me take some of when he was very young where he wouldn't be recognisable and I hadn't looked back on photos of when he was younger in a long time (.) and it didn't hit me until after the process was finished (.) I knew I'd got this freedom but I didn't know why	Looking back at photos Found some freedom But didn't know why	Looking back Liberation Mystery	Positive reframing Liberation
33	Int	Right ok			
34	Betty	And it wasn't 'til weeks later that I realised that I had been carrying guilt feelings around with me	After several weeks realised that she had been carrying guilt feelings	Mystery Making sense of past	Positive reframing
35	Int	Right mm mm			
36	Betty	And it's released me of that because looking back on my on those photos of our life because when you're a single parent you think have I been too strict? Have I been too lenient? Have I err could I have done a lot better basically? And (.) I think I'd buried those feelings and hadn't dealt with them	Has been released from feelings of guilt Questioning parenting style	Liberation Positive reframing	Liberation Positive reframing
37	Int	Right			
38	Betty	But doing that made me realise that and I felt freer than I have in a long long time	Realisation Feeling free	Liberation	Liberation
39	Int	Right and was that through basic well obviously you say you had to revisit the photos			
40	Betty	Yes	Had to revisit past	Looking back	Positive reframing

		About the experience and so maybe going through the feelings again	Revisiting old feelings	Looking back Old feelings	Positive reframing
41	Int				
42	Betty	That's right		Looking back Old feelings	Positive reframing
43	Int	Somehow			
44	Betty	Yep (.) and just looking back and realise it hadn't (.) because once you become a carer you concentrate on the here and now	Not had a chance to look back on past As a carer needed to focus on present	Rare opportunity Normally focus on present	Positive reframing
45	Int	Mm			
46	Betty	And you're getting on with the day to day living of things			
47	Int	Mm			
48	Betty	And all you've got is this changed person (.) and you don't think back (.) to the good times you had you start tearing yourself up over the times you perhaps think ohh was I bit a bit too err I can remember Andrew going missing he should have been home at a certain time and he wasn't	Not looked back to the good times before But had questioned how she'd brought up Andrew	Looking back Positive reframing Former doubt	Positive reframing
49	Int	Right			
50	Betty	And played pop with him and sent him to his bedroom and you start thinking			
51	Int	This is when he was young			
52	Betty	This was when he was young you start thinking was I too harsh you know all sort of things start coming into your mind and then when I look back and through the holiday photos and that	Thought that she might have been too harsh with Andrew But now looked back on holiday photos – more balanced view	Looking back Positive reframing Former doubt	Positive reframing
53	Int	Right			
54	Betty	And yeah you think yeah we had a lot of good times	Realises they had a lot of good times	Positive reframing	Positive reframing
55	Int	Right ok ok good good erm so did you have any expectations of the process?			
56	Betty	No I didn't know honestly what to expect			
57	Int	Right ok			
58	Betty	No I didn't know what to expect it was unknown territory for me but I thought if this can help anybody in any way I'm just going to go for it and I'm going to say yes straight away because I know when I commit myself that's it (.) if I hesitate that's when doubt starts creeping in and so I go on my first instincts	Didn't know what to expect First instinct was to say yes to process Wanted to help other people	Few expectations Utility of stories important	Utility of stories
59	Int	Right ok ok do you think erm (.) because you went really doing it for other people as it were rather than expecting to get some benefit from it yourself do you think that affected the process at all (.) do you see what I mean? (1) rather than if you gone sort of say well actually this is a three day			

60	Betty	workshop it'll give me a chance to make some more sense over of it Yeah I think yeah I think it did I think I was really surprised (.) at the feeling of freedom I got and I think because (.) I thought well I'm just going along to help other people and let services see	Involved to help other people Surprised at feeling of freedom she got from process	Few expectations Utility of stories important	Utility of stories Liberation
61	Int	Mm mm			
62	Betty	The mistakes that can be made and I don't think I really expected to gain from it myself although I knew other people had who'd done it previously	Didn't expect to gain from process	Didn't expect to benefit	Utility of stories
63	Int	Yeah yeah			
64	Betty	You know cos as I say I didn't know I was carrying those guilt feelings I thought I'd dealt with it	Didn't know she was carrying guilt feelings Thought she'd dealt with them	Surprised by hidden emotions	Liberation Positive reframing
65	Int	Mm mm (.) erm do you think much has changed since you did the workshop? You say it was very emotional at the time and did you say you felt free after the workshop			
66	Betty	After			
67	Int	Or maybe several weeks later realised			
68	Betty	Yeah why			
69	Int	Why			
70	Betty	I thought I got the immediate feeling after we'd taken the photographs that night (.) I woke up in the early hours and got this feeling of joy and of freedom	Woke up early morning with feeling of joy and freedom	Liberation	Liberation
71	Int	Right ok			
72	Betty	Err I woke up I think it was about 3 o'clock in the morning I just felt great	Felt great	Positive impact	Liberation
73	Int	Was that after the first day			
74	Betty	That was after the photos after we'd took the photos that was later on that was about was it the second day			
75	Int	Maybe it was the second			
76	Betty	I think it was the second			
77	Int	It probably would be the second I'd have thought			
78	Betty	The second yeah			
79	Int	Right ok			
80	Betty	And err (.) yeah that's when I just woke up with this feeling of joy and freedom in early hours of the morning (.) and got straight back to sleep you know	Feeling of joy and freedom	Positive impact	Liberation
81	Int	Hmm hmm			
82	Betty	And woke up and the feelings were still there but it was like I say it took me a good few weeks to realise why	Feelings of joy and freedom	Positive impact	Liberation
83	Int	Right (.) and since then has much changed?			
84	Betty	No I mean apart from the fact that I feel you know I've still got that feeling of freedom	Still has feeling of freedom now	Positive impact	Liberation

85	Int	Right that's good							
86	Betty	I'm not carrying any guilt feelings around with me or anything so yeah it's good		No longer carrying feelings of guilt It's good	Positive impact			Liberation	
87	Int	Great (.) do you think erm (1) the fact that you were in an environment where as you said yourself other people were talking about your know very difficult life experiences some very you know very moving							
88	Betty	Yes							
89	Int	You used the term heart rending experiences (.) do you think how that how that how do you think that affected you?							
90	Betty	Well I think because we were sort of (.) although we'd all got different experiences we were sort of in the same situation in a way and it made it easier to talk and knowing that you wasn't the only one who was being emotional and it felt a very safe place to be		All in the same situation Made it easier to talk Felt very safe	Supportive group Able to be open Felt safe			Support	
91	Int	Hmm hmm good good (.) you were full of praise for Pip Tony and Jo							
92	Betty	Yes		Full of praise for facilitators	Very supportive facilitation			Support	
93	Int	Can you think of anything that they (.) that they did I mean you might not be able to answer this question because I think there's is just something about the way they were rather than what they did							
94	Betty	I think it's the way they were but they're very sensitive		Facilitators were very sensitive	Very supportive facilitation			Support	
95	Int	Right							
96	Betty	And very gentle err but very good at drawing out what you want to say but not putting words into your mouth		Very gentle facilitation Gave you freedom to express yourself	Very supportive facilitation			Support	
97	Int	Right ok good good erm							
98	Betty	But very experienced and you know it's the care (.) you know immediately that they really care about people		Very experienced facilitation Facilitators really cared	Very supportive facilitation			Support	
99	Int	Right ok that comes through							
100	Betty	Yeah							
101	Int	Good good (1) so basically it's had a positive effect which is still persisting to this day has it kind of (.) have those erm (1) has that kind of effect (.) what I'm trying to get at is how erm (.) how it might have affect on your life on the wider aspects of your life this feeling of release		Positive effect has endured	Positive impact				
102	Betty	Err I think (.) now I can (.) like (.) when I went out (.) I used to feel a bit guilty sometimes you know but now I don't		Doesn't feel guilty when she goes out	Released from feelings of guilty			Liberation	
103	Int	You mean when you left the house							
104	Betty	Yeah having time for myself		Doesn't feel guilty having time for herself	Released from feelings of guilty			Liberation	
105	Int	Right right ok							

		But now I feel fine about it (.) and I know it's necessary for me as well	Feels fine about taking time for herself	Released from feelings of guilty	Liberation
106	Betty				
107	Int	Hmm hmm (.) good good (3) so you talk a bit about how (2) in preparing for the workshop in preparing your story you looked back at photos so did that process help you to kind of come to a different understanding or a different see things in a different light perhaps?	Seeing past differently	Positive reframing	Positive reframing
108	Betty	Well I think it made me realise that (.) I've had to be strong over the years as a single parent (.) and I (.) I mean as you know I've got three children to my ex-husband (.) I met Andrew's father (.) and on the day he was due to go back to his own house (inaudible) I told him about his gambling and he had a break down and it was only then that	Realised that she's had to be strong as a single parent	Positive reframing	Positive reframing
109	Int	Right			
110	Betty	Only then that I found he'd got a history of mental illness himself			
111	Int	Right			
112	Betty	But I used to take them away on holidays myself and I used to hauling all luggage travelling on the coach you know and walking just managing it all (.) people used to say you're a strong person and I never used to believe them			
113	Int	Ok ok			
114	Betty	But looking back I must have had to be pretty strong and that reinforced that for me	Positive reframing of self view based on past events	Positive reframing	Positive reframing
115	Int	Right ok ok so right			
116	Betty	And so it gave me a bit more self belief actually	Gave me more self belief	Improved self belief	Liberation
117	Int	Right ok (.) so it's quite significant then well yeah			
118	Betty	Cos well (.) you know I just took them all over (.) like I made sure they got on holiday every to either Skegness or Scarborough			
119	Int	Right ok			
120	Betty	In a caravan holiday you know but at least we got away			
121	Int	Yeah yeah			
122	Betty	And they got the break they needed			
123	Int	Hmm hmm (.) so erm huhh you might not be able to answer this but erm a big part of your motivation was trying to tell your story so that it can help other you know other people			
124	Betty	Hmm			
125	Int	Do you whether that's happened?			
126	Betty	I don't know cos I haven't had any feedback			
127	Int	Oh ok			
128	Betty	I don't know whether anybody's seen the story err I haven't had any feedback about that			
129	Int	Ok			
130	Betty	I do know we had that presentation			
131	Int	Yeah yeah the launch event			
132	Betty	The launch event but apart from that I don't whether it's been used or whether			
133	Int	Right right ok because I know I don't know about all the stories I know Rethink have used some of			

		the stories in their training and I know Lyn used her story in a patient safety thing (.) it's something mean to look into but err	Utility of stories important	Utility of stories
134	Betty	I would be nice to know that it had been used that somebody had benefitted from it	Would be nice to know that stories were being used and that people benefitted	Utility of stories
135	Int	I'm sure it has well we had the launch and you know obviously I'm no longer in that job but through the launch event and actually producing CDs which can be sent out to so that something I kind of need to follow up on		
136	Betty	Because I mean Lyn's story was horrific with the breakdown between (.) you know various services but (.) if like me you're new into mental health as a carer it's critical that (.) they act correctly the first time		
137	Int	Hmm mm		
138	Betty	Err particularly when a person is not known to them and they should take notice of the carer cos the carer knows that person best		
139	Int	Hmm mm mm yeah so and I think with the stories being on the website people will look at them		
140	Betty	Mmm		
141	Int	Because you do know they go on the website particularly with emm well you might not know actually but Pip and Tony won an award		
142	Betty	I know they were up for one		
143	Int	The BMJ award		
144	Betty	Did they win it		
145	Int	Yes		
146	Betty	Ohh brilliant I'm really I wondered I kept wondering how they'd gone on cos she said anybody's welcome to come who wants to but I didn't fancy going down to London on my own and no one else was going as far as I know		
147	Int	Yeah yeah so that gives them you know that's obviously a very high profile prestigious award so more people will look at the website and will look at the stories		
148	Betty	Ohh I'm really please they got it yeah they deserve to	Facilitators deserved to win award	Support
149	Int	Yeah and I know erm on the back of what Lyn did (.) at the patient safety there was somebody from the department of health who you know was really impressed with the stories and says can I use these stories	Very supportive facilitation	
150	Betty	Yeah good		
151	Int	So yes (.) so generally you feel a lot better (laughter)		
152	Betty	Yes I do (laughter)	Generally feels a lot better now	Liberation
153	Int	and hopefully the stories are being used you feel it was a very supportive environment that that you were in erm (.) so all very positive really are there any kind of negative things about it		
154	Betty	I don't think there are actually (.) no I didn't find I couldn't find anything negative about it	No negatives	Liberation
155	Int	Right (laughter)		

156	Betty	(Laughter) you know me I'd have spoken about it (laughter) anything negative				
157	Int	Yeah yeah so erm that's really (.) we've covered an awful lot there and many of the things you've said have been really really quite pertinent and very relevant is there anything else that comes to mind				
158	Betty	No the only thing is I would encourage anybody who got the chance to do it	Would encourage other to do a story	Good experience	Liberation	
159	Int	Hmm hmm				
160	Betty	It's really worth doing	Really worth doing	Good experience	Liberation	
161	Int	Yeah yeah I suppose one of the other things about it is (.) is the way that it combines these different things (.) you've kind of got people getting together in a group supporting each other sharing either similar stories or similar sort of emotional content and then you've got the kind of the main the writing your own story producing that and the digital side of things producing something that you can show				
162	Betty	And we all bonded in the group	All bonded as a group	Supportive group	Liberation	
163	Int	Right right ok				
164	Betty	Which was good there was that bond between all of us you know	Group support	Supportive group	Liberation	
165	Int	Right right ok yeah well I think that is important so (.) have you used your story have you shown it to family or				
166	Betty	I shown it to people err well our curates seen it at church and two or three friends and (.) in fact I wrote some notes down about it but unfortunately I haven't got them in this bag	Shown it to curate at church and a few friends	Helped her to share story	Support	
167	Int	About their response to it				
168	Betty	What they thought yeah and how it's moved them	They found it moving	Utility of stories	Utility of stories	
169	Int	Yeah				
170	Betty	Err it err (.) well the curate it made her cry when I said the only time I can really relax is when I get away from home that made her cry	Others found story moving	Power of story	Utility of stories	
171	Int	Right right				
172	Betty	Err (.) and they were all aghast that services could wrong like they did	Others shocked by story	Power of story	Utility of stories	
173	Int	Right right yeah has it helped you to (.) kind of share your story in other ways (.) just maybe being more open about what's happening				
174	Betty	Oh a lot more open about what happens within in mental health I don't hesitate to say I'm a carer for someone's who's mentally ill	Helped her to be more open about mental health and services	Improved self confidence	Liberation	
175	Int	And has that changed because you're obviously very involved in				
176	Betty	Yeah it has changed in that (.) err (.) at one time if people had come back with something negative I would have just shut up				
177	Int	Right				
178	Betty	And I challenge that now and say it could happen to anyone	More confident to challenge other people re their opinions on mental illness	Improved self confidence	Liberation	

179	Int	Ok ok if they were being negative about Andrew			
180	Betty	Yeah because the stigma is still there			
181	Int	Mm mm oh yes yeah yeah and it sounds like you're tackling it on an individual basis			
182	Betty	So when anybody talks about anybody whose mentally ill cos they've seen something in a programme			
183	Int	Right ok			
184	Betty	I say yes but that's media exploitation and there's thousands who are mentally ill and they go out and they do anybody any harm	More confident / assertive re. tackling stigma	Improved self confidence	Liberation
185	Int	Yes yeah yeah (1) so overall quite a err quite a transformative process	Transformative process	Positive impact	Liberation
186	Betty	Yes yes			
187	Int	Ok does that cover everything?			
188	Betty	I think it does doesn't it? (laughter) I think it does mark. I can't think of anything else			
189	Int	Right			
190	Betty	Just that it'd be nice to keep in touch with them everyone at some point err I know Pip and Tony are hoping there might be a reunion cos there is that bond	Would be nice to keep in touch with group and facilitators		
191	Int	Yes it's something that erm			
192	Betty	And were not very none of us because we're so busy are going to keep in touch with one another you know	Not kept in touch		
193	Int	Yeah yeah			
194	Betty	Well after cos there is just so much happening in life			
195	Int	Yeah it's difficult to make that extra time			
196	Betty	Yeah it is			
197	Int	Cos I know it's something that Tina said you know the things she said (1) with yourself Lyn and her that you were very supportive of each other and err			
198	Betty	Yes we were	Very supportive group	Very supportive group	Support
199	Int	Cos in some ways your circumstances are well I guess you've all cared or been caring for			
200	Betty	Yes I think we've all cared for our sons basically yeah			
201	Int	Yes ok I'll stop there (.) thank you			

### Clare transcript analysis

Section	First order coding	Second order coding	Interview themes
1	Int	So basically the first question is how did you find the process overall?	
2	Clare	Ohh (laughter)	
3	Int	(laughter) There are more specific questions later but that just a general one	

4	Clare	Erm I think it was one of the best things I've ever done in my life (.) it's one of the best (.) run organised supported groups I've ever been in (1) they were very umm (.) conscientious about how people felt (.) they were very highly professional about what they were doing and yet very approachable people that ran it so overall it was just brilliant really (.) a good experience	One of the best things I've ever done Excellent facilitation Very supportive Brilliant experience	Supportive context Very good experience	Good experience at time
5	Int	Right that's great (.) so erm (1) what were your reasons for taking part in it?			
6	Clare	Erm (.) gosh (2) cos you asked us (laughter)			
7	Int	(laughter) because I asked you too			
8	Clare	No because it sounded like a very good idea you told me about the patient voices website I read some things on there erm and then you said you were looking for money to do it and I said I'd definitely be interested (.) why I did it I suppose erm (1) I think I just knew at that stage that so many things had gone wrong with Joe's life and his death and his experience of err err the psychiatric (1) err service (.) that I wanted to (.) unpick it all and get it together and err and I'd got back replies to my letters of complaint and stuff like that and (.) I just thought well (.) I need to go somewhere else with this because I took the route of not blaming any particular person for what went wrong but (.) to say (.) that lessons needed to be learnt so then having been part of the Sheffield Health and Social Care (.) patient forum or user carer forum I then went on to stand as governor and chose that route to do something about it	Wanted to unpick circumstances surrounding Joe's death Wanted MH services to learn from Joe's death	Wanted to make sense of the past Wanted others to learn from mistakes	V difficult at time Story being used
9	Int	Hmm hmm			
10	Clare	And it's as part of that that I ended up being on your			
11	Int	Yeah yeah			
12	Clare	In your meetings when you were there and doing it and it just seemed like a really really good thing to do cos I wanted people to learn from what happened	Wanted MH services to learn from Joe's death	Wanted others to learn from mistakes	Story being used
13	Int	Hmm hmm			
14	Clare	And other people to feel that they're not alone if it's happened to them			
15	Int	Yeah			
16	Clare	Or whatever but more than anything I wanted it to reach down to people who work at the grass roots rather than what I've found about being a governor is you're working in the upper echelons and at strategy level	Wanted to reach frontline staff	Wanted others to learn from mistakes	Story being used
17	Int	Yeah			
18	Clare	And I'm not happy at that particularly I'd rather be changing things at the grass roots			
19	Int	Right			
20	Clare	For the better if I can or if it needs to be done at all	Wants to improve MH services	Wanted others to learn from mistakes	Story being used
21	Int	Yeah yeah and do you think those expectations have been met or are being met?			
22	Clare	Yeah I mean it's (.) the video I call it a video but it's a DVD really that I made has been used twice (2) the first time I mean it's just kind of like ripples out of you know a pebble being dropped in a pool isn't it	DVD has been used twice	Story is having an effect	Story being used
23	Int	Mmmm mmm			

24	Clare	The first (.) thing that happened was that Rethink used in on a day with (.) health service workers				
25	Int	Right ok				
26	Clare	And there's a very good psychiatrist who's come to work as a consultant psychiatrist for the health and social care foundation trust and Simon Mullins and he (.) made an appointment to talk to the governors and it turned out it was not long after this event (.) and he was just so overwhelmed and full of this thing the poor bloke had tears in his eyes	Consultant psychiatrist very moved by DVD Powerful story	Story is having an effect Powerful story		Story being used
27	Int	Right				
28	Clare	Of remembering about what was in the video and wanted to meet the carer governors and so had to then let out it was actually my video				
29	Int	Umm yeah				
30	Clare	Erm but then the other carer governors chipped in with their stories which haven't been recorded but (.) equally valid equally good points that they had to make and so the guy learnt a lot that day just about what it's like to be a carer	Is helped to raise the profile of carers within SHSC	Story is having an effect		Story being used
31	Int	Mmm				
32	Clare	So that was nice because he's trying very hard to be part of the community				
33	Int	Is he in the crisis team?				
34	Clare	Ah err possibly I can't remember				
35	Int	Anyway ok				
36	Clare	But he's trying very hard to not be stuck in a hospital room somewhere but to be out in the community as much as possible				
37	Int	Great				
38	Clare	Cos that's where that's where the expertise is needed if you're going to keep people out of hospital and in the community				
39	Int	Yeah yeah				
40	Clare	People who really understand what it's like to be in the community and look after people with psychiatric conditions				
41	Int	Yeah				
42	Clare	So				
43	Int	So it is having an impact				
44	Clare	Yeah the next thing was what I've just done yesterday	DVD is having an impact	Story is having an effect		Story being used
45	Int	Ok				
46	Clare	The patient err (.) oh what was it called				
47	Int	Safety				
48	Clare	Yeah patient safety event which was run by the health and social care foundation trust again err (.) and they used that along with a keynote speaker from the department of health err they used the video too to say to people this what we're trying to sort this kind of thing	DVD is having an impact	Story is having an effect		Story being used
49	Int	Mm mm				
50	Clare	And I spoke to it afterwards and err with Tina Ball and the woman from the department of health was very pleased to know about it could she use it	DVD is having an impact	Story is having an effect		Story being used
51	Int	Ah right				

52	Clare	Yes of course you can use it (laughter) it's out there in the ether for anybody to use it anybody that needs to you know give some people a dose of reality basically when you get academics they shuffle papers around but they might have an episode themselves of some difficulty but (.) never realising what it's like at the grass roots for people who are trying to deliver services good services	DVD is having an impact Powerful story	Story is having an effect Powerful story	Story being used
53	Int	Mmm mm			
54	Clare	That was a good day			
55	Int	Good emm (.) did you anticipate that it would have a (.) positive well ah ok you said it was a brilliant day so obviously that bit was good but I'm wondering			
56	Clare	Very good	Good experience at time	Good experience at time	Good experience at time
57	Int	Right ok but did you anticipate that			
58	Clare	Err but we were told that some people would feel it was like a cathartic experience so (I) in a way at the time it didn't seem like that it just seemed as though I'd been (.) gone through hell and back again	Didn't feel cathartic Felt like she'd been to hell and back	Not got closure Very difficult painful experience	V difficult at time Still struggling
59	Int	Yeah sure			
60	Clare	You know relived the whole thing in great detail but at the same time because you're talking with like minded people your it's hard to do it but afterwards you kind of (.) feel a lot better	Relived whole experience With like minded people Felt a lot better afterwards	Reliving past Supportive group Positive impact	V difficult at time Good experience at time Helped her to feel better
61	Int	Mmm mm			
62	Clare	Whether (.) erm in the long term it's had the same effect it's really hard to judge because I seriously went into decline from September to Christmas which again of course is a relevant time of year when Joe was ill and later died erm and getting through that first Christmas was awful so (.) I didn't expect to be hit with that again this year last year as it were	Long term effect is difficult to assess Went into decline between Sept and Dec 2009 – a year after Joe was ill and died – hit her very hard	Long term effect unclear Life still difficult	Still struggling
63	Int	Right			
64	Clare	Erm and I was and so now I'm going to go and get some more therapy from IAPT and it's taken well the first letter the GP wrote was a year last Christmas (.) I've seen somebody who just doing some very low level	Saw a low intensity IAPT worker	Still needs therapy	Still struggling
65	Int	Yeah ok			
66	Clare	And put me forward for the next level up (.) I've criticised this step care model but never mind err (.) and I'd obviously been forgotten or they were just so snowed under with it all anyway in the end I went through the Pals thing			
67	Int	Right			

68	Clare	I don't know how relevant this is			
69	Int	Well it's all part of your experience			
70	Clare	It is part of the experience that's followed on from			
71	Int	Yeah yeah			
72	Clare	I didn't expect to need to access further therapy just specifically on Joe's things maybe for other things I don't know	Didn't expect to need further therapy to deal with Joe's death	Still needs therapy	Still struggling
73	Int	Mm mmm			
74	Clare	But I did feel that I did need to in the end err it's not gone away obviously and I phoned him up and they've finally after a fortnight phoned me back and offered me an appointment in April so that's quite a long time to wait for (.) I mean that's another of my criticisms of what happened to Joe	Still struggle to come to terms with Joe's death Trying to access more therapy	Not got closure Still struggling Still needs therapy	Still struggling
75	Int	Sure yes			
76	Clare	There was no support given to us its come from groups like your carers group that you ran and other people in it that err which is very useful obviously	Not been offered support	Not had much support	V difficult at time
77	Int	Mm mm			
78	Clare	But yes tough time it was	Has had a tough time	Has struggled	V difficult at time
79	Int	Well absolutely yeah bound to be emm (.) so (2) I guess the next question is sort of how you felt during the process which you've kind of said a bit and then afterwards and then over the long term			
80	Clare	Mm			
81	Int	Which you've touched on a bit haven't you			
82	Clare	I mean at the time we were all in bits weren't we I mean you weren't there	Everyone was in bits during the workshop		V difficult at time
83	Int	I was there at the beginning and the end and you were smiling at both points			
84	Clare	Oh dear err (.) obviously you talk about things that touch at raw nerves in other people so there were people (1) leaving the room in bits err em but that was all part of supporting each other	Talking about difficult experiences Difficult emotionally Very upsetting Supported each other	Revisiting difficult experiences Very upsetting workshop Very supportive	V difficult at time Good experience at time
85	Int	Yeah			
86	Clare	And afterwards saying I'm very sorry but (.) I hope it hasn't upset you too much but you know	Apologised for people getting upset	Apologised for people getting upset	V difficult at time
87	Int	Mm mm			
88	Clare	Erm yes (.) and seeing well I think for all of us we found having to look for (.) the images to put with the voice very very hard indeed I mean I had to go back into this box where I've put all the stuff about Joe's death and the little mementos that I kept	Looking for appropriate images was very hard Had to go through mementos of Joe & stuff about Joe's death	Looking through images was hard	V difficult at time
89	Int	Mm mm			

90	Clare	Erm and get it all out again I could cry now if I allowed myself	Very upsetting	Very upsetting workshop	V difficult at time
91	Int	Mm mm			
92	Clare	But I try keep professionalism up (laughter)			
93	Int	Well (laughter) if you need to cry cry			
94	Clare	(laughter)			
95	Int	I've got some tissues			
96	Clare	Erm ehh (1) yes it (.) was (.) really tough on all of us (1) I think (.) but there were three of us there there was Tina and Maureen	Very upsetting Very tough Supporting each other	Very upsetting workshop Very supportive	V difficult at time Good experience at time
97	Int	Yeah			
98	Clare	Maureen's in was in your group			
99	Int	Yeah			
100	Clare	And we were really err apart from being part of a strong group really supported each other but on a similar kind of a theme as it were	Strong group Very supportive		Good experience at time
101	Int	Yeah sure yeah			
102	Clare	So (.) you know Maureen gave me the title for mine because by then I couldn't think anymore (laughter)	Helped each other Exhausting process	Very supportive Exhausting process	Good experience at time V difficult at time
103	Int	Right			
104	Clare	At the end of it			
105	Int	Right sure			
106	Clare	Erm and putting the music to it was err music's one of the things which really holds me together and err that was that was nice that was the best bit actually cos it just felt as though you were completing it	Enjoyed completing story, adding music	Enjoyed completing story	Good experience at time
107	Int	Right			
108	Clare	And you think well I hope I've managed to put that in a box and finished with it now but of course nothing's that simple (laughter)	Think you've got closure But nothing's that simple	Think you've got closure But still struggling	Still struggling
109	Int	No no			
110	Clare	But it was better	But feels better about past	Feels better about past	Helped her to feel better
111	Int	And the music's the final bit			
112	Clare	Mm (.) chose some music fit that to the (inaudible)			
113	Int	So is there a kind of sense of you having to face your demons through this cos you talk about you know reliving difficult experiences (.) and obviously you come out well you always come out the other side			

	Demons (.) I suppose the demons are feeling guilty	Facing demon of feeling of guilty	Still feels guilty	Still struggling
114	Clare			
115	Int	Right		
116	Clare	You're in you're split it's like I was a teacher so if anything kicks off in the classroom or a kid throws up your professionalism kicks in and you stay calm and actually underneath you might not be like that at all and it's kind of like that (.) I'm doing things like this like yesterday and putting on the professional front when actually underneath what it's cost me has several nights bad sleep (.) I mean I was awake for hours and hours and hours last night having done I mean pleased I'd done what I'd done	High cost of facing past	Still struggling
117	Int	Yeah		
118	Clare	Yesterday but actually reliving it	High cost of reliving past	Still struggling
119	Int	Yeah		
120	Clare	And and trying to work out all the time why do I feel like this where's this come from? (.) and rationally you know you don't feel guilty and shouldn't feel guilty but actually (.) it keeps bubbling through the cracks again that you've papered over and you do feel incredibly guilty so those are the demons that one keeps trying to cope with really	Trying to work out why she feels like she does Rationally should be fine, but isn't Still feeling incredibly guilty	Still struggling Helped her to feel better
121	Int	Mm yeah		
122	Clare	Not so much the Trust but the fact that the work as a governor keeps (.) pulling things up	Her work keeps taking her back into her past	Still struggling
123	Int	Right ok so you're having to go back through it again and again you can't just		
124	Clare	In a way yes	Having to go over events again and again	Still struggling
125	Int	Leave it at rest		
126	Clare	and the the (.) I think one thing that's err no I don't think I can say it's that experience that's made (1) the change but I think the post trauma type stuff where (.) I'd be in a meeting (.) I was in a meeting about nutrition this little group going so I'm nebbling in on their business and erm (.) this is in the Trust and they're just talking about (.) well I'm saying you've got to always apply this to people in the community after all they're trying to keep people in the community and not just you can't just talk about people who are actually resident here		
127	Int	Yeah		
128	Clare	Erm you've got to actually think about those out there as well (.) and you know I was thinking older people under nutrition and all the rest of it and they were thinking yes really bad depression and that immediately took me not to some little old lady I'd got in my head but Joe	Still keeps being reminded about Joe's illness and death	Still struggling
129	Int	Yes yeah		
130	Clare	And how ill he was and thin he got sometimes	Still keeps being reminded about Joe's illness and death	Still struggling
131	Int	Right		

132	Clare	And so it bubbles up in those (.) it's constantly regurgitating and I suppose it's better not to bury it but at the same time it pops up when you don't want it to (laughter) that's the thing	Memories keep popping up when she doesn't want them to	Still struggling with past	Still struggling
133	Int	Yeah	Reoccurring memories late at night	Still struggling with past	Still struggling
134	Clare	Especially late at night			
135	Int	Yeah right			
136	Clare	So in a way it's not got rid of that but it is getting better and I think that the storytelling probably was part of that	Not got closure but getting better Storytelling probably helped	Still struggling with past But getting better	Still struggling Helped her to feel better
137	Int	Right ok			
138	Clare	Which is why I'm also going to go back to (.) but the thing about the storytelling is that if I go back into some form of therapy situation I can just tell them to go to that website I don't have to talk the whole thing through again	DVD will be useful in therapy Help her to share her story	Helping her share her story	Helped her to feel better
139	Int	Right ok yeah			
140	Clare	And they could get the gist of it straight away without me having to say this is what happened and bring it all back up again	Won't have to retell her story again	Helping her share her story	Helped her to feel better
141	Int	Mm mm			
142	Clare	I mean I will talk about it obviously but I want get beyond that point of having to spend a whole session explaining what it's all about			
143	Int	Yeah yeah			
144	Clare	So in that way its personally to me it's helpful	Has helped her personally	Helping her personally	Helped her to feel better
145	Int	Mm mm mm			
146	Clare	And then I've shown it to my family so it was helpful to them I had my boys my other two boys come round and Joe's mate Dave and their girlfriends and they and we all sat through it cos after I'd done it I said I want you to know that this is what's happening and this is what I've done and this is what it's going to be used for and I want to know I want to know what you think of it because I've feel I've shouldered such a lot all on my own	Shown DVD to family Helped her to show how much she has had to shoulder on her own	Helping her share her story	Helped her to feel better
147	Int	Right right mm			
148	Clare	Because I don't talk to them about it	Doesn't talk to family about it		
149	Int	Mm mm			
150	Clare	They'd get into a terrible state erm and so of course they sat watching absolutely in pieces as you'd expect	Doesn't want to upset them		
151	Int	Mmm mm			
152	Clare	Erm and I said have I exaggerated it in any way? Have I distorted the story? Have I told it just eh and they said no mum that's just exactly how it was	They validated her account	Helped her to get support	Helped her to feel better
153	Int	Mm mm			

154	Clare	So that was I think that's done them good and out of that meeting we are now in weeks time going back to the Isle of White where I scattered Joe's ashes and we're doing like a memorial walk again across the Tennison Down and up to the Needles and back again to where we scattered his ashes so that's	Story has helped family	Helped family to come to terms with Joe's death	Helped her to feel better
155	Int	Right right			
156	Clare	So it's kind of like a little ball a kind of little things some little ripples and bigger ripples and coming out of the (.) and you've chucked it in the water and it's still floating	Story is helping in lots of different ways	Story is helping in lots of different ways	Story being used
157	Int	So it's sounds like in one sense (.) I mean there's a lot for you about sharing your story because of your work as a governor and (.) you know that's (.) kind of regardless of the story that's kind of why you're a governor			
158	Clare	Yes			
159	Int	because you had caring responsibilities			
160	Clare	Yeah			
161	Int	The way things turned out you're very motivated to improve services as a result but then there's also the element around sharing it in your personal life			
162	Clare	Yes	Wants to improve services	Wants to improve services	Story being used
163	Int	Getting support there whereas within services that can be difficult for you	Helped her to get more support	Helped her to get more support	Helped her to feel better
164	Clare	Yes yeah			
165	Int	Although beneficial for the services but in your personal life there is more scope for getting support and being understood I think	Helping family to understand what she has been through and is still going through	Helped her to get more support	Helped her to feel better
166	Clare	Yes yes			
167	Int	Is that fair to say			
168	Clare	Yes that's fair yeah (laughter) very good			
169	Int	Erm (2) I think you've covered so much actually			
170	Clare	(laughter) probably too much			
171	Int	(laughter) no no I think you've been very yeah very erm clear in what you've said really because you know (.) the other questions I've got here (.) you've really covered (.) most of them (.) really I mean there's other (.) I mean I kind of said half way an hour kind of its 19 minutes now it obviously doesn't have to take half an hour that's was just really my shot in the dark I mean there's things here you see (.) as I said there's a kind of a erm (.) you know I've looked at the theory for this but I don't want to colour you say by sort of saying well did this happen			
172	Clare	Yes yeah mm			
173	Int	So erm			
174	Clare	I mean I think not as a result of the storytelling but as a result of being a governor I'm watching the suicide err plan strategy for reducing suicide and they're quite happy with things almost because it's not so bad in Sheffield compared to other places kind of thing but at the same time			

		they're beginning to be aware that it's not in house that the suicides are happening it's out in the community and the more that that's (.) so I'm watching that one because that impinges on the whole experience as well so				
175	Int	Yeah yeah so (.) I'm just thinking are there any sort of (.) would you like to try and sum up your experience and the impact it's had on you				
176	Clare	Oohh				
177	Int	Or maybe not it's alright you don't have to				
178	Clare	Errmm (.) I think doing it had a massive impact but I think the impact has been other people have watched it		Doing it had a massive impact Has had an impact on audiences	Story is having an effect Powerful story	Helped her to feel better Story being used
179	Int	Right				
180	Clare	I mean Tina said she was watching everybody when the video was on yesterday and she said absolutely everybody was utterly glued to watching it because well it's powerful and it says a lot things about what's happening in the community when you try and look after people in the community so		Very powerful story	Powerful story	Story being used
181	Int	Mm mm				
182	Clare	Yeah so in that way it kind of (.) you know (.) there's a lot of people at these sorts of events because they are there because they have to be there not because they necessarily always want to have to be trained again but they know that				
183	Int	Yeah right sure				
184	Clare	So in that way these video stories just have far greater impact than somebody coming up from London and giving a speech and no matter how good and really with it she was and really understanding of people's where they're at in their work life and everything so yeah I mean it has a big impact that's the biggest thing		The biggest impact of the story has been on audiences	Story is having an effect Powerful story	Story being used
185	Int	Right				
186	Clare	It has more impact on other people than possible for me		More impact on others than on herself	Story is having an effect Still struggling with life	Story being used Still struggling
187	Int	Yeah				
188	Clare	But I'll think about that cos I can't really answer it directly				
189	Int	That's fine				
190	Clare	It's very hard to say how much of an impact it's had on me		Difficult to assess personal impact	Difficult to assess personal impact	Helped her to feel better
191	Int	Yeah well you've said a lot already actually				
192	Clare	Yeah yeah				
193	Int	You have said a lot				
194	Clare	Yeah				
195	Int	Shall we leave it there?				
196	Clare	Yeah (.) I think so				

197	Int	Thank you				
198	Clare	Thank you				

### James transcript analysis

Section			First order coding	Second order coding	Interview themes
1	Int	So erm just to start with how did you find the process overall?			
2	James	Err very very 'ard it had a big impact (.) them three days	Hard experience Had a big impact	Difficult experience Positive impact	Very difficult emotional experience Improved mental health
3	Int	Umm			
4	James	and i didn't realise how emotional and 'ard it'd be	Very emotional Very hard	Very emotional Very difficult experience	Very difficult emotional experience
5	Int	Right			
6	James	Cos i'd never really gone into me accident before	Not looked into accident before then	Looked in more depth than before	Very difficult emotional experience
7	Int	Right			
8	James	So i opened a (.) big can of worms	Opened a big can of worms	Very emotional Very difficult experience	Very difficult emotional experience
9	Int	Ok			
10	James	Eh (2) er a (2) I suppose at one time (.) part way thru' it I felt I couldn't do it	At one point felt he couldn't do it	Very difficult experience	Very difficult emotional experience
11	Int	Right ok			
12	James	I thought it were too much	Too much	Very difficult experience	Very difficult emotional experience
13	Int	Right just to talk about err			
14	James	Just the whole err I thought it were that emotional	Very emotional	Very emotional	Very difficult emotional experience
15	Int	Umm umm			
16	James	Err and being with other people and their stories	Moved by other peoples stories	Other stories were upsetting	Very difficult emotional

17	Int	Yeah					experience
18	James	I'd never been in a situation like that before		Not been a situation like that before	Looked in more depth than before		Very difficult emotional experience
19	Int	No most people haven't					
20	James	Err and when we 'ad and when we 'ad that first discussion					
21	Int	Umm					
22	James	An an addressed everybody and you know said why we were here and you know that had a big		Other people's stories had a big impact	Other stories were very upsetting		Very difficult emotional experience
23	Int	Umm					
24	James	Impact					
25	Int	Umm					
26	James	You know cos I know I've had a terrible incident an accident but listening to some of the other people					
27	Int	Yeah					
28	James	And what they've been thru'					
29	Int	Yeah					
30	James	Err (.) well I were in tears meself for them as well		Other people's stories were very upsetting	Other stories were very upsetting		Very difficult emotional experience
31	Int	Right ok					
32	James	You know when we first introduced everybody and I thought this is going to be a bit of a rollercoaster					
33	Int	Right					
34	James	'cos I think everybody were in same (.) same mind I think					
35	Int	I think they were yeah					
36	James	upsetting		Very upsetting	Other stories were very upsetting		Very difficult emotional experience
37	Int	Yeah I mean I've I've obviously look at all the stories and most of them several times					
38	James	Yeah yeah					
39	Int	There you know they're all very moving					
40	James	They are		Very moving stories	Other stories were very upsetting		Very difficult emotional experience
41	Int	You know there's a lot of difficult					
42	James	But I felt I felt that I was in the right place to be opening my story as well		Felt like a good environment to talk about his story	Very supportive context		Very supportive context

43	Int	Right ok					
44	James	With everybody else					
45	Int	Umm umm					
46	James	With their stories err (1) I mean I've (1) been and seen numerous psychologists and gone over my story no end of times					
47	Int	Right					
48	James	And am seeing a counsellor now but (.) it's not 'ad the impact as what		More powerful than seeing a counsellor or psychologist	More powerful than other therapy he'd had before	Improved mental health	
49	Int	Right err yeah					
50	James	As it was trying to tell that group of people what'd happened to me		Having an audience made a difference	Having an audience made a difference	Very difficult emotional experience	
51	Int	Right err ok					
52	James	So cos I have seen a lot of counsellors					
53	Int	Right					
54	James	And psychologists					
55	Int	Umm					
56	James	You know 'cos I do suffer with (.) you know post traumatic stress and everything from the accident		Suffers from PTSD	Suffers from PTSD	Helped him get closure	
57	Int	right ok yeah					
58	James	And I'm still doing now (.) but that were really raw		Raw experience	Very emotional Very difficult experience	Very difficult emotional experience	
59	Int	Umm umm					
60	James	To me doing that in front of everybody		Hard telling story in group	Hard telling story in group	Very difficult emotional experience	
61	Int	Umm					
62	James	It felt more (.) you know (.) more real		Felt more real	Very traumatic	Very difficult emotional experience	
63	Int	Right					
64	James	With everybody there than what I have done sat in room with just one person talking about it					
65	Int	Sure sure (2) yes so it was in itself very traumatic		Very traumatic	Very traumatic	Very difficult emotional experience	
66	James	It were it were (.) very upsetting		Very upsetting	Very upsetting	Very difficult emotional experience	
67	Int	Yeah					

68	James	An an it knocked the wind out me sails for a few weeks that	Took him several weeks to recover	Left him feeling shaken	Very difficult emotional experience
69	Int	Right right ok			
70	James	It did physically and mentally	Both physically and mentally	Left him feeling shaken	Very difficult emotional experience
71	Int	Umm			
72	James	I glad I did it	Glad he did it	Glad he did it	Improved mental health
73	Int	Right ok			
74	James	Glad I did (.) but I struggled. I did well cos I was one of the first to finish it	Glad he did it But struggled One of first to finish	Glad he did it Very difficult experience	Improved mental health
75	Int	Right ok (laughter)			
76	James	And I was helping everyone else with their	Helped others	Pleased with process	Very supportive context
77	Int	That's good 'cos there's a lot in yours actually			
78	James	I felt as though I'd got to get it done as quick as I can and get	Wanted to get it done as quickly as possible	Wanted to get it done quickly	Very difficult emotional experience
79	Int	Ok ok cos you've got a lot of images in yours			
80	James	Yeah so i wanted to I'd got it all in my head and I wanted to get it down on	Wanted to get it down	Wanted to get it done quickly	Very difficult emotional experience
81	Int	Right right did you write it beforehand or err			
82	James	Err			
83	Int	And collect the images beforehand			
84	James	Err no I actually got all my photos together actually brought all my photos before I knew what i was going to write			
85	Int	Ok ok			
86	James	I'd sorted a load of photos out before we went there			
87	Int	Right right			
88	James	So I'd got them ready and filled in me voice round the images	Sorted out images first		
89	Int	Right ok ok			
90	James	So that's how I did mine			
91	Int	Right.(.) so erm and how was the process of looking at the photos? 'cos there's some of you in hospital and factories			
92	James	yeah there's some in hospital and some of the roof where I fell and everything and I think it (I) looking back now it's done me good 'cos I don't (.) I'm not dwelling so much on the accident now	Done him good Doesn't dwell on accident so much now	Positive impact Doesn't dwell on accident so much	Improved mental health Helped him get

				now	closure
93	Int	Right			
94	James	And I've had more trauma with my father being ill this past 12 months and dying (.) but (.) err I think it's done me good that I've opened this can of worms	Done him good Had more trauma recently with father dying	Positive impact	Very supportive context
95	Int	Right ok			
96	James	And and it is there for people to see	Story is there for people to see		
97	Int	Umm			
98	James	I don't know how I've not logged on I don't know how many people have			
99	Int	Hmm you can't tell actually			
100	James	Had a look at mine. Whether it's done any good I don't know	Don't know whether it's done any good	Hopes it has done some good	Wanting to help others
101	Int	Well you can't um I mean um I think I can't say it's something I need to look at			
102	James	Since doing this digital story obviously I missed that launch so I've not really heard anything else about it since I did it			
103	Int	Right			
104	James	So it's just the impact what I had doing it and how I feel now			
105	Int	Yeah yeah			
106	James	But I feel better for doing it	Feels a lot better for doing it	Positive impact	Improved mental health
107	Int	Yeah			
108	James	I'm glad I did it	Glad he did it	Positive impact	Improved mental health
109	Int	Good good that's the bit I'm interested in			
110	James	Yeah			
111	Int	Your experience			
112	James	As for feedback (.) I don't know what it's done for anybody I hope people have looked at it and it does some good	Hopes it has done some good	Hopes it has done some good	Wanting to help others
113	Int	Yeah			
114	James	Cos that's why I wanted to do it as well. I wanted to do it to help me and help other people	Did it to help other people	Did it to help other people	Wanting to help others
115	Int	Yeah yes (.) yeah as I say I don't know and I do want to find out a bit more I know some of the stories have certainly been used and I think because (.) Pip and Tony won this award recently from the British Medical Journal			
116	James	Right right yeah			
117	Int	For innovation in healthcare education			
118	James	Oh yeah			
119	Int	So which is really prestigious so you know I think a lot of people have looked at the website anyway the website's had thousands and thousands of hits but I think things like that and more			

120	James	people are learning about the stories				
121	Int	Yeah and (inaudible) what's it about yeah				
122	James	So I'm sure it will and anybody who sees any of the stories can't help but be moved by them				
123	Int	Yeah and hopefully it will give some hope to other people			Hopefully it will give some hope to other people	Wanting to help others
124	James	Yeah yeah				
125	Int	You know that's the good thing about it I mean we have these terrible incidents in our life and we have to get over them don't we			Have to get over these terrible incidents in our lives	Helped him get closure
126	James	Umm umm				
127	Int	We have to carry on			We have to carry on	Helped him get closure
128	James	Well yeah yes				
129	Int	But doing a process like that helps you get it all into err (.) sequence			Process helps you get things in order	Helped him get closure
130	James	Right right ok it helps you make more sense of it perhaps				
131	Int	Even though I'm seeing a counsellor now I'm not so much traumatised by me accident			Not so traumatised by accident now But still seeing a counsellor	Helped him get closure
132	James	Right				
133	Int	Cos I feel as though I've lifted the lid on it (.) but I'm still struggling (.) mental and physically			Feels like he's lifted the lid on it But still struggling mentally & physically	Helped him get closure
134	James	Right right right ok yeah yeah				
135	Int	But I'm not going back to the accident as much as I were			Not dwelling on the accident as much	Helped him get closure
136	James	Is this in terms of having flashbacks or just ruminating about it				
137	Int	Yeah just life in general and yeah although I've still got the problems now they don't seem to be as deep as they were			Problems don't seem as bad as they were	Helped him get closure
138	James	Right right				
139	Int	With doing this and knowing it's on a DVD there				
140	James	Right right				
141	Int	It's like put it in its little place				
142	Int	Ok ok				

142	James	It you get my meaning					
143	Int	Yeah no that's a good way of putting it yeah yeah					
144	James	All that trauma is on a little disk now		All the trauma has been put in its place		Has come to terms with his accident	Helped him get closure
145	Int	Right right ok					
146	James	So I've tried to keep that separate now (.) I show it people		Helps him keep it separate Shows story to people		Has come to terms with his accident	Helped him get closure
147	Int	Oh good					
148	James	I mean I've shown me solicitor who did my case and he were right moved by it he thought it was a very good idea		Shown it to solicitor who was very moved by it		Helped him to share his story	Helped him get closure
149	Int	Yeah yeah					
150	James	And he thought you know it were good he'd been with all through the accident your see					
151	Int	Oh right ok					
152	James	Saw me in hospital all the nine years					
153	Int	Right right ok					
154	James	So it were he's been a big part of my life as such so for him to see it all in a package like that so					
155	Int	So would you say it's generally helped you to cos one of the things is you can share your story em in terms of showing the DVD with friends family other interested parties but do think it has kind of helped you to be more open about those sort of					
156	James	I think it has I don't shudder so much when I say to people I've had a fall at work and I can just talk about it now whereas before I used to (I) cower up about it and not bother		Has helped to be more open about sharing his story No longer anxious about telling people his story		Helped him to share his story Helped him to be more open	Helped him get closure
157	Int	Right right ok					
158	James	But I went to work I fell and I'm here now so I don't seem to dwell on it as much as I do and even looking at err accidents in newspaper doesn't make me as alarmed as what it used to do		Doesn't dwell on it as much Less anxious		Doesn't dwell on accident so much now Less anxious	Helped him get closure Helped him get closure
159	Int	So you're getting less of a reaction					
160	James	So it's it's done me good but I've had this other trauma with my family		Did him good		Positive impact	Improved mental health
161	Int	Sure sure					
162	James	Which has set me back if I hadn't have had that		Been set back by father dying		Still struggling	Helped him get closure
163	Int	Ok ok					
164	James	That little set back again I think think I'd like to make another if I could now to close this other		Would like to make		Would like to	Helped him get closure

	chapter with me dad cos I've been like looking after him since my accident on and off	another one about his father dying to get closure	make another story to help deal with father's death	closure
165	Int Right right really			
166	James And he he that's been a big part of everything and since my accident we were really close so I would if I ever got the chance to do another one	Was close to father Would like to make another story	Would like to make another story to help deal with father's death	Helped him get closure
167	Int Um you talked a bit about how (.) compared to counselling seeing a psychologist and how this (.) I can't remember the exact terms you used but it seemed to have more of an impact or allow you to talk about things in a different way or or			
168	James I think 'cos people have seen it and it's all processed on what it's on I mean err a lot of work I've done with psychologists I mean I've wrote about me accident (.) I did cognitive behaviour therapy and I did a lot of writing about	Did writing therapy and CBT before but didn't work	More effective than other therapy he'd tried	Improved mental health
169	Int Right right ok			
170	James From when I were born and it didn't work it didn't work so I think that had more of an impact	The story had more of an impact	More effective than other therapy he'd tried	Improved mental health
171	Int And do you know why?			
172	James I don't know I went thru' a year of cognitive behaviour therapy writing about me life and trying to get it all in order and just doing that digital story put it all	Did a year of CBT and writing But story helped more	More effective than other therapy he'd tried	Improved mental health
173	Int Was the writing just shared with the CBT therapist			
174	James Yeah just us two yeah			
175	Int Because there's obviously I mean one of the things about digital stories is it's got lots of different elements it's got that creative writing and sort of writing a story			
176	James Yeah and I think being with people being in a situation no disregard to therapists of anything but they haven't (.) been in that situation and to see people heart-broken like we all were it it that moves you more than anything	Being with other people with similar experience was very moving Really helped	Other stories were upsetting Positive impact	Very difficult emotional experience Improved mental health
177	Int Umm umm umm			
178	James You know cos getting to know that group of people for them three days and what pain they were going through you know you're not on your own	Got to know other people Saw their pain Knew he was not alone	Being with people who'd been through traumas helped	Very supportive context
179	Int And it helps you to			
180	James Ay it did me it did me	Very helpful	Very helpful	Very supportive context

181	Int	Yeah yeah						
182	James	Mentally it did		Helped mentally	Helped mentally	Improved mental health		
183	Int	And do you think that's because (1) just because you feel that erm (1) that's its nor(mal)						
184	James	I think it's because people were that interested in me and what had happened to me		People were interested in him	Caring group	Very supportive context		
185	Int	Right right yeah						
186	James	Cos a lot of people aren't they're not bothered		Lot of people aren't bothered				
187	Int	Aren't they ok						
188	James	You know I've had accident that's it get on with it you know						
189	Int	Yeah						
190	James	But (.) you know (.) I think the group we were in really cared about each other err (1) I think it did me a lot of good being open with people who've had a trauma than people who've not been thru' it you see		Group really cared about each other Being with people who'd been through similar traumas really helped	Caring group Being with people who'd been through traumas helped	Very supportive context		
191	Int	Umm umm (1) and erm how did you find Pip and Tony and Jo?						
192	James	I thought they was absolutely fantastic		Facilitators were fantastic	Good facilitators	Very supportive context		
193	Int	Right ok						
194	James	You couldn't wish for a better group of people to do anything like that with so they just made you feel at home (.) they were sensitive they tret you (.) they knew what they were doing cos it's a very unknown territory they're tapping into (.) people's trauma so they've got to know what they're on about		Sensitive facilitators Facilitators knew what they were doing	Sensitive facilitators Good facilitators	Very supportive context		
195	Int	Yeah yeah						
196	James	You know I suppose some people it can really upset them cos it upset me a lot		He found it very upsetting	Very upsetting	Very difficult emotional experience		
197	Int	It does it does						
198	James	But I think the way they deal with it and the way they take you thru it were marvellous absolutely		Facilitators were fantastic	Good facilitators	Very supportive context		
199	Int	Good good						
200	James	Full credit to them yeah I don't think it could have been run any better to be honest		Couldn't have been bettered	Good facilitators	Very supportive context		
201	Int	Right right ok						
202	James	Even though I struggled I was struggling with me own feeling not cos how they were running I was struggling cos of me own feelings		Struggled with own feelings not facilitation	Very emotional	Very difficult emotional experience		
203	Int	I mean to some extent your struggle difficult emotions they are almost testament to the power of it						

		(.) had they not created an atmosphere where people were opening up you could have gone and said yeah it was good it helped me to reflect about it (.) almost cos they did create this atmosphere			
204	James	Yeah I don't know whether you've had that view with everybody else			
205	Int	Yeah I have actually that's quite erm if you like the common themes are that the facilitators were brilliant that they were very caring the group was very supportive			
206	James	They were yeah	Very supportive group	Very supportive group	Very supportive context
207	Int	That em (.) everybody's stories were traumatic were very moving umm so those were kind of you know there were lots of other things but everybody sort of reported that (.) I mean there are difference as well because people came into at different stages of what they were going thru			
208	James	But I'd been battling with myself for a lot of years with this and I know some people had only had a recent trauma who were there but I seemed as though I was going round in circles until I did that	Had been going round in circles before the workshop	Helped him to moved forward	Helped him get closure
209	Int	Right despite all the other input that you were having			
210	James	That I've had yeah (1) looking at it now (.) it made an impact then and I'm glad I did it err (1) which has probably have put me on a steadier road than what I would have been on err I mean I were on verge of doing silly things at one ibt (.) I'm not saying since this digital story but over the last 12 months I've not been that bad	Definite improvement in his mental health	Definite improvement in his mental health	Improved mental health
211	Int	Right right ok			
212	James	So take that out what you want to take of it (.) I'm not as bad as I were cos I was on verge of committing hari kari I'd had enough	Definite improvement in his mental health	Definite improvement in his mental health	Improved mental health
213	Int	Right ok ok			
214	James	And I'm not like that now			
215	Int	No no			
216	James	I'm struggling but I'm not like that	Still struggling but much better	Still struggling	Helped him get closure
217	Int	So are you kind of more positive about your future generally			
218	James	I am now and I've talked to this new counsellor and she's said I can't believe from I've only been seeing her for about 5 weeks I go to Mind actually do you know Mind	More positive about his future	More positive about his future	Improved mental health
219	Int	Yes I do know Mind yes very well			
220	James	I go to Mind and she's just seen a change in me and I'm wanting to plan my future now and yeah know	Wanting to plan for the future	More positive about his future	Improved mental health
221	Int	Ok ok			
222	James	And before 12 months ago I didn't want to do ought I didn't even want to wake up in the morning and I want to live a bit now	Didn't want to do anything before but wants to live a bit now	More positive about his future	Improved mental health
223	Int	Right right ok			
224	James	So whether all this has had a big impact on it			
225	Int	Well yeah it sounds just from what you're saying it has had a big impact			
226	James	Cos it not only me in my little cocoon whose had an accident (.) it's no good feeling sorry for	He's not alone in	Knew he was not	Very supportive

	meself and there's people out there and I saw people that day whose had bad things as well	having difficulties Rest of the group had difficulties as well	alone Being with people who'd been through traumas helped	context
227	Int Yeah yeah			
228	James So you know get out yourself for it and that's how I feel			
229	Int Well it obviously seems to be working			
230	James Stop feeling sorry for yourself it's happening to everybody traumas	Realised that everyone has to deal with trauma and he need to get on with his life	Helped him to come terms with past Helped him to move forward	Helped him get closure
231	Int But I wonder whether there's something in your (I) in your experience of kind of erm (.) obviously you have been thru something which is very traumatic (.) sounds like you were nearly killed weren't you and then all the pain			
232	James Yeah yeah			
233	Int And the trauma and also trying to get compensation			
234	James Yeah it's been a ten year battle			
235	Int You know what happens for (.) a lot of people kind of just cope with these difficult situations by just pushing things down and they don't experience them and what can happen and it obviously does for some people in this sort of setting is that people actually have to go or they go thru' it again and they re-experience it these things and it no longer has power over them so			
236	James I were really overwhelmed with them three days you it know every so glad I did it but it were tough cos I've never been there before	Had to relive his trauma	Very emotional Very difficult experience	Very difficult emotional experience
237	Int It's kind of like facing your demons isn't it			
238	James Yeah	Had to face demons	Had to face demons	Very difficult emotional experience
239	Int It's like going [over really difficult thing			
240	James [like opening a box up yeah	Opening a box	Had to face demons	Very difficult emotional experience
241	Int And you come out it the other side			
242	James And I think looking at me now I'm a lot better person that I were 12 months ago and I'm better with my family yeah there's been a lot of positives	He's a lot better person now than 12 months ago Better with his family	Positive impact	Improved mental health
243	Int Right yeah			
244	James But 12 months ago I'd had enough (.) so it's a positive and I haven't had anything else I've done	Change is due to digital	Positive impact	Improved mental

		this digital story I haven't been doing anything else I'm not saying it's just that what's done it	story	health
245	Int	No		
246	James	But it had such a big impact that I turned corner a bit	Had a big impact Helped him turn a corner	Improved mental health
247	Int	Umm umm		
248	James	And though come on now let's get on with life	Want to get on with life	More positive about his future
249	Int	Yeah yeah so what I think maybe just going back to that (.) this sort of what you said earlier and just repeated then about getting on with life there's maybe something about the fact that you've got all this these things going on in your head this trauma the memories or whatever and the fact that you kind of face them for 3 days in that sort of environment		Improved mental health
250	James	Yeah		
251	Int	You kind of face them and you work them thru and make a bit more sense out of it		
252	James	Yeah		
253	Int	And that kind of allows you to move forward		
254	James	Yeah it did		
255	Int	Is that a fair		
256	James	I'd got a big box of things stuffed away they were all over the place		
257	Int	Yeah		
258	James	And I took that lot out and I've dealt with that bit and I think that's what's helped me move on	Has sorted a lot of things out now and so can move on	Helped him to move forward
259	Int	Yeah and now it's on your DVD whatever and it		
260	James	Yeah and I'm quite proud of it as well	Proud of DVD	Pleased
261	Int	Yeah well you should be		
262	James	I think it's good		
263	Int	Yeah it is		
264	James	And what they allowed us to do in three days to say I'd never used a computer before or anything	Not used a computer before – empowering	Empowering
265	Int	Right hadn't you		
266	James	Still can't now and I were moving things here moving things there and I were helping others in the end (laughter)		
267	Int	Yeah (laughter)		
268	James	And I'd never been on a computer before (laughter) so there were a lot of positives actually it were good	Lots of positives	Positive impact
269	Int	Umm umm so I mean you did well you said you couldn't fault the facilitators and the set up		
270	James	Mean the setting was lovely	Setting was lovely	Supportive environment
271	Int	Good it is nice I only visited it at the beginning and the end so but were (1) I mean there were		

		negatives not necessarily about the workshop but about				
272	James	Oh no		No negatives		
273	Int	About how it leaves you afterwards you were saying you felt quite				
274	James	Very fragile		Left feeling very fragile	Positive impact	Improved mental health
275	Int	Shakey				
276	James	Yeah I were				
277	Int	For several weeks after				
278	James	A bit low like I think it were worth it		Felt a bit low for several weeks but it was worth it	Left him feeling shaken	Very difficult emotional experience
279	Int	Yeah it sounds like it definitely				
280	James	Yeah yeah it were worth it				
281	Int	So did you erm				
282	James	I don't know if some people it might touch the nerve I don't know if it could send people a different way				
283	Int	Well it yeah yeah				
284	James	I don't know if it could be too much sometimes				
285	Int	Well I think that's why having the (.) you know the facilitators who were there to be very sensitive and kind of pick up on that and erm that can happen and suppose it's where the skill of the facilitators to say well ok actually that's but maybe you're not ready to talk about				
286	James	I don't think any of you group fell over the edge I don't think				
287	Int	Well I wasn't there but you all completed your stories				
288	James	I mean now I'm wondering if its if any people regret doing now out of the group				
289	Int	Well I think				
290	James	Whether it were too much for them you see				
291	Int	Yeah I think there is a danger at other erm (.) other sort of similar studies like around writing therapy it can stir things up people feel worse quite shell shocked for the kind of your know however many days or weeks it is afterwards but then they feel more positive				
292	James	Like I've done yeah				
293	Int	So it could be that there is risk that it could kind of unsettle things and so in terms of this group you're the sixth person there were nine people and I'll be seeing Pep in a minute she's the seventh there's two others who didn't get back in touch so at least for the seven				
294	James	It's all positive				
295	Int	Well it's come out positive				
296	James	Yeah yeah				
297	Int	Thru thru				
298	James	Nobody's had a really shocking side effect from it like				
299	Int	No no				
300	James	That's what I were meaning if anybody				

301	Int	And I think the thing is like you say it's in the context of everything else that goes on in your life because you've been caring for your father and now he's passed away and that obviously a really significant thing and there will be those other events so				
302	James	Yeah				
303	Int	So it's had a positive impact (.) very difficult process erm I'm wondering whether erm (.) because you went into it really to share your story so that other people could benefit whether that (1) whether the actual experience was different than if you'd gone on like a kind of three workshop which was about you opening your suitcase up do you I know that is part of your expectation just cos I think they obviously are important				
304	James	Yeah yeah		Wanting to help others was important	Wanted to help others	Wanting to help others
305	Int	So				
306	James	But err that's my main objective now is to keep helping people that's why I still do a little bit for mental health now if I can help				
307	Int	Yeah and you were doing that before and this is part of that kind of theme in your life				
308	James	And I still do a little bit it's made me more want to help people as well		Has made him want to help more people	Wants to help others	Wanting to help others
309	Int	Yeah				
310	James	And I hope this story does help people		Hope's the story does help people	Wanted to help others	Wanting to help others
311	Int	I'm sure it will				
312	James	And I'd be willing to go and talk to anybody about it		Would be willing to talk to anybody about it	Wants to help others	Wanting to help others
313	Int	Ok ok yeah				
314	James	You know				
315	Int	Well I know Mia has been using the stories I'm not sure which ones as part of the induction she's very keen on it though you're in touch with her				
316	James	Yeah regularly me and Mia yeah				
317	Int	Yeah so that's an avenue so (2) I mean I think we've covered				
318	James	I can't think of anything else it's err				
319	Int	I suppose part of it is the err (.) I mean yours clearly you know having the accident was very traumatic and going back to look at it still seems very traumatic but is there I'm just wondering whether looking at it in that erm context to see it in a different more positive				
320	James	It does now cos I can put it on now and I don't think It'd have hurt me as much as it used to		Able to talk and think about the accident without feeling so hurt	More open now Come to terms with past	Improved mental health Helped him get closure
321	Int	Right right				
322	James	Or used to talk about it				
323	Int	Right right ok				
324	James	I'd have no problems putting it on now with some people in here and err		Is ok to show his story	Come to terms	Helped him get

			to anybody now	with past	closure
325	Int	Right ok			
326	James	I think I'd be comfy with it			
327	Int	Right ok so I suppose that's			
328	James	Which is a positive	Pleased that he can be so open about it	More open now	Improved mental health
329	Int	So I suppose it's almost like what you're saying is like obviously the stories the same and what's happened in your past is the same			
330	James	But I think it's contained now	Thinks trauma is contained now	Come to terms with past	Helped him get closure
331	Int	Yeah you can relate to it that's happened here I am now			
332	James	It's not all here now it's here and I can use it			
333	Int	Yeah yeah			
334	James	It'll always be there in its little package you know it just doesn't seem (I) I mean me accident used to take 95% of my brain space away	Trauma is contained in the DVD rather than going round his head	Come to terms with past	Helped him get closure
335	Int	Right ok			
336	James	And now it don't now	No longer consumed by trauma	Come to terms with past	Helped him get closure
337	Int	And now you've been able to share that			
338	James	And now I can do other things and move on a little bit	Can now move forward	Helped him to move forward	Helped him get closure
339	Int	Because one of the things in the literature is about that erm (.) it's almost like erm in terms of keeping secrets			
340	James	Yeah	No longer has to keep it a secret	More open now	Improved mental health
341	Int	To keep a secret uses like you were saying 95% of your brain it uses			
342	James	But it's not a secret now it's out	Can be open about accident	More open now	Improved mental health
343	Int	Like if you meet somebody and they don't know you and you need to talk about what you do or what you used to do			
344	James	Yeah yeah			
345	Int	Or why you walk with a stick or whatever			
346	James	Yeah that's it	Can be open about accident	More open now	Improved mental health
347	Int	It's kind of you know keeping a secret about that or being able to say yeah I had an accident (.) it's what happens			
348	James	But I'm definitely moving forward which is a good thing in every way well my family are happy as well	Is now definitely moving forward	Helped him to move forward	Helped him get closure
349	Int	Well that's it			
350	James	I were getting a funny old sod (laughter)			

351	Int	(laughter) well you wouldn't be the only person so (.) is there anything else you want to say			
352	James	I don't think so Mark. I think I've said everything that's come to me anyway			
353	Int	Yeah			
354	James	Yeah			
355	Int	Ok thank you I'll end it there			

### Julie transcript analysis

Section			First order coding	Second order coding	Interview themes
1	Int	So erm how did you find the process overall?			
2	Julie	I found it really interesting and really interesting on lots of different levels (.) erm obviously from an emotional level that was really interesting erm also from a cathartic point of view	Interesting Different levels Emotional Cathartic	Engagement Complexity Emotional Cathartic	Profound emotional experience Cathartic experience
3	Int	Right			
4	Julie	I found it incredibly cathartic which I suppose in many ways I was expecting erm (.) you know the two things that I've mentioned to be profound but perhaps not quite as profound as it was erm and emotionally a really challenging journey erm so a mixed array of emotions (.) and just really trying to do it from a very honest perspective (1) I err yeah found it erm it was a journey and I remember saying to Pip in the	Cathartic Profound Really challenging journey Mixed array of emotions	Cathartic Profound Challenging Journey Emotional	Cathartic experience Profound emotional experience
5	Int	Right yeah			
6	Julie	In the debriefing on the last day I remember making the analogy to almost something quite spiritual but I think it's because we lead such busy lives that I had the time to focus on me which Mark is very rare being a working mum	Quite spiritual Time to focus on me Rare opportunity	Spiritual Reflection Rare opportunity	Profound emotional experience Supportive context
7	Int	Yeah sure right right			
8	Julie	And it was erm many ways it felt quite contemplative	contemplative	Reflection	Profound emotional experience
9	Int	Umm umm			
10	Julie	And it's only sometimes when we stand still that we can really feel and hear what's going on so yeah I found it very emotional but really wonderful	Really feel & hear what is going on Very emotional Wonderful	Reflection Profound Emotional Wonderful	Profound emotional experience Supportive context
11	Int	Hmm			

		But it truly looking back in answer to your question it felt like a real journey that I went on	Real journey	Journey	Profound emotional experience
12	Julie				
13	Int	Right			
14	Julie	And I suppose maybe hence making the analogy of feeling spiritual in some way	Spiritual experience	Spiritual	Profound emotional experience
15	Int	Hmm hmm			
16	Julie	Getting to (laughter) getting to (.) I suppose quite often we put a plaster over our emotions and we just try and disguise things as best we can and this felt really painful because you're taking the plaster off and you're just almost getting to the very root cause of what's going on erm yeah	Really painful Like taking the plaster off Getting close to the root cause	Painful Deep experience	Cathartic experience Profound emotional experience
17	Int	Great thank you there's an awful lot in that			
18	Julie	Was there sorry (laughter) sorry			
19	Int	No that's good that's good it's a very very rich area so can you say about a bit your reasons for taking part			
20	Julie	Yeah I remember when (.) I was actually off during May cos as you know I work term time and was off during that period and I was already doing some other work and it was when my colleague said she'd received the email and I just thought it was too much of a wonderful project to let go so I remember taking my girls back to the office that day just to start sending out letters erm cos it felt like I wanted to be a part of it and I didn't want to miss			Usefulness of stories
21	Int	Had you come across it before?			
22	Julie	I came across it ahem just when I started in this post so it was the September prior to you err			
23	Int	Less than a year before I contacted you			
24	Julie	Less than a year (.) it was a patient and public involvement regional leads meeting that's sort of quarterly and it was someone from Bradford had shown a film and it was to do with a young medic in training and Fay my colleague and I sat there and the tears just poured I just found it so utterly poignant yeah it was the way in which the young medic was actually seeing the elderly person not just as err	Knew the stories could be poignant	Power of stories	Usefulness of stories
25	Int	It is the one where the guy dies in theatre			
26	Julie	No			
27	Int	Oh ok			
28	Julie	He's trying to catheterise an elderly woman			
29	Int	Yes yes I know the one			
30	Julie	And why I found it so poignant I think it was the way he was reflecting in the busyness of his career I guess it's very easy to see someone as just a body but he'd actually linked it to the person erm and there was another one about a woman having I think it was arthritis (.) erm her husband was her carer and I just sat there and ahh I just found it amazing and it was just seeing err I think cos I wasn't expecting it	Seen some amazing stories before	Power of stories	Usefulness of stories

31	Int	Right						
32	Julie	And that was the first time I came across it (.) so from then I just googled and I just thought this is terrific so when (.) you contacted the Trust it was like hey your know it would be fantastic to get people involved in it (.) yeah so the first time when we went when we met in the town hall and I met Pip and you were there and everyone else I was already sold in a way but I didn't feel that I could have a place because I was there supporting		Thought it would be great to use the stories in SHSC	Utility	Usefulness of stories		
33	Int	Yeah						
34	Julie	You know I just thought that I really really wanted to do it but I didn't feel able to do that and it was only when you know I was lucky to get a place that's what I'm saying erm but I remember during that day I tried to erm someone there saying I can't see the point of this and remember then going into my marketing and selling mode saying it could really benefit you but clearly it wasn't right for this particularly lady but yes		Really wanted to make a story having seen them before Thought the stories were great	Enthusiasm	Profound emotional experience Usefulness of stories		
35	Int	Right ok (laughter)						
36	Julie	(Laughter)						
37	Int	So (.) so I think what you are saying is you'd already seen the stories found them extremely powerful and moving		Found the stories to be powerful and moving	Power of stories	Usefulness of stories		
38	Julie	Yes						
39	Int	And thought it'd be consequently a good thing to do in Sheffield and be able to						
40	Julie	Absolutely						
41	Int	Use those stories within the Trust to (inaudible)						
42	Julie	I think it was also for me just a different way of doing things looking a things from a creative point of view		Like that it was different and creative	Utility Creativity	Usefulness of stories Profound emotional experience		
43	Int	Umm						
44	Julie	And it's coming from the heart		Stories came from the heart	Deep	Profound emotional experience		
45	Int	Umm						
46	Julie	Someone isn't being told what to say they're not having word put in their mouths its coming from the heart and that's important		Important that stories come from the heart	Deep Authenticity Honesty	Profound emotional experience		
47	Int	Yeah yeah great (.) so kind of the next questions I've got down here really relate to how you felt during the process (.) after the process and kind of know 6 months down the line						
48	Julie	Yeah it was interesting at first cos when I realised that I was lucky enough to have a place I straight away thought I'll do something on PPI patient and public involvement that was my initial thoughts cos I thought (.) I want to give something back to the Trust and I didn't want to be selfish and it was only erm so I was really toying with this		Wanted to give something back to the Trust				
49	Int	Umm umm						
50	Julie	It was that night before the first day of the training that I had a dream forgive me if I sound like		Dreamt about Mum				

		Martin Luther King but I had a dream and in the dream Mum was absolutely vivid and it was me finding all the letters			
51	Int	Right yes that your refer to in the story			
52	Julie	And it was relating back to that and I just thought actually (.) yes so anyway when I got to Whirlow Grange that day I was still thinking am I being selfish should I do PPI what will benefit and it was only when we sat round and Pip said you know what have your chosen that I said I would like to focus on Mum (1) while relating this story but also it was because I wanted to be on the same journey everybody else was	Wanted to do a personal stories rather than work related to be on the same journey as the other people	Openness	Profound emotional experience
53	Int	Yeah yeah			
54	Julie	I felt if I did something relating to work I would feel outside of the group	Wanted to be on the same journey	Engagement	Profound emotional experience
55	Int	Yeah sure			
56	Julie	And I suppose I just wanted to share the same journey what everyone was going on	Wanted to be on the same journey	Engagement	Profound emotional experience
57	Int	Ok ok			
58	Julie	So hence me choosing something very personal	Chose something very personal	Openness Personal	Profound emotional experience
59	Int	Right right ok			
60	Julie	And I remember when I chose it I sat there and just sobbed and I wasn't expecting it and I sat there and sobbed (.) and eventually it came out what I was going to chose so I yeah emotional	Sobbed and sobbed Just choosing the story was emotional	Emotional Painful	Profound emotional experience Cathartic experience
61	Int	So when you were actually asked			
62	Julie	Umm yeah			
63	Int	When Pip or whoever went round in the circle and when it came to your turn			
64	Julie	I just blubbered I just err completely	Cried	Emotional	Profound emotional experience
65	Int	Right			
66	Julie	Hmm I don't (.) I don't think I was expecting that because it's not as if mum died yesterday but it still felt very raw err um so that was quite telling really erm and I think the whole of the three days that we had (1) uhh it felt like hard work and hard emotional work	Wasn't expecting to cry as mum died years ago Hard emotional work	Surprisingly moving Emotional Difficult	Cathartic experience Profound emotional experience
67	Int	Yeah yeah			
68	Julie	And I would get home at night and obviously have to go into like mum mode and try and be the	Thought about story		

		caregiver and everything else you are when you leave work and erm I still wanted to have time to find the photos cos I knew I had these photos so even when I got home my mind was still focussed on that trying to find the err in my head I knew the exact ones I wanted and I knew they were in a safe place	when at home at night		
69	Int	Right right			
70	Julie	But it was just trying to find them so yeah it felt like three days of emotional work but I will honestly say that without Pip and Tony and was it Jo as well	Hard emotional work	Emotional Difficult	Profound emotional experience Cathartic experience
71	Int	Yeah Jo yeah			
72	Julie	They did it so mindfully I felt looked after I felt very very safe (1) and I think it would be hard pushed and I know when people try and they say we're making a film and it's like well have you contacted Pip? have you contacted Tony? Cos I think without their support and without guiding me it wouldn't have felt the same	Mindful facilitation Made to feel safe Very important to process	Felt safe	Supportive context
73	Int	Yeah yeah			
74	Julie	So there was a hundred per cent trust	100% trust	Trust	Supportive context
75	Int	Umm			
76	Julie	Erm and the group was amazing (.) it was really (.) to be able to trust strangers (.) is quite hard really to do that and to honestly be able to trust (.) so I think why I found it so hard it was erm wanting to be as honest as possible	Group was amazing Trusted rest of group which was difficult Wanted to be as honest as possible	Support Trust Honest	Supportive context Profound emotional experience
77	Int	Right			
78	Julie	Erm			
79	Int	And was that something that you came with or that came out of the process perhaps			
80	Julie	Mmm absolutely erm I came with it but i didn't think it would be such an emotive thing to do and I think the process helped you to be honest and it was sort of related back to feeling safe erm (1) so yeah	Didn't expect it to be so emotional Process helped her to be honest because it was safe	Surprising Emotional Honesty Safety	Cathartic experience Profound emotional experience Supportive context
81	Int	So it sounds like prior there was a certain amount of anxiety about what to do the story on			
82	Julie	Umm umm			
83	Int	And then during the three days it was (.) well a lot of erm very strong emotions some of them very painful but also feeling safe	Strong emotions Painful But felt safe	Emotional Painful Felt safe	Profound emotional experience Cathartic

84	Julie	Absolutely					experience Supportive context
85	Int	And then afterwards					
86	Julie	It took some time to recovery it was so you know straight back to work the next day (.) and it felt really strange it felt like you'd been in this cocoon for three days				Took some time to recover	Moving profound experience Profound emotional experience
87	Int	Right					
88	Julie	Maybe it's where your head is it's a head space where you've allowed yourself to be but it was also in the company of everyone and then all of sudden it's back into work and it felt very unreal uh				Been in a different headspace Going back to normality was a shock	Moving profound experience Profound emotional experience
89	Int	Work did					
90	Julie	Very unreal it was almost like ehh (.) two sort of parallel dimensions					
91	Int	Right					
92	Julie	The one where your emotions are absolutely upfront and raw and then back into an environment where it's like ohh almost needing to put a lid on it for a time (1) so yeah it took (.) I remember emailing Pip saying (.) it's taking a little bit longer to feel fully recovered				Emotions were upfront and raw in workshop cf hidden in everyday life	Openness Profound emotional experience
93	Int	Right ok					
94	Julie	Erm yeah					
95	Int	So it took a while and now six months down the line					
96	Julie	I suppose what's different now is I couldn't wait for my girls to see it even though you know they moaned about the one of the pictures cos they said it's not the best one and you know but they ho and they felt quite nervous at first about maybe people across the world will see pictures of them but they feel fine with that and it's quite a nice touch to connect to different parts of the world but how do I feel now? I feel as though I've left a legacy behind of mum				Has a legacy of mum which feels really good Keen for girls to see it	Legacy Usefulness of stories
97	Int	Yeah					
98	Julie	Which feels really really good (1) so a number of people have seen it and I showed a really good girlfriend of mine and she just sobbed and sobbed because it absolutely tapped into her mum and how her mum died and so feeling the power of the film I haven't err shown it to my dad there just hasn't been a good time when he's been on his own				Shown it to friends Powerful film Not shown to dad as there's not been a good time	Shared with friends Powerful film Usefulness of stories
99	Int	Right					
100	Julie	Erm and because it's so powerful I'm frightened of (.) and so I gave dad the website and said when you have a moment				Film is so powerful she is frightened of effect on her Dad	
101	Int	Ok yes yes					
102	Julie	Look at it erm (1) so yeah I feel it was really worth doing (.) I'll still take a look at it and I feel in many ways that there was a real resolve in me (.) erm having done it				Feel's it was really worth doing Felt a real resolve	Positive impact Engagement Cathartic experience Profound



		Yeah I think at first cos you can almost feel erm (1) I remember on the first day and it was early on and I just cried and cried (.) but that felt ok	Cried lots and that felt ok	Emotional Crying	Profound emotional experience Supportive context
120	Julie				
121	Int	Hmm			
122	Julie	Which sounds really perhaps strange in a group of people that you've never met before but it felt ok to do that	Ok to cry in front of strangers	Support	Supportive context
123	Int	Umm			
124	Julie	Erm which is quite unusual in some ways erm (1) but how I think (.) Pip Tony and Jo handled it you're able to do that	Unusual situation	Rare opportunity	Supportive context
125	Int	Yeah			
126	Julie	Erm yeah			
127	Int	So erm (2) I'm just wondering how whether you can think of other ways it's had an impact on your life apart from just the emotional			
128	Julie	Umm			
129	Int	Side of things			
130	Julie	Umm I think from a point of view of sharing with other people and giving them the information especially people within the Trust my colleagues for example (1) trying to share with them how useful it has been for other members who did it for me who did it for example to give hmm carers and services another way of telling their story hmm every month I present a corporate induction to our new starters	Importance of using stories to empower users and carers Uses them in the staff induction	Utility	Usefulness of stories
131	Int	Ah right			
132	Julie	And I always show a short film at the moment it's the doctor and the door mouse			
133	Int	Right			
134	Julie	Which goes down			
135	Int	Is that one of the digital stories			
136	Julie	Yeah			
137	Int	I've not seen that one			
138	Julie	It's a wonderful one it epitomises how patients often know better than the err doctor			
139	Int	Right			
140	Julie	The clinician			
141	Int	Right			
142	Julie	It's a really really useful one or I'll show Nev Wheeler's story			
143	Int	Right I don't think I've seen that			
144	Julie	Yeah Peaks and Troughs so there's a range I use			
145	Int	Yeah yeah			
146	Julie	So I suppose it's my way of letting people know about the stories	Promotes the stories	Utility	Usefulness of stories
147	Int	Umm umm			
148	Julie	So they can use them (3) urrh			

149	Int	Fine erm I think we've covered most of the points I've got down here erm and I don't want to lead you down any avenues (.) suggest put suggestions in your mind (.) are there any other things?				
150	Julie	I think probably what we talked about in the first place being able to after the (1) after the third day and after we watched the films had a little premier				
151	Int	Mm				
152	Julie	Within the (.) in front of everyone (.) it was noting how the films could be used within the Trust	Wanting to use the films	Utility	Usefulness of stories	
153	Int	Right yeah				
154	Julie	And clearly there were some that could be used				
155	Int	Right yeah				
156	Julie	And you know the sort of safety issues and things like that and so it was just really wanting to make use of them and letting people know that they can (.) well if the funding was there they could make a story obviously	Wanting to use the films and wanting other people to know that they could also make their own stories	Utility Sharing stories	Usefulness of stories	
157	Int	Yeah yeah I guess there a few other aspect I could maybe touch on				
158	Julie	Ok				
159	Int	Erm I suppose one is erm well has it helped you to see things differently around your relationship with your mum or the circumstances around her death or				
160	Julie	I think the circumstances you know I absolutely adored mum but because I felt it was a complicated death in many ways her not being diagnosed early				
161	Int	Right				
162	Julie	So (.) you know (.) from the date of diagnosis on the 6 <sup>th</sup> and dead on the 16 <sup>th</sup> was very very quick				
163	Int	Right				
164	Julie	Erm never having time to almost come to terms with that erm how quickly she died and always believing why didn't we know? Why couldn't we tell there was something? (.) and I think also living with a mum who suffered from depression erm (.) I supposed it's made me much more mindful of looking after me	Not had time to come to terms with her death Unanswered questions Doubt	Reflection	Profound emotional experience	
165	Int	Right				
166	Julie	Cos I can see certain signs erm (1) so yeah in some ways quite learning curve but it really feels like (.) the huge amount of guilt I felt cos I wasn't there during	Steep learning curve Has had feelings of guilt cos she wasn't with mum when she died	Positive reframing	Cathartic experience	
167	Int	Right when she died				
168	Julie	Yeah (.) that making the film just helped me reflect on the positive which I think in many ways is just been tremendous cos I just always viewed me as such as baddy who wasn't there for mum	Story has helped her to reflect on the positive Very beneficial	Positive reframing Positive impact	Cathartic experience	
169	Int	Right				
170	Julie	So you know it's really				
171	Int	And now you don't				

		I still think I could've done more that's that's me	Still doubts that she did enough	Still doubts herself	Profound emotional experience
172	Julie				
173	Int	Right ok ok			
174	Julie	Errm			
175	Int	Mm and I suppose another aspect which you've touched on is the kind of mm overcoming inhibitions			
176	Julie	Mmm			
177	Int	About not being able to share you know difficult experiences or difficult emotions with other people			
178	Julie	Yeah and I think it's quite ehh (1) it's almost like you know having that stiff upper lip it's like being strong for everyone else	Previously not able to share feelings	Openness with feelings	Profound emotional experience
179	Int	Mm mm			
180	Julie	And gosh there's nothing wrong with mum's crying in front of their daughters you know in front of their children but it's actually just almost giving yourself permission to cry	Feels like she needs permission to cry	Openness with feelings	Profound emotional experience
181	Int	Mm mm			
182	Julie	Err (.) and I think if I would have chosen something like patient and public involvement and not this it would have felt so different Mark we wouldn't be having this same conversation			
183	Int	No no			
184	Julie	I would have been doing it because the corporate side of me was saying			
185	Int	Right ok			
186	Julie	Do this you know but I did it from a heartfelt decision (.) so although it felt selfish in some ways (.) it felt right in others	Heart-felt decision to talk about her mum	Deep	Profound emotional experience
187	Int	Mm mm mm but I think the way you've done it in fact I'm pretty sure about this you've entered into it more wholly			
188	Julie	Absolutely			
189	Int	Or very wholly actually			
190	Julie	Yeah	Wholly involved in process	Deep	Profound emotional experience
191	Int	Whereas you know if you'd have just talked aspects of your job or whatever you'd have used the technology but it would have been very different			
192	Julie	Yeah			
193	Int	Actually the whole mood of the whole workshop could have been different because of that			
194	Julie	I think so			
195	Int	So actually what you did was probably not selfish			
196	Julie	Ok uhh ok (laughter) ok			
197	Int	You know you entered it fully in the spirit of it so (.) any other last comments			

198	Julie	No I think from an artistic point of view it felt really as though I wanted to make something that would last a long time (.) erm and I (.) you know what I was saying before that each of the girls have a disc	Wanted to leave a legacy of her mum for her girls	Legacy	Usefulness of stories
199	Int	Right			
200	Julie	And it does it feel like I've I've left something for them			
201	Int	Mmm			
202	Julie	Err to see (.) and I think it's also some of the pictures they've seen of mum one that sits on our (.) mantelpiece in the sitting room fireplace sorry in the sitting room erm mum's looking older and I think when you're little you forget that people were once young and perhaps really			
203	Int	Ok yeah			
204	Julie	So it's also giving them a different visual image of what their granny once looked like and her having a life she wasn't just my mum so err just trying to give a rounded picture uhh (laughter)	Gives the girls a different more rounded perspective on their granny	Share story	Usefulness of stories
205	Int	Ok			
206	Julie	Yes			
207	Int	Right thank you			

### Martin transcript analysis

Section			First order coding	Second order coding	Interview themes
1	Martin	I suppose (.) having done it especially the second one (.) erm yeah things not the same things have changed for me to you know that extent really(.	Life has changed	Beneficial	Feels more in control now
2	Int	Yes			
3	Martin	And that's the difference yeah it's probably good for your research really			
4	Int	Mm mm			
5	Martin	The therapeutic value it's had on me (.) cos (.) the difference the first one and the second one is just (.)	Been therapeutic	Beneficial	Feels more in control now
6	Int	How you were when you did them			
7	Martin	The second one especially (.) if (.) well you've actually seen them so you know the difference between how it starts between the first and second (.) and erm (.) I was frightened to death at the end of the first one (laughter) don't get me wrong I was glad I'd done it	Frightened after the first story Glad he'd done it	Unsettling Pleased	Difficult process Empowering process
8	Int	Ohh yeah yes			
9	Martin	I was really glad I'd done it it's just (.) erm (1) well we were going to have a little meeting after but because it ran so late we ended up not having the meeting	Glad he'd done it	Pleased	Empowering process
10	Int	The healing journeys one			
11	Martin	Yes			
12	Int	So did you show the stories?			

13	Martin	Yeah we had a premier and that was fine but things were running that late that all of us that were going for err (.) meet up after didn't meet up so it ended up with me and it was just all the weird things going round in my head you know (.) all of a sudden (.) there's millions of people going to see this they're all going to switch on a six o'clock (laughter) it was that sort of daft thing that went through my head that you know at six o'clock everyone's going to switch on and see this thing (.) and of course that was never part of it anyway cos I had the option of going on the internet or not	Left him shaken Worried about lots of people seeing his story – left feeling vulnerable	Unsettling Felt vulnerable	Difficult process
14	Int	Yes sure			
15	Martin	It's just that I said yeah internet doesn't bother me and I go oh god everyone's going to see it but of course it was anonymous anyway	Worried about lots of people seeing his story – left feeling vulnerable	Felt vulnerable	Difficult process
16	Int	Yours is very anonymous yes			
17	Martin	With the first one yeah but with the second one at least you see me			
18	Int	Yeah			
19	Martin	So it's just that's the progression I've gone down (1) that I feel strong enough to do that	Feeling a lot stronger as a result	Feels stronger	Feels more in control now
20	Int	Right ok to be less anonymous			
21	Martin	Another year down the road and yeah perhaps I'll be there saying come on you know full up front	Expects recovery to persist	Optimistic	Feels more in control now
22	Int	Mhm mhm			
23	Martin	But it's just the confidence I got from it	Gained in confidence	More confident	Feels more in control now
24	Int	Right ok so it gave you confidence in your life in general			
25	Martin	Yeah			
26	Int	Which is good			
27	Martin	Brilliant innit (laughter) but erm d'you want to know the reason I started it in the first place?	Really pleased with effect it's had	Pleased	Empowering process
28	Int	Yes yeah			
29	Martin	Well I actually (.) I'd seen a psychologist for ages for almost a year so I understood what was causing the problems	Knew what was causing his problems	Aware of own problems before	Difficulty moving forward before
30	Int	Right			
31	Martin	Then I went with an OT (.) as my care coordinator and she encouraged me to write at certain times of the day when I was getting wound up and noticed the triggers so I'd basically started doing that (.) and then I was encourage to write something mainly for me (.) which I did I wrote pages and pages of the stuff but I made it into an article for Your Voice	Had done therapeutic writing before	Writing had been helpful before	Empowering process
32	Int	Right which I've read			
33	Martin	So that's sort of turned into an article for Your Voice basically and it sort of follows on from that so I've always been (.) more interested in stuff telling my story and sort of part of the journey of things that have helped or not and then I was just sort like would you like to do the digital story? So after a couple of weeks of thinking I said yeah it sounds good that	And so was interested in telling his story Thought it sounded good	Wanted to tell his story Thought it would be good	Wanted to help others

34	Int	So just going back to your writing cos there's two aspects of it you started by writing something for yourself to help you structure your ideas					
35	Martin	Yeah this is it was always made very clear that what I was writing was not for anybody else really	Had only written for himself initially	New experience	Empowering process		
36	Int	Sure					
37	Martin	Erm she did say that if I wanted to show her that was fine (.) but it wasn't part of doing it the doing was for me to help me to notice where the triggers were and things like that things that I was doing that made me go of	Writing had been to help him notice his triggers	Writing had been helpful before	Empowering process		
38	Int	So through the process of writing you had a better understanding of yourself and what were signs of you becoming more ill were					
39	Martin	This is it I knew why I was doing it (.) through the psychologist	Writing helped him to understand his triggers	Writing had been helpful before	Empowering process		
40	Int	Right right					
41	Martin	Because of the trauma					
42	Int	Mm mm					
43	Martin	That was causing the problems but what I wasn't recognising was the everyday life things I knew I was going off and fighting and things like that but it was all just lumped into one it was just you know like jumping from one to the other whereas that was (.) writing it down was more to say where the triggers were					
44	Int	so it helped					
45	Martin	What I was actually doing when I started to go off					
46	Int	So would it be right to say that it helped you disentangle things	Had used writing to help him make sense of his behaviour before the workshop	Writing had been helpful before	Empowering process		
47	Martin	This is it that was the start of it					
48	Int	Making sense of your everyday life and how that related to prior experiences					
49	Martin	All it was just a case of avoiding certain things because that was causing the problems					
50	Int	Mm mm					
51	Martin	Mm I've got to say that erm (.) that during that time it was looked at err going to see a psychotherapist and (.) they said it was probably not a good idea for me to go down that route (.) because of the fits because of the violence because I'm epileptic as well (.) and so two tend to be connected	Psychotherapy had been considered but rejected because of his epileptic fits	Wary of delving into past	Difficulty moving forward before		
52	Int	Right					
53	Martin	The more violent I get the tend to be more fits that I get					
54	Int	Right so you were offered psychotherapy					
55	Martin	No I was not offered it					
56	Int	Oh ok					
57	Martin	They looked at going down that route there was a great debate between the psychiatrist and the psychotherapy services					
58	Int	Right					

59	Martin	And given what they knew (.) they thought it would not be such as good idea for me to go down that route of psychotherapy				
60	Int	Right				
61	Martin	Cos it'd cause too many problems				
62	Int	To revisit your early life experiences the traumatic experiences				
63	Martin	They thought I was better off not going that road (laughter) given the I was prone to violence then so the natural route was then to have a look at it more as a err awareness thing	Dr thought it best not to explore early history in psychotherapy because of risk of violent outbursts	Wary of delving into past	Difficulty moving forward before	
64	Int	Right				
65	Martin	What was causing the problems and is was upto me how I reacted to that it was more once I was aware of them that I would avoid getting in those circumstances	Writing had helped him control his violent behaviour	Writing had been helpful before	Empowering process	
66	Int	Right so if you like the digital storytelling is part of a process				
67	Martin	This is coming towards more of the end of it	Digital story is part of longer process	Part of bigger process	Empowering process	
68	Int	Yeah in terms of you writing for yourself then sharing your story with Your Voice and then obviously this is maybe more in depth but potentially a larger audience and using it in different ways as well through your teaching				
69	Martin	Well i do it through the teaching and that side but (.) it's when you come to the second one that this is where you really see the differences	Uses story in teaching	Uses story in teaching	Feels more in control now	
70	Int	Mfm mm				
71	Martin	And I say things like I've actually broken the chains	Broken the chains	Broken the chains	Feels more in control now	
72	Int	Mfm mm				
73	Martin	Cos even after the first one there seemed to be the chains there even though I was aware of them they were sort of holding me back from doing what I wanted to do	After the first story, there were still chains holding him back from doing what he wanted to do	Could feel chains holding him back	Difficulty moving forward before	
74	Int	Right				
75	Martin	Until after I did the first one once I got used to the fact that I'd done it and (.) settled with it (.) you know I was quite happy	After the initial shock of the first story was quite happy	Pleased	Empowering process	
76	Int	Mfm				
77	Martin	And I've used it through the teaching I do and it's even made me go faster down the road and when I didn't see anything before now I actually see something at an end (.) I don't think I'll ever quite reach it (.) but I'm certainly getting closer to the end and I even thought about something I didn't dream of erm there'd be decent tomorrow	Using story in teaching helped his own recovery Now sees a brighter future	Using story in teaching helped his recovery Optimistic about the future	Feels more in control now	

78	Int	Right ok		Never dreamt of decent future before		
79	Martin	I didn't dare think of that		Didn't dare think of a decent future	Couldn't think about the future before	Difficulty moving forward before
80	Int	Right		Now sees a brighter future	Optimistic about the future	Feels more in control now
81	Martin	Whereas now yeah there is a (.) better tomorrow it might not be ideal		Now sees a brighter future	Optimistic about the future	Feels more in control now
82	Int	No		Now sees a brighter future	Optimistic about the future	Feels more in control now
83	Martin	It might not be ideal but it's better than what I've had		Recovered significantly between first & second story	Recovering rapidly	Feels more in control now
84	Int	Mm mm		Rapid recovery	Recovering rapidly	Feels more in control now
85	Martin	And that I suppose is the benefit I got from it all (.) but as I say if people see the difference between the first and the second alone				
86	Int	Yeah				
87	Martin	You know in such as short space of time (.) it's only just over a year and even the change from that to err that one simply because of how things have gone				
88	Int	Do you think the fact that you've been using your story on a regular basis has kind of helped rather than if you just did your story and it maybe went on the website you showed it to a few people and then you forgot about it you know whereas you've been using yours perhaps more than most people would				
89	Martin	Yes err quite possibly I use it at least twice a year and in fact it's on Blackboard so it's there (.) well I don't know whether it stays on there or not (laughter) I know the first one that was still left on Blackboard for the social workers but I've also used it with the occupational therapists				
90	Int	Right ok				
91	Martin	And they've got them on Blackboard but it's at least once a year for both sets of students				
92	Int	Mm mm				
93	Martin	So it's there (.) and it's just made me able to answer anything (.) it doesn't bother me about the trauma or anything anymore		Trauma no longer bothers him Much more resilient in general	More emotionally resilient now	Feels more in control now
94	Int	Right				
95	Martin	You know it's not (.) I don't see there's (.) an emotional attack which is something that used to cause me problems (.) I was fine if you stood up and wanted to argue about anything		More emotionally resilient now Less argumentative now	More emotionally resilient now	Feels more in control now
96	Int	Mm mm				
97	Martin	Quantum physics or whatever you know I argue about it quite nicely but if it was something on an emotional level I was not very good at it		More emotionally resilient now	More emotionally resilient now	Feels more in control now

98	Int	Umm mm		Less argumentative now		
99	Martin	Whereas now it doesn't really bother me that much (.) I just accept it for what it is (.) and have my ways of coping with it		Able to accept the past better Has effective coping strategies	More emotionally resilient now	Feels more in control now
100	Int	Yeah				
101	Martin	But it's all come through the stories really		Recovery is all as a result of the stories	Recovery due to stories	Feels more in control now
102	Int	Mmm mm				
103	Martin	Especially the original one even though I had a mad hour at the end of erm I suppose it was really because I was on my own		First one was most powerful	Powerful stories	Feels more in control now
104	Int	Yes				
105	Martin	Coming to terms with it and it was just that and after an hour I realised and logic kicked in (.) you know the chance of six million people switching on at six o'clock I'd be better off trying to win the lottery to be honest cos there not nobody knew it was there even		Able to come to terms with his story	Story helped him to come to terms with past	Feels more in control now
106	Int	Yeah yeah				
107	Martin	You know it was not on the thing then				
108	Int	But it was your perception at the time				
109	Martin	Yeah the initial thing it was err (.) it was like a shock thing		In shock after first story re. anonymity	Unsettling	Difficult process
110	Int	But it's almost err correct me if I'm wrong but (.) just talking generally now if you've had a traumatic life event and you've not err some people know about it but you've not really sort of shared it and then maybe you start sharing it with one or two people that's a big step				
111	Martin	I think it was the premier (laughter) even though I'd be sat with the other storytellers for days in fact your first day is normally your sat in your group and tell what your story's going to be about so I'd been sat with these people it's just that erm we'd all seen our own stories individually and people from the university had looked at them and said how good they were				
112	Int	Right				
113	Martin	But this was err it might as well have been in the Odeon or somewhere		Showing his story in premiere was a big thing for him	Felt vulnerable	Difficult process
114	Int	(laughter)				
115	Martin	(laughter) the great film premiere was coming up the only thing that was missing was the Oscars and the pop corn really but everything else you know it was there (.) and it was just one story after the other				
116	Int	Mmm mm				
117	Martin	And yeah sort of logic went out the window for a short time		Somewhat confused at end of first workshop	Unsettled	Difficult process
118	Int	What do you think was the effect of the fact that you were doing this with other people and other				

		people err I probably have seen most of the stories but I'd just wondering what the effect of seeing other people of doing it with other people who were talking about difficult life events or trauma and then seeing them share it was well						
119	Martin	Well it was actually quite comforting really you know even though there was not another one in the same position as me	Comforting to be doing it with other people	Supportive group	Empowering process			
120	Int	Mmm						
121	Martin	Everybody had different traumatic experiences	Everybody had different traumatic experiences	Bonded with group	Empowering process			
122	Int	Yeah I mean Paul's is quite err						
123	Martin	You know well err I felt you know I'd have like to have been there because I'd have the one that was err fighting for him	Wanted to support other group members	Bonded with group	Empowering process			
124	Int	Right						
125	Martin	You know when he was being bullied						
126	Int	In his situation						
127	Martin	I'd be the one that was err come from behind and say oi have a go at me cos I'd don't mind you know that was something that I felt for him						
128	Int	Right ok yes						
129	Martin	I could quite easily have been the one that would've stand with him and say right come on						
130	Int	Mmm						
131	Martin	So there are little things that you pick up and think (.) yeah a bit more than empathy because it's something that your now erm (1) yeah it gives you a bond to a certain extent as in the only person I really see is Pep and erm cos we tend to do the social work students together anyway come October time but Paul I see quite a lot just floating about and its err a bit of bond even if it's only a loose one it's there because i know that they've got traumatic things the same as I have just slightly different that's all but it hasn't lessened the effect is what I'm trying to say	Showing a bit more than empathy Bonded with some group members Still sees Pep & Paul occasionally	Bonded with group Still feels the support from the group	Empowering process Feels more in control now			
132	Int	It hasn't lessened the effect on you or err						
133	Martin	That bit didn't it just made me aware that I'm not alone with trauma	Realised that he is not alone with trauma	Still feels the support from the group	Feels more in control now			
134	Int	Yeah sure sure						
135	Martin	Even though I've been down the road of erm of a survivors group that was just a group of survivors so you expect to have some kind of bond with them but this was a bond that I wasn't quite expecting cos it was all different traumas	Had support from other groups in past This was different as wider range of people	Still feels the support from the group	Feels more in control now			
136	Int	Mmm						
137	Martin	And we do meet up every now and again in various things you know some of the carers I meet up with and that and it's still there that bonds still there	Still meets some of the group and bond is still there	Still feels the support from the group	Feels more in control now			
138	Int	Yeah						
139	Martin	And I think that's something that I'd always shied away from	Had always shied away	Able to bond with	Feels more in			

			from getting close to people	people more than before	control now
140	Int	Mmm mm			
141	Martin	Anybody with err (.) in fact very few people knew what happened	Had kept his history a secret	Had kept his history a secret	Difficulty moving forward before
142	Int	Mmm			
143	Martin	And now there's a lot more people know what happened and I'm fairly comfortable with it (.) I'm very comfortable within the university	Lot more people know about his history He's now comfortable with people knowing his history	More able to be open	Feels more in control now
144	Int	Yeah sure			
145	Martin	All the students are very good (.) but these are outsiders that I feel comfortable with	More confident now	More confident now	Feels more in control now
146	Int	Yeah yeah			
147	Martin	That's never happened cos I'd never allow it			
148	Int	Mmm mm			
149	Martin	I'd never allow that to happen			
150	Int	Mmm so in some sense this kind of erm and I don't want to put words in your mouth it's almost changed the way you see the world or how you see other people err whereas perhaps before you didn't feel safe with them			
151	Martin	No			
152	Int	To talk about certain things			
153	Martin	I suppose you'd call it a bit of paranoia I had I had even it weren't for anything (inaudible) cos I just wouldn't allow anybody in	Bit paranoid before but OK now	Feels more confident now	Feels more in control now
154	Int	Yeah sure			
155	Martin	Whereas now it's a case of I have let them in and I've done it quite easily	Now able to let people get close to him	Able to bond with people more than before	Feels more in control now
156	Int	Mmm			
157	Martin	Hence in the second story breaking the chains bit (.) is what it means (.) and if I remember rightly the last little bit goes the trauma will always affect me but the things that changed is it won't control me anymore	The trauma will always affect him but will no longer control him	Feels more in control now	Feels more in control now
158	Int	Yeah sure			
159	Martin	And that's the great difference it won't control me anymore	Feels much freer now	Feels much freer now	Feels more in control now
160	Int	Mmm mm			
161	Martin	And maybe that's what it is maybe it's a bit of control thing that I'm in control of (.) who I tell who do I tell and I feel a lot more comfortable with a lot more people than I did before	Feels more in control now Feels more comfortable with more people now	Feels more in control now	Feels more in control now

162	Int	Did doing this story help you to clarify that in your mind the fact that the trauma will always effect you but it won't always control you				
163	Martin	This is it even after the first one (.) immediately after it was always seem to be that this chain was pulling me back it wouldn't let me go much beyond that	There's always seemed to be a chain holding him back	Feels more in control now	Feels more in control now	Difficulty moving forward before
164	Int	Right yes				
165	Martin	And (.) yeah it was started doing that using it at university and all that and the chain just weakened and everything just went and that was it	Through using his story at the university, chain became weaker and has now broken	Uses story in teaching Feels more in control now	Feels more in control now	
166	Int	During the first one				
167	Martin	Yeah because I felt more comfortable with myself about it and err the tug of the chain wasn't there anymore it'd gone (.) it's got broken	Feels more comfortable with himself Chain has been broken	Feels more confident now Chain has been broken	Feels more in control now	
168	Int	Great				
169	Martin	It's got broken and that was it (.) so now I can look at and thing why didn't this happen many years ago really	Chain has been broken Wonders why it didn't happen earlier	Chain has been broken Mystery	Feels more in control now	Empowering process
170	Int	You say that in your second story				
171	Martin	Why didn't this happen many years ago				
172	Int	Yeah				
173	Martin	But it's like everything else progression isn't it				
174	Int	Well very much so				
175	Martin	And that's the only thing I hope through the stories that people see is the fact that there is progression even for somebody as far down the line as me and I had a long way to come and your know (.) a lot to change (.) sort of 40 odd years of doing things my way (.) behaving in a certain way for that to be reversed you know it's not going to happen overnight	Wants people to know that recovery is possible even after decades of mental illness	Wanting others to see that recovery is possible	Wanted to help others	
176	Int	No				
177	Martin	But that I just hope that with the stuff I do it will give the students some insight when they go to see people and catch them earlier that's the whole idea is to catch them earlier and then there won't be people like me well there will be	Hopes students get insight into people with MH problems and are able to help them earlier	Want others to learn	Wanted to help others	
178	Int	Yeah				
179	Martin	There will always be people like me just they'll caught early with a bit of luck	Wants to improve services	Wants to improve services	Wanted to help others	
180	Int	Yeah				
181	Martin	And treated early and yeah so that's all I (inaudible)				
182	Int	Mm				
183	Martin	And it's for me I've done it for me as well you know that's part of it I'm actually doing it for me	Does teaching for	Does teaching for	Feels more in	

	as well (laughter)	himself as well	himself as well	control now
184	Int So did you expect it to have some therapeutic value for you to come out feeling better in some way after the three days			
185	Martin I didn't actually know I knew that err well I used to write and that used to always make me feel a little better but I didn't understand what it was doing in that respect it was just yeah I did feel a bit better	Didn't know whether he'd benefit from the workshop Although knew writing helped	Few expectations	Wanted to help others
186	Int Mm mm			
187	Martin Whereas this was a total expansion on that and sort of after that initial bit it sort of yeah it's helping others but it was helping me that's when it started it wasn't just a case of if yeah I always thought if I can do something else something else is coming up that's (inaudible) yeah brilliant I thought I was well passed it	Process a lot more powerful than writing was for him Wanted to help others Though he was passed it	Want others to learn Didn't think he could change	Wanted to help others Difficulty moving forward before
188	Int Right			
189	Martin And I've said that in the past you know I'm too far down the road it's so many years behind me that I can't change (.) I actually believed I couldn't change	Didn't think he could change	Didn't think he could change	Difficulty moving forward before
190	Int Right			
191	Martin And after doing the story (.) that's when things started to change a little bit (.) and the more I was doing it (.) the more things changed (.) and things got better for me	After the story he did begin to change and this has persisted	Recovering rapidly Optimistic	Feels more in control now
192	Int Mm			
193	Martin But I didn't deliberately go out there and think I'm going to do this and I'm going to feel tons better	Didn't do it with the intention of helping himself to feel better	Few expectations Didn't think he could change	Difficulty moving forward before
194	Int Mm			
195	Martin I didn't actually believe that (.) and I could have gone down the road and said no I want it just for me or I'll let the university see it but nobody else			
196	Int Yeah			
197	Martin I could have gone down that road			
198	Int So somehow during the process your view of your future changed almost like a door opened and you kind of think well actually maybe there is a chance of recovery			
199	Martin It wasn't sort of opened wide			
200	Int No no			
201	Martin Your right that's a good analogy really in that (.) there's a door in the corner and all of sudden it opens a little bit (.) well its always been locked			
202	Int Yeah			
203	Martin So it's opened a little bit gives a chance to sneak and have a little look round the corner you know what's behind that door and that's sort of yeah that's quite good actually cos that's the kind of feeling it was I wanted to have little look behind that door	Helped him to change	Helped him to change	Feels more in control now

204	Int	Mm							
205	Martin	And to see what was going on and all of sudden I could actually go in that one that's another room I can go into another space I can go	Helped him to see things differently	Helped him to see things differently					Feels more in control now
206	Int	Yes do you think there's anything in the way that the workshop was facilitated that kind of cos you know you've got the technology you've got the sharing the stuff you do yourself the writing the presentation but how it's presented and how you're supported through it is something that's Well I think that's the important part	Facilitation was important	Very supportive facilitation					Empowering process
207	Martin	Mm cos it could be done in a very technological way							
208	Int	I think if it had been just a case of erm (l) somebody from erm the IT people in the university playing there with the computers while I was saying something and adding the bits that I wanted to be added whilst I was telling my story I don't think that would work the same as that little bit							
209	Martin	No							
210	Int	If you feel a bit off it Pip was there you know sort of very intuitive probably (.) to look very comfortable just a little chat then there's nice regular breaks just to get a coffee and chat about all sorts of stuff to actually take it away from it but it's when you get involved to do the little bits	Very supportive facilitation	Very supportive facilitation					Empowering process
211	Martin	Right ok							
212	Int	You bring your own pictures	Controlling content was important	Controlling content was important					Empowering process
213	Martin								
214	Int	Cos you've got an animation in yours							
215	Martin	Well this is it when we first discussed what it was about that was when I really said totally anonymous not going to be me (.) at all							
216	Int	Umm							
217	Martin	So hence the road the country lane and they said what do you want and I said well yeah (.) you know thinking about my group in a way	Facilitators helped him to express himself	Empowering facilitation					Empowering process
218	Int	Steps							
219	Martin	So I just thought yeah footprints and I had footprints going squiggly across the screen							
220	Int	Well they go up and then down							
221	Martin	They go squiggly it's a wavy line isn't it but they sort of start middle and they go down don't they and they slowly but surely it ends up a bit further up							
222	Int	Yeah							
223	Martin	That was very deliberate the fact that's where I started from and the ups and downs and twists I've actually still ended up a little bit further up and then the end picture was (.) the road had got shorter it was actually the same picture	Expression and control important	Expression and control important					Empowering process
224	Int	Right ok							
225	Martin	It was the same picture but I wanted it look as though I'd got down the road a bit so Pip just brought it in	Wanted to show progress in story	Wanted to show progress in story					Wanted to help others
226	Int	Mm mm							
227	Martin	I decided yeah for all I don't want to be on screen what I will do is the bye bit which is the last	Wanted anonymity	Wanted anonymity					Difficulty moving

		frame that you see			forward before
228	Int	Right			
229	Martin	Is me walking down the corridor in Hallam			
230	Int	Yeah yeah			
231	Martin	Bye (.) and even that's within the little space of telling the story (.) even that little bit had grown	Over the workshop developed confidence for a personal photo to be included	Developed confidence	Feels more in control now
232	Int	Ok so things like that can be having been through it myself little things you do can be very symbolic			
233	Martin	Well it was very deliberate on my behalf that I wanted it that way and I wanted the finish slightly higher than the start			
234	Int	Yeah			
235	Martin	Very deliberate but (.) I know what it was about			
236	Int	Yeah			
237	Martin	In a lot of ways that was very personal	Very personal story	Very personal story	Empowering process
238	Int	Oh yeah			
239	Martin	Well I felt I'd moved a bit (.) regardless of what other people saw	Felt he'd moved forward in 3 days	Rapid recovery	Feels more in control now
240	Int	And are you thinking of that movement in relation to what happened in those three days?			
241	Martin	Yeah			
242	Int	So as a result of your experience over the three days you felt a bit further along the journey and a bit higher than you did to start with			
243	Martin	Yes precisely			
244	Int	And that if you like started to change your view of what could happen in the future	Became more optimistic about the future	Feels more optimistic	Feels more in control now
245	Martin	Well that was the start of it (.) the odd daft setback but a as you say it's like everything else			
246	Int	Mm			
247	Martin	To see all the stories together in the film premier that I could understand that's how it went and it was just an hour of panic in me head all sorts of things whizzing through (.) until the sort of logic kicked in again and things changed			
248	Int	Do you think there's something about erm (1) facing your demons not to sound too emotive about it?			
249	Martin	Yeah it's just the way you face them I think and this is what psychotherapy were very wary of			
250	Int	Yeah			
251	Martin	If they somebody sort of sat there helping me to confront these demons I'm more likely to punch their lights out cos I'm getting wound up and that wasn't the right way to do it	Was effectively able to face demons cf. psychotherapy	Able to face demons	Empowering process
252	Int	No			

253	Martin	The right way to do is to sort of let me (.) control what bits come out when they come out and I still get to the end it's just how long it takes might be longer than shorter its one of those things (.) it's more I have control of what bits come out and when they come out	Ability to control pace of disclosure was crucial	Control was important	Empowering process
254	Int	Right in the digital storytelling			
255	Martin	Digital stories are not much different to that (.) I had me script and the script on the first day is nothing like the finished product (.) in a lot of respects it had changed as it went along	Story changed over the 3 days	Rapid change	Feels more in control now
256	Int	So is that			
257	Martin	I was trying to get the feelings across that I felt	Was trying to express his feelings	Expression important	Empowering process
258	Int	Mm mm			
259	Martin	I didn't want that to change but some of the other things that did change that I can't even remember now but I just needed to change those little bits	Needed to change a few bits	Expression important	Empowering process
260	Int	Right			
261	Martin	And as I say the height of the finish was totally for me it wasn't meant for anyone else even though it's quite obvious it finishes like that	Story had personal meaning which may be hidden to others	Very personal story	Empowering process
262	Int	Yeah			
263	Martin	They wouldn't know why it did (.) for me it was very particular that I wanted it to do that but that was for me (.) it's like artists put a little squiggle somewhere and they're they only ones who know where it is (.) you know that sort of thing			
264	Int	Mm yeah			
265	Martin	And of course when the second one came along (.) I spoke to Pip I said I know what I want (.) I want things that (.) it's what it means to me with the second one was the ghosts	Wanted ghosts in second one	Very personal story	Empowering process
266	Int	Mm			
267	Martin	The ghosts I wanted them to appear and disappear until the last one where it shrinks and vanishes and I know it's there but it's not going to control me anymore that's the thing all those demons have lost control of me it's just how I put it the demons'll always effect me they don't appear anymore cos I broke the chains from them they're not going to control me anymore	Wanted ghosts to disappear Wanted to show that the demons had lost their power	Demons had lost their power	Empowering process
268	Int	It's interesting to hear you talk about control and I'm wondering whether there's any parallels between you can almost control how you present this bit of your life story in its digital format the fact that you can change from how you originally wanted to present it to how you end up presenting it and the technology gives you a lot of control as well (.) I wonder whether that gives you a sense that you can control how your history affects you or what you do in the future rather than it controlling you			
269	Martin	Well this is it once you learn that that's it			
270	Int	Mm			
271	Martin	And for me that was it was a matter of learning that yeah I can control a lot of things in life but it tends to be not the emotional things	Learnt that he could control a lot of things in life, but not his	Feels more in control now	Feels more in control now

				emotions	
272	Int	No no			
273	Martin	I tend not to be able to control them so easily but that even though the stories quite emotional I still had control of it		Learnt that he could control his emotions in the story	Feels more in control now
274	Int	Mm			
275	Martin	I'd say the magic bit was when I said to Pip this is what I want (.) the ghosts is what I wanted but even that was more for me than anyone else		Parts of the story were just for him	Very personal story
276	Int	Yeah yeah			
277	Martin	It was more for me (.) not reassuring as such but yeah (.) that sort of thing that any time I look at that now (.) that's all I'm going to see the thing for me is not the story cos I know the story it's the ghosts			
278	Int	Right ok (laughter)			
279	Martin	(laughter) It's the ghosts appearing			
280	Int	Right so you've got the images very powerful images in there			
281	Martin	But you see even that was for me really the ghosts disappearing means more to me than anybody that doesn't know me		The ghosts have personal meaning for him	Very personal story
282	Int	Mm mm			
283	Martin	It means a lot to me those ghosts disappearing		The ghosts disappearing mean a lot to him	Very personal story Feels more in control now
284	Int	Right yeah yeah			
285	Martin	And it's just all part of it and (.) the second story and this is something I've to thank Pip for actually very much (.) erm there is quite a long scene where I'm talking about the students			
286	Int	Mm mm			
287	Martin	There was something there very bland we couldn't find anything from Hallam that's why it looks a bit weird you can't see it's Hallam			
288	Int	Yeah			
289	Martin	But you know it's somewhere that students go to (.) but then Pip and Tony with their little magic (.) brought something out from the first story and if you look at it you'll see people from the first story there as like (.) err support for me		Magical nature of stories Stories as supportive tools	Mystery Empowering stories
290	Int	Right			
291	Martin	I don't know how Pip thought of it (.) but for me I thought yeah brilliant this is something that I could have done dead easy could you still have the image of the hall but it's almost as if they are there to support me you know what I mean		Support from rest of group has endured	Supportive group
292	Int	Yeah ok			
293	Martin	Whereas before it was like evil ghosts and spooks this is more a feeling of there's support there for you		Support from rest of group has endured	Still feels the support from the
					Feels more in control now

294	Int	Right ok			group	
295	Martin	And it's really weird how that came across and I wasn't expecting that and that's all down to Pip really	Didn't expect it to be this positive	Surprised by impact		Feels more in control now
296	Int	Mm mm				
297	Martin	So it just shows that in a lot of ways how much she thought about what I was trying to get across	Facilitators helped him to express himself	Empowering facilitation		Empowering process
298	Int	Yeah yeah				
299	Martin	Which answers another part of one of your questions before was who is doing it who's actually doing it (.) I think if had anybody doing it like some IT fella that just does that bit I don't think it would work if the person didn't have a feeling for or instinct about what you were trying to get across and I think that's what counts	Facilitators helped him to express himself Facilitation very important	Empowering facilitation Facilitation very important		Empowering process
300	Int	Yeah				
301	Martin	Having somebody that has a bit of knowledge of what you're going through	Empathy from facilitators was important	Supportive facilitation		Empowering process
302	Int	Yes yeah				
303	Martin	And what you want to portray really cos when you get it right and when you see it (.) it's very powerful for yourself	Finished stories had a powerful impact on him	Empowering stories		Empowering process
304	Int	You mean for you as err making it				
305	Martin	Yes because you get across exactly what you want and I suppose that's an art in itself erm (.) when they just see a script when you write about it but when you talk about it that it comes across and err you've got to have that instinct or intuition to know what I'm saying (.) you know like when I'm saying I want these ghosts to appear and disappear sort of thing that could be done very IT sort of somebody just saying do this do that				
306	Int	Yeah				
307	Martin	But when you're there and sort of Pip was there and she helped me to get the right sort of ghost not big nasty ghosts just impish type things which reflect how they affect me you know I could be in the middle of the Co-op and these ghosts would come and that's what I wanted for them to appear and just disappear until it gets to the end and they just disappear and they don't come back and that's it they just shrink and go down to nothing	Facilitation very important Finished stories had a powerful impact on him	Facilitation very important Empowering stories		Empowering process
308	Int	Mm mm				
309	Martin	But that's where they come from				
310	Int	Sorry				
311	Martin	You've got a lot of power and control even power comes into it	Helped him to feel in control and more powerful	Feels more in control and powerful		Feels more in control now
312	Int	Right				
313	Martin	All sorts of little bits come into the digital story (.) for me the most powerful image I suppose is the chains	Complex process Powerful imagery	Empowering stories		Empowering process
314	Int	Yeah				

315	Martin	The breaking of and all it is is a picture of chains but I know what it means to me	Powerful imagery	Empowering stories	Empowering process
316	Int	Very symbolic			
317	Martin	Yeah you see it was that very symbolic and all but to me it's a bit more than that mm in some ways i can look at it and think ha ha I know what it means really you don't (laughter)	Powerful imagery Helped him to feel more powerful	Empowering stories	Empowering process
318	Int	(laughter)			
319	Martin	You don't I know what it means to me really you don't you have some idea (.) like the artist putting a little trick in the corner and i think yeah that's me and that's what I got out of it	Helped him to feel in control and more powerful	Feels more in control and powerful	Feels more in control now
320	Int	Right good			
321	Martin	A power issue control issue	Helped him to feel in control and more powerful	Feels more in control and powerful	Feels more in control now
322	Int	Power and control do you want to end it there or have you got any last			
323	Martin	No I think that's about it but I'd certainly recommend it (.) to anybody done in the right situation	Would recommend it	Would recommend it	Feels more in control now
324	Int	Mmm I'll end it there			

### Ruth transcript analysis

Section			First order coding	Second order coding	Interview themes
1	Int	So perhaps a good place to start is how did you find the process overall but then again you've done it twice			
2	Ruth	In a word			
3	Int	No you can use			
4	Ruth	Very very helpful very healing	Healing	Healing Valuable	Positive impact
5	Int	Right			
6	Ruth	Erm (I) do you want me to expand			
7	Int	Erm yes			
8	Ruth	We'll err (1) there were like different bits of it the creative process I loved and I hadn't realised (.) how much I was going to love that (1) I think cos it was on computers and I thought I'd be a bit terrified	Loved creative process	Creativity Engagement	Self expression
9	Int	Right ok			
10	Ruth	But because there's someone around who just knows how to press that button and make it all come back			
11	Int	Yes oh right			

		I felt very relaxed and really found that I knew exactly what I wanted to do in that creative process	Felt relaxed Knew what she wanted to do Creative process	Creativity Agency	Self expression Agency
12	Ruth				
13	Int	Right			
14	Ruth	I found a sort of power and I err (1) would have liked to have made it even better but there wasn't the time	Found a sort of power	Power	Agency
15	Int	The story?			
16	Ruth	The whole thing you know I might have tweaked pictures again zoomed er I would have liked to have had (1) more I would liked to be more skilled so that access to doing all those things with the photos it was er I found it a very exciting experience really loved that tapped into an energy that I hadn't tapped into for ages	Found it very exciting Tapped into an energy she hadn't tapped into for ages	Power Mystery	Agency Positive Impact
17	Int	Right ok because you talk about (.) its so long since I saw your first story but you talk about (1) something with threads			
18	Ruth	Weaving			
19	Int	Yeah weaving			
20	Ruth	So it's about			
21	Int	And that seemed like a bit of life line to you			
22	Ruth	Well it was			
23	Int	Your creative energies into that rather than music I think			
24	Ruth	That's right I did it was like (1) it was lifeline (1) because I think I'd kind of detached myself from reality really I'd become so immersed in the drama of everything going on around me that I kind of lost my identity (.) it'd become my story rather than me being an individual and having	Weaving (creative process) as a lifeline Lost herself in the drama of caring / lost identity	Identity	Reframing past
25	Int	Right you'd been consumed by your role of caring for your two sons			
26	Ruth	I had been consumed I had yeah and I suppose that having the opportunity to have a voice about that have it out there was erm (1) well it helped me move on because I could let go of it and because I had this experience of getting in touch with my creativity it reminded me of me you know	Lost herself in caring role Having a voice helped her to move on – to let go of caring role / identity Getting in touch with creativity / reminded her of her old self	Change Identity Creativity	Reframing past Self expression Agency Positive impact
27	Int	Right ok			
28	Ruth	It was it was powerful like that and that was the healing for me I remember Pip said something about we haven't got a monopoly on suffering and that stuck with me because you know you hear everyone else's stories and realise that everybody's got a story (1) it's not about your story it's about how you deal with things with life and the experience showed me that I was missing out on	Powerful Healing Gained insight / perspective on own	Power Healing Insight	Agency Positive impact Reframing past

		living on <u>living</u> really	experience relative to other people / normality Sense of agency in situation Realisation she was missing out on living	Power Insight	
29	Int	Umm			
30	Ruth	Yeah umm (.) kind of just woke me up I would say it was like my first waking up and since them I do feel like I'm living differently	First experience of 'waking up' Now feels like she is living differently	Insight Change	Agency Positive impact
31	Int	Right ok (.) so obviously you did your first story about a year and half ago now			
32	Ruth	Or two I don't know now			
33	Int	A while ago and then the second story so			
34	Ruth	It was good	Good experience		Positive impact
35	Int	So how come you came to do the first story			
36	Ruth	Erm (.) because I was involved in the Sheffield Hallam User and Carers project and we were invited along I didn't really know what I was doing I just went along for a bit of adventure	No specific expectations of process – just wanted a bit of adventure		
37	Int	Right			
38	Ruth	Ern umm			
39	Int	Did you have like an introductory workshop like the one that I organised at the town hall			
40	Ruth	No			
41	Int	You spoke at that			
42	Ruth	We saw err we saw (I) there was a carers and users conference and Julie Coleman was there and she showed her story and we did have that and we were told to have an idea of what we wanted to write a story on and I really had an idea that I was just going to tell the whole world you know my story and the anger and it was there and what I as I say in the thing the second I was amazed what story came out it wasn't what I expected at all but it was because of that being involved with everyone else and sort of listening that we were given you know no one had an agenda you didn't feel like you had to (.) I don't know how it happened (.) I don't know but that just wasn't the story that was going to come out	Had a clear idea of her first story prior to workshop Wanted to tell the whole world about her anger Actual story that came out amazed her – not expected Effect of being involved with everyone else and listening to their story No one had an agenda (freedom?)	Expression  Insight Power Creativity Mystery	Self expression  Agency Reframing past Self expression Agency

					Doesn't know how her story came about.		
43	Int	No					
44	Ruth	It was almost like I had no control			It was almost like she had no control of the story	Mystery	Reframing past
45	Int	Right					
46	Ruth	Some natural					
47	Int	Some force					
48	Ruth	Organic force yes			Natural force working through her	Power	Agency
49	Int	Right ok umm yeah					
50	Ruth	Mmm					
51	Int	Well I guess I can see how that happens in some sense because you've got (1) not thinking about you in particular but a lot of people talk about you know (1) Tim was talking about like you know opening a suitcase you know with all the past trauma about his accident like he'd kind of stuffed everything all and locked them away and over the course of the workshop he'd opened it and going through and pulling things out and err making sense of them and I think maybe there's err once you've opened that suitcase to use that analogy then then you know that can be powerful and you often don't have the power of what what's					
52	Ruth	Of what's in the suitcase					
53	Int	Of what comes out and how it's going to affect you					
54	Ruth	Yeah yes					
55	Int	But yours sounds different					
56	Ruth	Umm of course because I'm so special (laughter)					
57	Int	(Laughter)					
58	Ruth	I think what came out the suitcase was erm (1) the the urge to be creative and the missing I mean the weaving's about that so it was kind of connected that I have always been very very creative and that had been I'd been isolated from it			Urge to be creative	Creativity	Self expression
59	Int	Umm umm (1) so have you then been able to more creative in your life between the two stories and subsequently					
60	Ruth	I think I've erm not in a sort of tangible way that I'm making lots of things					
61	Int	Right					
62	Ruth	Not in that way but I feel like erm I live (1) I live in the moment			Living in the moment Being creative	Creativity	Self expression
63	Int	Ok					
64	Ruth	Much more and that feels creative			Being creative	Creativity	Self expression
65	Int	Right so that's about (.) is that about you're being able to creatively respond on moment to moment basis			Creatively responding in the moment		
66	Ruth	Yes I think so					
67	Int	Rather than on the basis of your history					

68	Ruth	I think that's a good way of putting it (.) I couldn't put it any better yeah				
69	Int	Ok				
70	Ruth	Life whereas I was going around and not seeing stuff now I am I'm excited like I was excited about being creative now I'm more excited about well its reality isn't		Excited about life Creativity Excited about reality / living	Insight Creativity Change	Positive impact
71	Int	Right ok about life in general (1) so erm (1) and I'm wondering whether some of that's about you kinda being able to (1) kind of err come to terms with some things and deal with them so that they're not controlling you		Coming to terms with things Regaining control of her life	Change Power	Positive impact
72	Ruth	Yeah yeah				
73	Int	So that kinda frees you up		Feeling free	Creativity	Positive impact
74	Ruth	Absolutely				
75	Int	To err				
76	Ruth	Yeah				
77	Int	To live more in the moment				
78	Ruth	Yeah and err because you know hearing other people's stories you realise that you can let a story control you for the rest of your life or you can (1) get some sort of perspective I suppose I don't know how to put it into words but that it's not all consuming and that you can actually live as well		Getting perspective Having more control over your life	Insight Power	Reframing past Agency
79	Int	Umm umm				
80	Ruth	But I suppose that I as carers we rarely ever get the chance to tell our story there's hundreds of opportunity to tell their story and it's a necessity and so and perhaps that's one of the reasons why you lose touch with yourself as well		Rarely get to tell your story as a carer Lose touch with yourself	Identity	Reframing past
81	Int	Right				
82	Ruth	Because you become this (.) I had become a voice for these people who couldn't communicate		Telling somebody else's story	Identity	Reframing past
83	Int	Yeah yeah				
84	Ruth	So this experience was about me and that was err that was new		Novelty of focussing on herself	Identity	Agency
85	Int	Umm erm (2) so how did you sort of feel during the process				
86	Ruth	Umm (2) in the first one there was a sort of frustration at the start because I couldn't quite get my groove and I wrote a story but it just didn't feel right and then I err (1) and I felt a bit detached from it and interesting because I'd written in the erm it was all 'I' (.) you know cos they say do it all in first person		Initial feelings of frustration and detachment	Change	
87	Int	Right				
88	Ruth	And then I can remember sitting there thinking ah I want to tell this like a fairy tale and putting it in that tense and then I cried		Light bulb moment Crying	Creativity Expression Insight Emotional	Reframing past Self expression
89	Int	Right right				

		Crying	Emotional Expression	
90	Ruth	As soon as I remember just sobbing when I read it thru' because it was just I don't know why it made a difference but it did		
91	Int	Hmm		
92	Ruth	Maybe it spoke to the child in me		
93	Int	Maybe it did or may it erm I guess I mean you kind of described two things happening there one was changing from first to third person and the other one is using the fairy tale language and in a fairy tale things are exaggerated and you kind of polarise things and so the difficult person in your life becomes the wicked witch or the evil stepmother or goblin and I guess it kind of gives you more free expression		
94	Ruth	Maybe		
95	Int	Almost gives you a licence to express something which maybe you don't get to express (.) I'm speculating		
96	Ruth	It definitely (.) I can remember sitting there and Tony coming over I was all I did was just change just a few little bits not that much of change it was almost like I was looking at myself	Insight	Reframing past
97	Int	Well yes yeah the third person		
98	Ruth	Gave me a bit of space I remember that and I just remember flying with it and being absolutely completely absorbed completely absorbed and so frustrated sometimes that I couldn't get the help when I needed the help cos I wanted to get this just so (.) absolutely focussed on it (laughter) time just (stood) and it's incredible because I hadn't had that experience for so long that I was that absorbed so enjoyable so <u>so</u> enjoyable real life that ahh lovely yeah and then you know and not really all aware of anyone else around cos so focussed	Insight Change Power Creativity	Self expression Positive impact
99	Int	Right (laughter)		
100	Ruth	But of course at the end when you see everybody's story that was a erm that was very moving because you really have been thru' the journey with them from beginning to the end that was err I felt enormously privileged to hear these people to hear their stories and I kind of be part of that process that they had (1) I'm not sure that I was terribly supportive to people in the first one I was more so in the second one	Emotional Support	Positive impact
101	Int	Right ok		
102	Ruth	But eh yeah yes I think I was err caught into it all		
103	Int	Umm how do you think hearing other people's stories affected your story? Because presumably at the beginning you sit round in a story circle and you won't have the story fully formed but you'll talk about your ideas for a story don't you		
104	Ruth	I don't know I can't think how it affected my story I know it affected me this revelation of everyone having stories erm ah no (1) how I wrote the story? How did it affect the way I wrote the story?	Insight	Reframing past
105	Int	Well I just thinking that you came with a story that you wanted to write and there was a lot of anger in it		
106	Ruth	Yeah		
107	Int	And somewhere in the process the story you were going to write changed and I'm just wondering whether you can kind of pinpoint		

108	Ruth	I don't know what that was about maybe I felt that (2)			
109	Int	I wonder whether there's something about just picking up on what you've said about how during the process you feel you can live more in the moment now and wondering whether something happened because obviously the story is historical and any story is and whether there is something about not wanting to dwell in the past and being in the present that you wanted to reflect in your story I mean I don't know in all these things not yours specifically but a lot is about it certainly came through how much power our past has on our present so for example Ian uses the term breaking the chains talks about empowerment but he likes the term breaking the chains and yes his history is still the same about having been abused as a child but it no longer has the power to control him			
110	Ruth	That's right yeah			
111	Int	And I think there's kind of element of that in everybody's story			
112	Ruth	I would say that with mine I mean I use the word healing which is the same I don't break my chains yeah it does when you can name it when you can get it out there and it's really listened to	Healing Naming it Getting it out there Being listened to	Healing Expression Support	Reframing past
113	Int	Yeah			
114	Ruth	Its cathar cathartic whatever that word is	Cathartic	Expression Change	
115	Int	It is cathartic that's the word (laughter)			
116	Ruth	Yes it is umm			
117	Int	And sharing your story as well			
118	Ruth	Like if you've got monsters and you name them and they just become smaller they just get into perspective don't they that's how it felt for me	Naming a monster Taking its power away Having a perspective	Expression Emotion Power Insight	Reframing past Positive impact Self expression Agency
119	Int	So it's about kind of almost naming your demons or monsters or something			
120	Ruth	Yeah (2) very soothing	Very soothing	Healing	Positive impact
121	Int	Umm had you tried other approaches to tame your demons			
122	Ruth	I'd had a lot of therapy loads and loads of therapy	Had lots of therapy before		
123	Int	Right			
124	Ruth	Therapy queen so yeah yeah			
125	Int	Right			
126	Ruth	And I think and its very helpful but this was it was definitely about self expression for me that's	Self expression important	Expression	Self expression
127	Int	Ok right yeah			
128	Ruth	Just so because it came from me and I got in touch with me in a way that I hadn't erm being able to write and yeah it really it came from my soul my heart I meant I've had gestalt therapy where you do (.) do lots of creative (.) can do lots of creative things but not in as a concentrated powerful	Getting in touch with her soul, heart, self Concentrated powerful	Insight Expression Emotion	Reframing past Positive impact Self expression

		way			Identity Power	Agency
129	Int	No I mean I suppose in terms of the practicalities your therapy might be an hour or so				
130	Ruth	Exactly				
131	Int	Whereas this is you know it is three 8 hours days or whatever it is				
132	Ruth	Yeah and then you go home thinking about it as well ooh I'll do this (laughter) I'm a frustrated film maker		Intense 3 day process	Engagement	
133	Int	Right ok (laughter)				
134	Ruth	Maybe and then afterwards I was really exhausted for a long long while weeks yeah it took its toll on me the first on more than the second one the second one was like for me (3) it was like finishing it off like completing it like it didn't have the same intense hold on me as the first one but		Exhausting process First one more powerful than second one	Power Emotion	Self expression Agency
135	Int	During the process you mean				
136	Ruth	I think I was fairly intense but I was more aware of everyone else I can remember that I had time to sit by people and things		Second one less intense, more aware of others		
137	Int	Right				
138	Ruth	It was maybe cos it's your second one and you've gone through that first bit of the process it felt very satisfying it's like you've gone three quarters way round the circle and you got that little bit needed to be done		Second one felt like completing a circle	Expression	Self expression
139	Int	Right				
140	Ruth	And uhh ahh glad that's done (.) good feeling		Feeling satisfied at the end	Change	Agency
141	Int	So you're saying you don't feel any desire to make another one?				
142	Ruth	Ooh ahh hundreds yeah yeah		Wants to make hundreds more	Valuable	Positive impact
143	Int	Ok right				
144	Ruth	I'd like to get the software really and umm				
145	Int	Ok ok				
146	Ruth	But erm (2) I don't know whether they'd ever be as intense as that first one		Subsequent stories likely to be less intense	Change	Agency
147	Int	Well life's kind of like that isn't it and how's it kinda affected your life in general say for example with you know the rest of the family your kids?				
148	Ruth	The kids (3)				
149	Int	Because presumable you're still caring for your autistic kids				
150	Ruth	Yeah ahh				
151	Int	I guess they're older				
152	Ruth	Well I don't I think it's my attitude to life that's different in that way and probably better to be around erm (1) I don't feel the enormity of responsibility that I did		Attitude to life has changed Doesn't feel enormity of responsibility that she did before	Change Insight	Agency Reframing past

153	Int	Right							
154	Ruth	I don't feel as alone with it yeah erm I feel (1) yeah (1) you know it's just life is tough and that's how it is life can be crap (.) deal with it sort of thing and I wasn't like that at all I was very much aahh poor me this dreadful situation oohh you know it made me feel special I think		Doesn't feel as alone with it Healthier perspective on life in general – life is tough – deal with it rather than poor me	Support Insight	Reframing past Agency			
155	Int	Right right							
156	Ruth	Yeah but I feel liberated from that I feel liberated from the drama of it		Felt liberated from drama	Change	Reframing past			
157	Int	Right ok							
158	Ruth	Erm erm yeah and I'm better at looking after myself I'm better at being more in touch with what I need what I really need to do for me		Better at looking after herself More in touch with what she needs	Change Insight	Positive impact			
159	Int	Umm umm							
160	Ruth	That might just be sleeping lots erm have more sense of that than I did							
161	Int	Right ok so maybe part of you hearing your own story in the three day session maybe helped you to listen to your own story on more regular basis		More able to listen to own story on day to day basis	Insight	Agency			
162	Ruth	Yeah							
163	Int	Rather than as a carer when you were saying you were constantly telling other people's stories for them		Stronger identification with self as a person in own right rather than as a carer	Identity				
164	Ruth	Yeah so that's err what came into my head then there is more of I'm more objective about everything I don't know whether objective is the right word whereas I felt all consumed I have more there's I'm more separate because I've got more of an identity or feel that I've more of an identity yeah I can sort of (.) not just react to it all (.) all the time		Able to be more objective Feeling less consumed by life Stronger sense of identity Not just reacting	Change Identity Agency	Agency Positive impact			
165	Int	Yeah you can step back							
166	Ruth	Yeah							
167	Int	And be more considered make a more considered response (.) so has it changed your views about the future at all?		Able to make a more considered response	Agency	Agency Positive impact			
168	Ruth	Umm err I don't think much about the future							
169	Int	Busy living in the present		Focus on present rather than worrying about the future	Insight	Agency Positive impact			
170	Ruth	We'll try to really do							

171	Int	Umm						
172	Ruth	There's no point because I have no idea where these kids 'll take us there is just no point dwelling on it and we do a day at a time			Able to see unhelpful habits like worrying about the future	Insight		Agency Positive impact
173	Int	Right						
174	Ruth	Very much umm but I used to worry about the future all the time and			Used to worry about the future	Change		Agency Positive impact
175	Int	Ok so						
176	Ruth	And I used to control it you try and sort things out like this and now I don't I don't do that			No longer tries to control the future	Change		Agency Positive impact
177	Int	Right do you think maybe you've kind of just got more err I'm trying to think of the word (2) words confidence and kind of faith or trust ( inaudible)						
178	Ruth	Umm umm						
179	Int	Less worrying and needing to plan kind of almost where you trust or are confident that things will be ok						
180	Ruth	Be alright yeah I think trust yeah (1) yes I'm a lot more (2) at ease yeah			More at ease Can trust that the future will be ok	Change Insight		Positive impact
181	Int	Umm (2) is there anything else that you can think of from either the process or how you've been subsequently?						
182	Ruth	I don't want to show them any I don't want to stand up and have people look at them with me there anymore			Doesn't want to show stories to students anymore	Change		
183	Int	Right you've done that						
184	Ruth	And I don't want to do that anymore						
185	Int	Ok ok						
186	Ruth	And it felt I felt quite uncomfortable			Felt uncomfortable showing her story to students	Emotional		
187	Int	Right						
188	Ruth	Like I was						
189	Int	So were you doing that with students here						
190	Ruth	Yeah yeah almost like I was undressing						
191	Int	Right			Felt exposed	Vulnerable		
192	Ruth	Erm happy for other people to see it but I don't want to be around			Happy for other people to see her story but doesn't want to be present	Change		
193	Int	But not with you there						
194	Ruth	It's very sort of precious and personal			Story is precious and personal	Valuable		

195	Int	It is it is				
196	Ruth	Umm erm oh what did you say?				
197	Int	Well I was just wondering whether there was anything else really (3) I mean one of the things which comes out or may come out with people is the fact that because you've kind of shared your story once or may have opened up to other people in this situation it then may make it easier for you to share your story or share your thoughts in future because you've been able to do it in a in an environment if you like where people have listened to you				
198	Ruth	Umm				
199	Int	They have given the time so it kind of				
200	Ruth	Umm I think I do the other way don't I (.) you know in that erm I don't need to	Doesn't need to share story	Change		
201	Int	Ok				
202	Ruth	I don't need to do that anymore in the same you know erm				
203	Int	Ok				
204	Ruth	I don't particularly want people to be (2) get loads of details about it and erm				
205	Int	I guess there's almost kind of two things here there's well there's lots of things but in some sense there could be your story as a carer				
206	Ruth	Umm				
207	Int	Then there's also you the other side of you so in some ways you could be sort of saying well I don't feel that well this is almost what I feel you were saying correct me if I'm wrong but that you don't need to tell everybody that you are a carer and life's a big drama	Doesn't need to retell story of being a carer and life being a drama anymore	Change Identity		
208	Ruth	Yeah				
209	Int	But equally there's other bits to you that you feel happier to share because that	Happy to share other bits of her life, self	Support		
210	Ruth	Yeah yeah				
211	Int	Part of you has				
212	Ruth	Come alive yeah it is it's like that was my identity and all anyone talked to me about so now there is more for me to (.) more story about me	More sense of self an person independent of being a carer	Identity	Agency	
213	Int	Umm umm				
214	Ruth	Yeah that's true				
215	Int	So you think that is (inaudible) on a day to day basis				
216	Ruth	I think and it's a process as well it's growth as well like I don't think that you do these stories and over night I think its err it's been like a gradual	Gradual process of change	Change	Positive impact	
217	Int	Yeah				
218	Ruth	Awakening and there's other stuff that's going on in my life that's contributed to it but I do believe that it sort of sort of gave little start	Gradual awakening Story as a catalyst Other factors important	Insight Power	Positive impact	
219	Int	Good				
220	Ruth	Lovely to around facilitators that are very (3) in tune with you and sort of unhurried and patient	Patient respectful	Support		

		and very respectful (.) it was very helpful to have that sort of energy around erm I think it kind of allowed me to go further than I would have done yeah (3) seems a long while ago though Mark I must say I feel like I not in touch with it	facilitation was very important allowed her to go further	Valuable
221	Int	Ok yeah I guess it is a while umm (1) but it obviously still has an effect doesn't it might be harder to recall but I suppose maybe the fact that you've done two stories is kinda maybe potentially all the experiences can blur into one a bit		
222	Ruth	They do seem to yeah		
223	Int	So I think		
224	Ruth	That'll do		
225	Int	That's covered everything that I wanted was there anything else?		
226	Ruth	Can't think of anything Mark		
227	Int	Ok we'll end it there		
228	Ruth	Ping		

### Tina transcript analysis

Section		First order coding	Second order coding	Interview themes
1	Int	So do you want to say a bit about how you found the process overall? Perhaps just focussing on the three day workshops and any preparation you did.		
2	Tina	Ok well (.) it was (.) err the group work working in the group was quite an extraordinary experience really and the way people opened up umm so it became a support group I suppose	Extraordinary People very open Support group	Supportive context
3	Int	Right yes		
4	Tina	And umm (3) very emotional (upset)	Very emotional	Very emotional Difficulty reflecting
5	Int	Mm mm		
6	Tina	I mean other people's experiences really cut me up	Other people's stories were very upsetting	Powerful upsetting stories Difficulty reflecting
7	Int	Mm mm		
8	Tina	And umm I found it very difficult to talk about my experience (.) at all and umm and so what I and I had masses of photographs (.) that I could use and err and they kept on err trying to make me talk about myself which I could not do	Found it very difficult to talk about her experience	Difficulty talking about self Difficulty reflecting
9	Int	Right		
10	Tina	So I could talk about Ben I could talk about the family I could talk about other people I could talk about psychiatrists I could talk about the system	Could talk about Ben, family, MH services etc	Willing to talk about others, MH services Wanting to educate others
11	Int	Mmm yes		
12	Tina	But what I could not do was talk about myself	Couldn't talk about self	Difficulty talking Difficulty



25	Int	Mm		destruction		
26	Tina	He was obviously not well even then to be quite honest you know where you see him smiling with a girlfriend at the beginning	Reflecting on Ben's loss of self, illness ??	Talking about Ben	Wanting to educate others	
27	Int	Ok yes				
28	Tina	Cos he'd sort of dropped out of things but you can see he is lively intelligent and sensitive you can see that in his eyes can't you				
29	Int	Mm yes				
30	Tina	He was always very thoughtful and sensitive to other people and there's something about psychotic episodes which of course (.) shuts that off erm and the real thing about the psychotic episodes with Ben and I know it's different for different people is that he goes into (.) a nightmare world where he is terrified terrified and so erm (.) some of the violence I realised eventually was of course you know when he's sitting brooding whatever and you go into the room (inaudible) he doesn't see you he sees some monster and so there's a lot of strategies for dealing with someone when they're not well you know I think there's lots of sheets of information about it now	Reflecting on Ben's illness and how it has affected him	Talking about Ben	Wanting to educate others	
31	Int	Hmm hmm				
32	Tina	And when I was doing those courses for students I used to sort of put all this information (laughter) of you know never trying to (.) bully or make somebody do something when they're not well sit down and give them support (.) and then they might tell you what's going on so it's that idea of spreading understanding				
33	Int	Right ok				
34	Tina	But empathy I think as well so that people get (.) even when they seem to be behaving so badly some sort of insight into the horrors that they are going through perhaps	Wanting people to have insight in mental illness	Wanted people to learn from story	Wanting to educate others	
35	Int	Mm mm				
36	Tina	I think is what I wanted to come across	Wanted stories to convey horror of psychosis	Wanted people to learn from story	Wanting to educate others	
37	Int	Right ok (.) so it was about trying to (.) share your experience				
38	Tina	Yes yes				
39	Int	Broaden understanding				
40	Tina	Yes yes				
41	Int	Perhaps in a way that you'd not experienced when you were going through it over the last 20 years	Wanting people to have insight in mental illness	Wanted people to learn from story	Wanting to educate others	
42	Tina	Yes that's right (.) and I mean and I suppose also to to possibly what we all want to do is spread a much wider understanding in society at large cos you know with the closing up of all the big hospitals and care in the community the main reason is that people didn't have any understanding you know and you still hear these horrible stories of people who are not well and they go to try and get help or they're sent out into the community too soon and erm (.) I feel very sad about that there are people who then because of that they you know you occasionally hear someone goes out and they (.) kill somebody so that family's lost a person cos they've been murdered and then the person who did it is sort of locked up in Rampton or somewhere for life whereas if they had been	Reflecting that MH Services have failed many people and society at large	Talk about MH services		

43	Int	kept in hospital for another week or two or given a bit more support (.) it <u>might</u> have been avoided it might not but you never know do you? Mmm so that's all a bit scary I think mmm I don't think Ben was really (.) like that but I did meet a lot of people who were like that and err there were a lot of incidences of taking trying to get him back into hospital or friends coming round here clearly not well and Ben taking them to hospital and they were just being turned away			
44	Tina	Right Now I gather that the latest thing is that certainly within this area they do have information on computers in the hospital or they've got some sort of list about people with mental illness who are being looked after in this area so if Ben or any of his contacts had turned up in the local hospital they look up his name and see he's with Dr so and so or he's on this medication or we'll contact the psychiatrist	Reflecting on improvements in services		
45	Int	Right yes			
46	Tina	However it's not on the main computer thing and this new national health thing which is costing billions none of it's going to be on that so students like Ben sorry patients whatever you want to call them he would just take off and go down to London or something and there'd be no information there no support so (.) when people are like that and they want to get off their section and they just bugger off the system (.) breaks down	Reflecting problems with MH services	Talk about MH services	Wanting to educate others
47	Int	Mmm mmm yes			
48	Tina	So what can you do (laughter) erm so there's that but I do think the whole support system has improved enormously so I am very glad about that but there's still an awful lot more to be done and I think the other thing I wanted to raise in that little CD was that in spite of people behaving badly being very ill it doesn't mean that they're unintelligent or their cruel or they're lacking in sensitivity or they're lacking in awareness and quite often the medication dampens them down so they're (.) stomping around like zombies	Reflecting on improvements in services But still wanting to improve MH services and broaden understanding of mental illness	Talk about MH services	Wanting to educate others
49	Int	Mmm mmm			
50	Tina	But they are even if they can't talk very well medication sometimes seems to fur up the tongue they are aware of what's going on a lot of the time (.) because they don't (.) retaliate in some way they're treated a bit like backward children sometimes			
51	Int	Mmm mmm			
52	Tina	Erm anyway in Whitely Wood you never knew who was a nurse who was a patient who was on section cos there was no way of stopping people disappearing I mean it was an absolute dead loss I mean he'd been some years ago he went to the new place at Nether Edge what was it called Michael Carlisle centre and that was very good I thought	Reflecting problems with MH services Reflecting on improvements in services	Talk about MH services	Wanting to educate others
53	Int	Ok ok yeah			
54	Tina	He was on the first floor people couldn't get in without (inaudible) he'd gone off somewhere and was terribly ill and the police (.) brought him back the police were lovely to him in that instance they gave him food cos he hadn't had anything to eat cos he'd been on the run for days hiding you know sleeping on the beach god knows where they rolled cigarettes for him and gave him			

55	Int	sandwiches and brought him back and he went into Michael Carlisle and they gave him a little room and he was in that state of trauma and they were so good to him there				
56	Tina	Mm mm So that somebody would go in and spend time with him and try and comfort him the trouble is the Sheffield Outreach Team then had a different psychiatrist whose name I can't recall who was useless and his idea was once Ben was back he disagreed with people being in hospital and said he should come home although the doctors in the hospital disagreed wouldn't listen wouldn't listen to me and he was just beginning to go and sit in the canteen and if someone would come up he'd give them a cigarette but he was still at the stage of terror of people he wouldn't talk and this bloody psychiatrist sent him home erm fortunately other people had complained about him and he left and we've now got Chris Wallbridge whose lovely he's a really good bloke but Ben has never actually recovered that erm he's terrified of mixing with people because of the paranoia so he'll think people are looking at him however in the last couple of years that's eased up and what he does now he goes off to coffee bars he sits by himself	Reflecting problems with MH services Not being listened to in past Reflecting on improvements in services Improvements in Ben's MH health	Talk about MH services Lack of support in the past Talk about Ben	Wanting to educate others Helped her to reflect	
57	Int	Oh right ok				
58	Tina	Which is such a big breakthrough but I mean he's nearly 50 so I don't know whether it's the medication or that the illness is loosening its grip some writing suggests that as people get older or whether it's that the SORT team has been so marvellous because they have turned my life round	Gratitude to SORT team	Support from SORT	Wanting to educate others	
59	Int	Right good				
60	Tina	And erm my big worry is that I know Ted is retiring next year and Sheila who used to be with Ben in Whitley Woods and she's one of the visitors who takes him out it took him years to adjust to and open up to the people on the SORT team so I'm very frightened about the prospect of those two people leaving because someone else coming in could easily see that Ben is not going to kill anyone he's not likely to go on the rampage when he's ill he just shuts himself up and I'm frightened of him being taken off their list you know	Frightened of Ben being discharged from SORT team	Fear about the future	Difficulty reflecting	
61	Int	Mm mm				
62	Tina	Because without their visits he would be leading the life of a monk and you can tell when sometimes people have been off sick and he's not had all the visits he starts having weird thoughts and going a bit weird but because he doesn't go round threatening people people think he's alright				
63	Int	Mm mm yeah				
64	Tina	So that's all that so the experience of doing all that cos as you can see it's very difficult to focus on me because you this is what Pip and Tony kept on wanting me to talk about to focus on me and I really can't see the point in talking about me I mean I've got wonderful support from that ( ) it was really like a support team and Pip and Tony I would like to feel will be my friends for life after that because they were marvellous and they were so sensitive and supportive and they do seem to have some insight into people's grief you know very supportive and gentle about that ( ) what I have found since doing it I do have bouts of depression because I find it hard to keep it all out of my mind you know sometimes it just goes round and round and round	Acknowledgement of her difficulty focussing on her self Can't see the point in talking about herself Valued supportive Very supportive facilitation Has bouts of depression Suffers from rumination	Difficulty talking about herself Supportive process Still coming to terms with past	Difficulty reflecting Supportive context	
65	Int	Right				

66	Tina	All the bad things that have gone wrong in my life (.) before we knew Ben was ill you know to do with his father and family (.) coping (.) and I think an awful lot of Ben's illness was to do with all those years of terrible stress erm and he being the oldest boy trying to carry the can and I do think (1) I've never really discussed it with him except when he was little (.) I think he tried to take on the burden as a small child of being the man in the family and feeling a lot of it was his fault	Possible causes of Ben's illness	Talk about Ben	Wanting to educate others
67	Int	Right ok			
68	Tina	And that's not uncommon is it and so one of the reasons it goes round and round and round is having reached a stage where I can't unpick the past I've got to move forward what this did was make you go back into the past	Has unpicked the past Wants to move forward Process made her go back	Still coming to terms with past	Difficulty reflecting
69	Int	Sure yeah			
70	Tina	And erm as I say there is still all that stuff about you know supposing we had done something different supposing I had handled it differently and erm and given him more support if only I had known about what mental illness is you know	Guilt, responsibility for Ben's illness	Talk about Ben Still coming to terms with past	Helped her to reflect Difficulty reflecting
71	Int	Yeah			
72	Tina	Which I didn't and I perhaps treated him as a naughty badly behaved adolescent sometimes when really he needed support you know	Guilt, responsibility for Ben's illness	Talk about Ben Still coming to terms with past	Helped her to reflect Difficulty reflecting
73	Int	Umm yes I can recall a psychiatrist at one of our carers events saying how difficult it is to tell the difference between difficult behaviour and mental health problems in adolescents			
74	Tina	But there is also the other (.) new research is suggesting that (.) all those ideas that it's in the genes or it's a difficult birth or someone is born with a vulnerability there is also the idea that nurture upbringing you know if you have enough stress erm I think I'm basically a very optimistic outgoing determined person but I have patches in my life when I've been really suicidal	Reflecting on past	Reflecting on past	Helped her to reflect
75	Int	Right			
76	Tina	Erm in other words if things had not gone so badly wrong I would never have had those patches but really what I'm saying with Ben is that ok he was quite a hypersensitive emotional child but he was having a difficult childhood	Reflecting on past	Reflecting on past	Helped her to reflect
77	Int	Yeah			
78	Tina	Erm and part of me thinks if he'd had a more secure family background perhaps if I had more understanding he might have coped better because he did cope for a long time erm and in the end I made him pull his CV together and go for interviews and my attitude was the reason the your depressed is because you haven't got a girlfriend you haven't got any money you haven't got a job so go out and get a job and umm er and I pushed him out and so he got a good job and he went off to Grimsby and within six months he had his first big psychotic episode now he had been doing all sorts of voluntary work and he wanted to stay in Sheffield because he thought there would be job coming up my attitude was get a job now and you'll have a better chance of picking up the local job but maybe I should have listened to him because he actually knew what he could and couldn't cope with	Guilt, responsibility for Ben's illness	Talk about Ben Still coming to terms with past	Wanting to educate others Difficulty reflecting
79	Int	Well (.) yes (.) maybe but a lot of people develop psychosis even if they've been brought up in a			

80	Tina	normal well functioning family				
81	Int	Yes yes Mm I guess what's of interest in this context is the extent to which doing the digital story looking at the photos starting to talk about it with other people who've been through similar experience				
82	Tina	Yes yes				
83	Int	Whether that helped you to come to terms with it more				
84	Tina	I wish I'd been able to do it years ago actually because then it would have been absolutely marvellous	Regrets not doing it earlier Marvellous process	Positive impact	Helped her to reflect	
85	Int	Yes				
86	Tina	I think I'm so buttoned up now in a way but what's interesting I've never shown it to Ben I don't think I could I don't think it would help Ben to see it I think it could (.) no	Not shown to Ben	Finds it difficult to be open	Difficulty reflecting	
87	Int	Right				
88	Tina	But I have shown it to his siblings and erm (.) his youngest brother who really used to look up to him and was really shaken when he became ill and physically and emotionally they were both so alike he really thought he was going to develop it	Shown it to family	Shown it to family	Helped her to reflect	
89	Int	Mm mm				
90	Tina	He was shit scared he was going to follow the same path anyway he's in his early 40s now and he's alright but when I showed him the thing ahh				
91	Int	Mm mm well it is a very moving story				
92	Tina	So it was really (.) really powerful for him (.) I think it was powerful for the others as well but they're a bit like me they've sort of learnt to button up (laughter)	Powerful effect on family	Shared with family Powerful effect on family	Helped her to reflect Difficulty reflecting	
93	Int	Mm mm yeah so you say that you've kind of almost relived the experience and the fact that you say you wish you'd done it years ago suggests that it's beneficial				
94	Tina	Very beneficial yes	Very beneficial process	Positive impact	Helped her to reflect	
95	Int	But also hints of the fact that it's obviously a very difficult experience then but I'm wondering whether there's a sense of you've almost sort of and can't seem to shut it again				
96	Tina	I think there is that element yes I think that's what's so disturbing about it really (.) I do remember talking to Tony and I made a joke about the suitcase and he said you'll find that one of these days you're going to have open that suitcase (laughter) but erm I don't know to what purpose we just joked and moved on but erm	Opened Pandora's box	Difficult for her to look back	Difficulty reflecting	
97	Int	It's interesting just going back to what's in some of the literature on writing about traumatic experiences erm that people who'd written about traumatic experiences found it emotionally upsetting immediately after the writing exercise but their health over the longer term was generally better than the control group who'd written about unemotional things				
98	Tina	Yes it's interesting it's a bit like a boiling kettle just letting some of the steam out	Like letting off steam			
99	Int	Yes yeah the literature also suggests that keeping secrets causes psychological stress which effects the body in subtle ways which we may not notice and so perhaps opening that suitcase letting out				

100	Tina	some of the stuff particularly in a supportive environment has been shown to be beneficial Well one of the other outcomes of this has been that Lyn and I just see each other once in while	Still sees Lyn Support	Benefitting from support Positive impact	Supportive context Helped her to reflect
101	Int	Oh right ok			
102	Tina	And we don't need to refer to this we just give each other a big long hug			
103	Int	Right ok			
104	Tina	And we're both women who are living on our own and that physical thing is actually (.) because of course when we were making the films apart from all the grief there was lots of hugging and so which is probably very therapeutic (laughter)	Support from group was very therapeutic	Supportive group	Supportive context
105	Int	Yes yeah			
106	Tina	Erm yes I'm sure that does us good every time we see each other we have a big hug which probably makes us feel a bit better (laughter)	Support from Lyn	Benefitting from support	Supportive context
107	Int	But I guess one of the other things that you talked about at the beginning was well you feel part of support group (.) erm and obviously you've done this with 7 other people erm with different experiences			
108	Tina	We all met up at the Riverside reunion thing but apart from that we've not actually got together again except Lyn and I have			
109	Int	Umm yes			
110	Tina	Although we did intend to we just somehow couldn't get ourselves organised (laughter)	Did intend to meet up with rest of group but never happened		
111	Int	Laughter			
112	Tina	Well are there some other questions?			
113	Int	I do have some other pointers but what else did you note down?			
114	Tina	I can't remember (2) no you ask me some more questions			
115	Int	Ok (1) so how has it impacted on your life in general? (1) before and after is there anything different about how you see Ben or how you see yourself? Or your ability to perhaps share your stories or your emotions and experiences with other people			
116	Tina	Well I showed the CD to Ted whose been looking after us and often we just have a little chat on the phone but Ted came round to see me and so I showed him that and I think he was (.) quite (1) didn't say anything very much you see he's never seen Ben before he was puffed up and bloated you know and to see the young man and I think that's the other thing for people to realise what Ben was like before the illness took over (.) because the drugs do change the physical shape of people enormously don't they	Shown story to Ted in SORT team	Helped her to share her story	Helped her to reflect
117	Int	Yeah they do they do			
118	Tina	And also of course they shut down parts of the brain in a way you know they sort of shut off a lot of creativity and so on (.) certainly with the older drugs with their side effects (.) Ben always had horrible side effects so he'd didn't get on (.) I remember saying to one psychiatrist I feel Ben is	Reflecting on Ben's illness Still coming to terms	Talk about Ben Still coming to terms with past	Wanting to educate others Difficulty

		being used as a guinea pig look every drug in the book has been used on him over the years all to no effect at all surely now he could be candidate for Clozapine and he looked through Ben's file and he agreed cause in those days it was quite difficult to get on it because of the cost or its danger (1) now Ben's been on it for a few years maybe 5 years and seems to be stable on it	with Ben's illness	reflecting
119	Int	So it has helped you to share your story a bit		
120	Tina	Oh yes and I think (1) that was one of the few times I've never really been able to share it so that was (.) very good (.) I thought it was good for Ted to see that and I suppose that's the other thing about psychiatrists having some insight by talking to family about what a person's like before they lose touch with reality as we see it because (1) it's not just about treating the illness is it (.) it's about treating the person their personality who they are (1) so it's that listening thing again isn't it	Has helped her to share her story Not been able to share it before	Helped her to reflect
121	Int	Mm mm		
122	Tina	Some of the stories that some people told in that group were very distressing (.) talking about difficulties with their relationships depression other things (.) one of the things that I began to realise with this going round and round and round in my mind and some of the stuff I have written recently is that I was probably suffering a kind of mental abuse in my marriage which you know I got married very young what we used to call a shot gun wedding mm you are totally as a woman disempowered erm and something I'd not really taken on before not even thought about	Other stories distressing Looking back now feels she may have suffered from mental abuse in marriage	Difficulty reflecting
123	Int	Right		
124	Tina	Cos the idea was then that you made your bed and now you can bloody well lie on it you know and err (laughter) so (1) that's another thing that has only just come into my figuring things out and why I behaved as I did you know all that sort of stuff	Still working things out Reflecting on past coping strategy	Difficulty reflecting Helped her to reflect
125	Int	It sounds like there's an awful lot of stuff to come out		
126	Tina	Oh yes I really think I could do with doing another one to tackle some of this other stuff which is much more about me but which I had never (1) never taken on and err (1) probably had (1) thought well if you make mistakes you pay for them which is the old attitude	Would like to make another story Focus more on self as other stuff is coming out	Helped her to reflect
127	Int	Mmm yeah well I'm sure that's a good coping strategy yeah and I think for most people that's how they cope		
128	Tina	Yes and there is the question if you pull it all out (.) will it help you? Or not? You know some of the stones you've piled up to build a structure to live on will it pull them away	Questioning whether look back is helpful	Helped her to reflect
129	Int	Mm well that's a fear for a lot of people and I think in a lot of cases that's quite a legitimate fear because you can (.) make things worse in the short term really or if you open up in an environment where you're not supported or face ridicule or value judgement then that can be even worse for you		
130	Tina	Yes and I think if you've coped on your own because you've coped on your own because you haven't got all those support things then you find good ways of coping eventually and so without that little support group there is no support group if you see what I mean (laughter)	Has coped with little support for years	Helped her to reflect
131	Int	Right yes yes well I think for a lot of people who have caring responsibilities as well as parenting responsibilities as you know they do become very isolated		

132	Tina	That's right yes but also if your left on your own I mean my daughter's just coming up to 51 (.) if you're left on your own as a single mother with small children and you have no money and no support that's very isolating and then you bring mental illness into it you're very isolated	Caring and being a single parent she has felt very isolated	Has coped with little support for years	Helped her to reflect
133	Int	Yes mm I've just one last thought really (.) was erm just really reflecting on the fact that you went into this really to create resource to try and inform people in mental health services or wider about the experience of suffering from schizophrenia or caring for a child with schizophrenia rather because you thought that you'd find it useful beneficial or whatever and I'm wondering if there's anything in that that made it different rather than say the SORT team deciding to have a carers support group which meets once a month and you share your stories through that			
134	Tina	Yes (2) erm well I did see it as being something very different from that (.) I did think if you (.) were given an opportunity to tell your story (1) and if you were able to tell some of the bits that you thought were important to people out there they would listen erm and my hope was that it would provide a useful insight into a more sensitive handling of people with mental illness	Different to support group Wanted other people to understand mental illness	Wanted people to learn from story	Wanting to educate others
135	Int	Mfm mm			
136	Tina	That's basically what it was and I suppose it was (.) also a way of somehow vindicating Ben	Wanted to vindicate Ben – show his positive side	Wanted people to learn from story Wanted to vindicate Ben	Wanting to educate others
137	Int	Right erm ok			
138	Tina	I don't know whether that makes sense erm for example it meant a lot for me to show that to Ted whose been looking after Ben and erm (1) so it's two levels as a training thing			
139	Int	Well it's kind of three levels if you've got Ben yourself and the wider community			
140	Tina	Yes that's right and I erm I heard I think it was from Lyn that my thing had been shown at something for psychiatrists and they were really quite moved by it so I thought that's good it is being used (.) it was important to me to think it would be useful as a training type of thing	Pleased that it is being used	Positive impact	Helped her to reflect
141	Int	Yes yes well they are being used I don't know how much but they certainly are being used erm (.) are there any final reflections I mean we've covered an awful lot			
142	Tina	Erm well I suppose I just do feel I was very lucky to be able to do it (.) it was a wonderful opportunity so it was very good to meet people like Pip and Tony	Feels very lucky to have done it Good to meet Pip & Tony	Beneficial Very supportive facilitation	Helped her to reflect Supportive context
143	Int	Yes			
144	Tina	People who I think are doing a wonderful job and very important very important I can think of so many situations where telling a story like that (1) could be so cathartic I mean I think it was erm doing at the time to have people listening and being supportive was a wonderful experience	Facilitators did a wonderful job Important that stories get told Cathartic Wonderful experience	Very supportive facilitation Wanted people to learn from story Cathartic	Supportive context Helped her to reflect Wanting to educate others
145	Int	Mfm mm			
146	Tina	Very good and I think that was the only time I've ever had that umm (1) so it was good yes it was	First time she'd ever	Has coped with	Helped her to

		very positive (laughter)	experienced that type of support Very positive experience	little support for years Beneficial	reflect Supportive context
147	Int	Shall we end it there? (laughter)			
148	Tina	Yes (laughter)			
149	Int	Thank you			

## Appendix 8:

## Interview summaries

### Summary of Betty's Interview

Betty wanted to make a story to highlight the mistakes which had been made in her sons care. She didn't want to blame anyone, but wanted services to learn from these mistakes. She wanted people to have some insight into what a carer goes through. She did not expect it to have such a therapeutic effect on her and so was consequently surprised when she felt liberated by the process.

The role of her story in helping other people may be part of her own healing. It perhaps gave her some sense of agency or validated her as a person, whereas as a long term carer, her voice had often been ignored. She recounts an incident when John first became ill and her request for him to be admitted to hospital was ignored. As result he went missing that night, and she was worried sick. Thus she may have felt some responsibility for her son not receiving an appropriate level of care.

She found the workshop very emotional and found listening to other people's stories very upsetting. She acknowledges the high level of support that was available and the nice environment. Being with other people who'd had similar experiences made it easier for her to talk about her experiences. She bonded with the rest of the group. She was full of praise for the facilitators. All these factors helped her to feel safe. She would like to keep in touch with rest of the group.

Betty was able to look at her past and interpret it more positively which helped to liberate her from hidden feelings of guilt. Telling her story has helped her feel free. She woke up early in the morning after the second day with feelings of joy and freedom. It was several weeks after the workshop that she realised that she had been carrying feelings of guilt around with her. Looking back at photos of when her son was younger made her relive the feelings of doubt that she had about whether she was being a good mother. She realised that she'd blamed herself for her role in John's illness and had buried these feelings. Looking at photos helped her to see that she had been a good mum and had looked after her children properly. She saw how challenging it had been bringing up three children as a single mum and how she'd had to be strong. Despite these challenges she'd always managed to take the children on holiday every year. Overall, the process helped to release her from feelings of guilt and blame.

The positive effects have endured since the workshop. Now she is able to leave the house and do things for herself without feeling guilty. She is generally feeling a lot happier and more confident as a result of the process. She has shown her story to friends. This has helped her friends to understand what she has been through and has validated her experiences. She feels she can be more open about mental illness now and more confident about addressing the stigma of mental illness.

Overall, her interview suggests that she was able to reflect positively on how she brought up her son. She was listened to, had her experience validated and felt part of a supportive group. She hopes that she can help others through her story. These factors have helped her to come to terms with her past, be released from negative feelings and have lead to her feeling more confident, freer and generally happier.

### Summary of Clare's Interview

Clare wanted to 'unpick' the circumstances around her son's death and 'get it together'. So there is some sense that this was a way for her to make sense of and come to terms with her son's death. But she also wanted mental health services to learn from the mistakes that had been made in his care. She also wanted other people in similar circumstances to feel that they're not alone. As a Sheffield Health & Social Care Trust governor she has been at events where her story has been shown. She has seen how it has a powerful impact on the audience.

Clare describes the workshop as one of the best experiences of her life. However, at the time she felt like she'd been to 'hell and back'. She had to relive events surrounding her son's death, but because she'd been in a supportive context, she felt better for the experience. Looking through Matt's things and trying to find photos to illustrate the story was very upsetting. She had to confront feelings of guilt.

Although she felt better after the workshop, she had a difficult time coming up to Christmas last year and has been trying to get some therapy since then. Although at the time of the workshop she thought 'I've managed to put that in a box and finished with it now', she later realised that 'nothing's that simple'. But it did help her to feel better about her son's death.

Through her work she keeps on having to revisit her son's death which makes it very difficult for her to move on.

She has shown the story to her children and friends. This has helped her to get support and deal with the feelings of guilt and blame which continue to trouble her.

Although she describes how the process has helped, because she is still struggling emotionally, she is uncertain about its long term impact on her emotional well-being. However, she is confident that it is having a massive impact on staff in mental health services and thus her main objective has been fulfilled.

### Summary of James's Interview

James found the workshop a very hard and emotionally difficult experience. He hadn't anticipated how hard it would be as he'd not 'gone into his accident' in such depth before. He felt this was the right context for him to be reflecting on his accident.

Although he'd seen psychologists and counsellors before, having to tell his story to the group seemed to have a bigger impact on him than other types of therapy. He found retelling his story traumatic and it seemed more 'raw' and 'real' than previous experiences in therapy. Perhaps reliving it so vividly helped him to come terms with it more effectively. Prior to the workshop he'd done CBT and therapeutic writing for a year, but felt that he'd just been going round in circles. This approach seemed to be much more effective. A year ago he was feeling suicidal but is now feeling much more positive about life. He still sees a counsellor but is actually planning for the future.

He was really upset by other people's experiences. Being with other people who were dealing with personal trauma was also therapeutic for James. He knew that he was not alone in dealing with emotional pain. James felt that it was a very caring group and that other people really listened to him, whereas he felt that most other people just weren't bothered. The process motivated to 'stop feeling sorry himself because everybody has traumas to deal with'. He is now able to talk more openly about his accident and not get upset. In a sense, he no longer has to keep it a secret.

He found the process really hard and wanted to get it done as quickly as possible. He describes having all this stuff in his head which he wanted to get down as quickly as possible. He feels that the process helped him to open the box into which he put all the negative things about his accident, take everything out and deal with it (and possibly put the lid back on and keep it contained). The process has helped him to move on with his life. There is a sense that he was able to face all these difficult things, within such as supportive context, and come through the other side, albeit shaken. The process has left him feeling that his accident no longer has the power to hold him back, that it is contained on a DVD now and he can move on in life. Since the story he spends less time dwelling on his accident.

He thought the facilitators were fantastic and treated the group very sensitively. Despite finding it very difficult emotionally, he thinks that the workshop could not have been improved upon.

It took him several weeks to recover from the experience but is really glad that he did it. Although he is still struggling, life has got better. Since making the story, his father has died and he feels this has set back his recovery from PTSD. He would like to make another story to help him deal with the impact of his father's death

He wanted to make a story so that other people could learn from his experiences and that it would give them hope. He is proud of his story and it has consequently probably been good for his self confidence. He is even more keen now on helping people with mental health problems. James expresses concern that the process may be too much for some people, which reflects that at one point he couldn't go on. So the fact that he has got through seems even more of an achievement. He'd also never used a computer before and so completing the story gave him a great sense of achievement.

In summary, the process has helped him to make sense of his past and find some closure. He says 'all that trauma is on a little disk now' which has helped him to move forward. Being part of a supportive group and being listened to helped him to open up and work through difficult life events. Just getting through the workshop, which at one point felt too difficult, seems to have been good for his confidence. He has developed the internal resources to break out of vicious circle of despair. Having been suicidal about a year ago, he is now much happier and optimistic about the future.

## Summary of Julie's Interview

Julie found it to be an incredible cathartic experience. It was more profound than she had anticipated. She described it as a 'really challenging emotional journey' which was almost spiritual. It gave her time to reflect and to 'feel and hear what's really going on' which is a rare opportunity for her. In day to day life she 'just sticks a plaster over her emotions' and this gave her an opportunity to get to the root cause of what's going on, which was very painful but ultimately therapeutic.

She had come across the Patient Voices programme before and was impressed by the power of the stories. She liked the creativity of the stories and that they 'came from the heart'. Consequently she was keen to take part and for the stories to be used in SHSC to enlighten staff. She also felt that service users and carers should have priority for places on the workshop over a member of staff like herself and was delighted when she was offered a place on the workshop. She now uses the stories in the corporate induction training which she delivers and is keen for more people to be involved with the Patient Voice programme and for people to watch the stories.

She had initially wanted to do a story related to work, but was moved to talk about her mum. When she first mentioned this in the story circle she found it very emotional and burst into tears. She was surprised by her response as her mum had died a while previously, but it showed how raw her emotions still were despite the passage of time. By talking about her mum she was able to fully involve all of herself in the workshop and be on the same journey as the other participants who were also talking about traumatic life events.

She thought the facilitation was excellent and felt very safe. She was able to trust the whole group. The context helped her to be honest about her emotions and she felt safe to express them. On the first day she just sobbed and sobbed and that felt ok. She found it hard emotional work.

It took some time to recover and describes how the workshop had felt like being in a different world where her 'emotions were absolutely up front and raw'. By contrast she normally has to 'keep a stiff upper lip' and be strong for everyone else, whereas in the workshop it felt ok to show her emotions and cry.

She was keen to show her story to her two daughters and now feels that she's left behind a legacy of her mum which presents positive images of her mum when she was she was younger in contrast to how she was in old age. She hasn't shown it to her Dad and she is afraid of how it might affect him.

Prior to the workshop, she had been critical of how she had cared for her mum, thinking that she could have done better. Through the process she was able to see herself more positively and was freed from some of her negative emotions. It helped her to come to terms with her mum's death, which because of how quickly her mum had died, and being a busy working mum, she not really had time to do before. She'd felt guilty about not being with her mum when she actually passed away and saw herself as 'such a baddy'. The process her gave her the time and space to reflect on events and see how much she had cared for her mum.

Overall, she thought it was a wonderful experience which has helped her to positively reframe the events around her mum's death and free her feeling guilty about not being there when her mum died. She is a great advocate for the approach and keen for others to be involved.

### Summary of Martin's Interview

Martin produced his first story so that others could learn about mental illness and his second story so that people in a similar position to him could see that recovery is possible, even if they'd be debilitated by mental illness for decades. He also wanted students and staff in mental health services to have more insight in the realities of living with severe mental illness and thereby improve mental health services. However, he was also doing it for himself as well although he thought he was passed the stage where recovery was possible.

Prior to making the first digital story, Martin had insight into his own illness which was as a result of childhood trauma. However, despite the help of many mental health professionals he had been unable to control his violent outbursts. He felt unable to break the chains of the past and did not believe that recovery was possible.

He found the process difficult and felt vulnerable telling his story to the rest of the group. The first story initially left him feeling shaken and anxious at the thought of millions of people seeing his story on the internet. Martin found it difficult to open up to people and was worried about the impact of other people learning about his past.

Martin found the actual experience very empowering. He found the group very supportive and was able to bond with the group in a way which he hadn't hitherto been able. He saw that everyone has traumatic experiences in their lives and this helped him to bond with the rest of the group, whereas he'd always found it difficult to let people get close to him before.

He found the facilitation very supportive and empowering which helped to express his feelings more fully than before. He has done writing therapy previously, which he had found useful, but his was much more powerful. During the process he felt able to confront his demons, or ghosts, and during the process their power over him diminished. He was able to see things more clearly (maybe his past or maybe other futures / ways of being – not clear). He felt he started to move forward during the workshop and has been continuing to recover every since.

Being able to control the content of the story and the pace at which he opened up was important which helped him to see that he could control other aspects of his life. The story was also very personal and through it he was able to express himself in new ways which he consequently found empowering.

The process has had a gradual but dramatic effect on him which he describes in his second story as a 'new dawn and brighter future'. Overall he feels more confident, in control, emotionally resilient and optimistic about the future. He sees the process as helping him to come to terms with his past and of breaking the chains which were holding him back.

Overall, as a result of the two storytelling projects and using the stories to teach students, he has gone from struggling to control his violent behaviour and having little hope for the future to being well on the road to a brighter future. He is surprised by the progress he's made and consequently thinks it is a brilliant thing to do.

### Summary of Ruth's Interview

Ruth made her first story because she thought it would be a bit of an adventure. She went along wanting to tell the whole world about the anger that she felt but was surprised that she told a very different story. The story that she told came not from her normal angry self but from her creative essence from which she had become isolated over the years. She describes an organic power working through her.

She initially found the first workshop frustrating until she changed the voice in her story from the first to the third person so that it read more like a fairy tale. At this point she cried and had some sort of epiphany. She became completely absorbed in the creative process and describes 'completely flying with it'. The change of voice in some mysterious way gave her a different perspective on her life.

She loved the creative aspect of the process. She seemed to tap into some creative power within her which she really loved. It was reminiscent of other creative things she used to do when she was younger but hadn't done for a long time. For her, creative expression seems to have been an important part of her identity which she had lost because of the burden of caring for her children. Having a voice helped her to move on from an all consuming identity as a carer, and get back in touch a sense of her having a life of her own.

Seeing other people's stories had a big impact on her. She describes seeing other people's stories as an enormous privilege. She realised that everyone's got a story but that how we deal with it is important. Through the experience she realised that she'd been missing out on life, and has since been living differently. She saw how her story had been controlling her and realised that she didn't have to let it control her any longer. She described how she had lost her own identity and had become consumed by the identity of a carer. She describes how she had had little opportunity to tell her story before but had become a voice for her children who couldn't communicate.

She'd had lots of therapy before but this was more powerful probably because it allowed her to express herself creatively and involved an intense period over three days. She found the process exhausting and it took her several weeks to recover.

The first workshop transformed her life and since then she has been living more fully and been able to respond more creatively on a day to day basis. She has been able to see through some of the unhelpful views which had been disempowering her. She feels freer and is more able to live in the moment.

She feels liberated from the drama of life as a carer and has moved from feeling hard done to and having to cope with a dreadful situation to seeing that life can be hard and that you just need to get on with it. She feels that she is better at looking after herself and in some sense is more able to listen to her own story on a day to day basis. She feels she has more of an

identity and can respond creatively to life's challenges rather than simply reacting all the time.

She has used her first story in teaching students but no longer wants to do this. Although she is still happy for people to use her stories, she no longer wants to be present. In some sense, she appears to have moved on from telling her story as a carer. She feels her story is very precious and personal and doesn't necessarily want to discuss this with strangers.

She describes a gradual awakening. Other factors have been important in this, but her first story helped to get the process started. The second story felt like completing circle.

Overall, Ruth found the process very helpful and healing. The creative process and seeing other people's stories gave her insight into her life and freed her from a disabling identity as a carer. She had a rare opportunity to tell her story, rather than speaking for her children. She has regained a more empowering creative identity which had been lost through the burden of caring. She generally seems to have a more healthy perspective on life, is able to respond more creatively to life's challenges and worries less about the future.

### Summary of Tina's Interview

Her main reason for doing this was to produce a story which would be used in teaching. She wanted to help other people to understand what it's like to have a mental illness and convey the 'horrors of psychosis'. She wanted to get across the sense of loss and grief. She describes Robert's illness as like 'somebody dying over and over and over again' and how because of its ongoing nature, how it is difficult to come to terms with. But she also wanted to show Robert when he was well and to some extent vindicate him.

She described how she managed to cope as single mum by 'packing all the shit in her life into a suitcase, locking it up and putting it out of the way' and looking forward. So it was very difficult for her to look back.

Over the years her voice had been ignored by mental health services which had undermined her. Neither had she been able to talk to friends because of the stigma around mental illness. She spent a lot of time in the interview talking about Robert's illness and mental health services. This may reflect the fact that her voice as a carer has often been ignored. She feels that she needs to advocate for people with severe mental illness who have been disabled by their illness and their medication and end up 'stomping around like zombies'. Although she is critical of mental health services, she also acknowledges some good services and clinicians.

She found it a very emotional and moving experience. Other people's stories really upset her. She found it very difficult to talk about herself both in the interview and in the workshop. By contrast she was very willing to talk about Robert and mental health services. She describes how she has become 'so buttoned up' and that this did allow her to 'let off steam'. She found it very beneficial and wishes that she had done it years ago.

She is full of praise for the caring and sensitive facilitation and for the support from the rest of group. However, she still ruminates on difficult experiences and does not seem to have fully come to terms with Robert's illness. She says that she cannot unpick the past but has to

move forward, and consequently this process was difficult because it made her go back into her past. She thinks that not having a father placed a burden on Robert to be the 'man in the family' and thus feels partially responsible for Robert's illness and questions whether she was a good mother to him. She describes how she encouraged Robert to get a job and how after 6 months away from home he had his first big psychotic episode. Thus there is a sense that she put too much pressure on him and this was one of the things which led to him becoming ill.

She found the support from other group members therapeutic and continues to see Clare, another carer, and they are able to support each other emotionally.

She has shown the story to Robert's care coordinator as she thought it was good for him to see Robert before he became ill. She found this process helpful.

She talks about suffering from depression, both prior to and after the workshop and how in the past she has felt really suicidal.

Since making the story she has come to realise that she was subject to mental abuse when she was married. She feels that you have to accept the consequences of your decisions. She feels she could do with making another story to deal with some of the stuff about her past which she's become more aware recently.

Overall, although her main motivation was for her story to help other people understand mental illness, she found it really valuable to be in a supportive context and be properly listened to. It was the first time that she had experienced that level of support. However, although the process helped her to deal with some things, she has subsequently become aware of other difficult emotions and thoughts, and so still struggles emotionally. Having gone through life suppressing her feelings, which was not always an effective strategy, she now struggles to deal with her feelings as she becomes more aware of them.

## Appendix 9: Initial seven themes mapped against interview summaries

Dataset and interview themes in bold  
Notes from interview summaries in black

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Betty</b>	<b>Clare</b>	<b>James</b>	<b>Julie</b>	<b>Martin</b>	<b>Tina</b>	<b>Ruth</b>
<p><b>Wanting stories to help other people</b> Improve MH services To learn from past mistakes Help others to understanding MI and caring To give others hope</p>	<p><b>Utility of stories</b> Wanted services to learn from the mistakes in her son's care Wants people to have some insight in the burden of being a carer</p>	<p><b>Story is helping to improve services</b> Wanted MH services to learn from the mistakes which had been made with her son's care</p>	<p><b>Wanting to help other people</b> Wants to give others hope</p>	<p><b>Usefulness of stories</b> She uses the stories within SHSC</p>	<p><b>Wanting to help others</b> Wanted to give people more insight into living with SMI Wanted to give other hope that they could recover</p>	<p><b>Wanting people to understand mental illness</b> Wanted to convey the 'horrors of living with psychosis' and to convey her sense of loss and grief</p>	<p>No longer wants to be involved in using her story with students</p>
<p><b>People being held back by their past</b> Helped people to realise hidden feelings of guilt Helped people to break out of negative cycles and disabling identities Freed people from their past Not fully successful for some</p>	<p>She realised that she carrying feelings of guilt around with her. And this realisation helped her to be free of them.</p>	<p><b>Still struggling with past</b> As an SHSC governor she is continually reminded of her son's suicide which makes it difficult for her to move on</p>	<p>Has helped him to move on with his life—his accident no longer has the power to hold him back Had been going round and round in therapy for years Was motivated to 'stop feeling sorry for himself'</p>	<p>Freed her from guilty</p>	<p><b>Difficulty moving forward before</b> Has broken the chains and the past will no longer control him</p>	<p><b>Difficulty reflecting on past, self</b> Feels she cannot unpick the past but has to move forward. Not fully come to terms with Ben's illness</p>	<p>Freed from a disabling identity as a carer</p>

<p><b>Very difficult emotional experience</b> Reliving difficult &amp; traumatic experiences Other peoples stories were very upsetting Almost spiritual</p>	<p>She found the workshop very emotional and found listening to other people's stories very upsetting.</p>	<p><b>Very difficult experience at time</b> Felt like she's been to hell and back Had to relive the events around her son's death</p>	<p><b>Very difficult emotional experience</b> Seemed more raw and real than other therapy Really upset by other people's experiences At one point felt that he couldn't go on</p>	<p><b>Profound emotional experience</b> Really challenging emotional journey Almost spiritual</p>	<p><b>Difficult process</b> Felt vulnerable telling his story to the rest of the group</p>	<p>She was very upset by other people's stories</p>	<p><b>Self expression</b> Initially frustration Creative expression very powerful</p>
<p><b>Empowering process</b> Gave people a voice Validated their experience Sense of achievement Positive view of self Help others</p>	<p>Being able to help others through her story and mastering the technology and completing a story may have given her a sense of agency</p>	<p>It is helping her to tell the story of her son's death so MH services can learn, so is meeting her main objective for taking part</p>	<p>Was able to face his demons Can now talk about his accident without getting upset</p>	<p>Able to see herself more positively</p>	<p><b>Empowering process</b> 'breaking the chains'</p>	<p>As a carer her voice had often been ignored by MH services but she felt listened to by the group</p>	<p><b>Agency</b> Had a rare opportunity to tell her story</p>
<p><b>Supportive context</b> Sensitive caring group and facilitators Felt safe Being with people with similar experiences – not alone with</p>	<p><b>Support</b> Being with people with similar experiences helped her to open up She bonded with the rest of the group</p>	<p><b>Good experience at time</b></p>	<p><b>Very supportive context</b> Very caring group Was really listened to Excellent facilitation</p>	<p><b>Supportive context</b> Felt very safe Excellent facilitation</p>	<p>He was able to bond with the group in a way which he hadn't been able to before</p>	<p><b>Supportive context</b> Full of praise for the sensitive caring facilitation and a supportive group Had never experience such good support before</p>	

trauma Being listened to	<b>Positive reframing</b> Able to reflect on how strong she's been as a mother	Has helped her to come to terms with her son's death, but she is still struggling	<b>Has helped him get closure / to come to terms with his accident</b>	<b>Cathartic</b> Incredibly cathartic experience Able to see herself more positively	He was able to see things more clearly	Not really been able to positively view the past Looks critically at herself Sees herself as partly responsible for Ben becoming ill	<b>Reframing past</b> Gave her insight into her life
<b>Positive impact on mental health</b> Freedom, liberation Able to get more support Freed from guilt Healing Optimistic Some people still struggling Most would like to make another story Brilliant wonderful experience	<b>Liberation</b> Freedom from guilt and blame Feels more confident and generally happier	<b>Helped her get more support</b> Process has helped but she is still struggling emotionally	<b>Positive impact on mental health</b> More positive about the future and wants to live again	Freed her from guilty Painful but ultimately therapeutic Wonderful experience	<b>Feels more in control now</b> Freedom, breaking the chains, a new dawn and a brighter future Thinks it's a brilliant thing to do	<b>Helped her to reflect, be more open</b> She found it very beneficial and wishes she could have done it years Would like to make another story as has not got closure yet	<b>Positive impact</b> Very helpful and healing Is able to respond more creatively to life's challenges Seeing other people's stories had a big impact on her

## Appendix 10: Final dataset themes mapped against interview summaries

Dataset and interview themes in bold  
Notes from interview summaries in black

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Betty</b>	<b>Clare</b>	<b>James</b>	<b>Julie</b>	<b>Martin</b>	<b>Ruth</b>	<b>Tina</b>
<p><b>Wanting stories to help other people</b> Improve MH services To learn from past mistakes Help others to understanding MI and caring To give others hope</p>	<p><b>Utility of stories</b> Wanted services to learn from the mistakes in her son's care Wants people to have some insight in the burden of being a carer Being able to help others through her story</p>	<p><b>Story is helping to improve services</b> Wanted MH services to learn from mistakes which had been made with her son's care It is helping her to tell the story of her son's death so MH services can learn</p>	<p><b>Wanting to help other people</b> Wants to give others hope</p>	<p><b>Usefulness of stories</b> She uses the stories within SHSC</p>	<p><b>Wanting to help others</b> Wanted to give people more insight into living with SMI Wanted to give other hope that they could recover</p>	<p><b>No longer wants to be involved in using her story with students</b></p>	<p><b>Wanting people to understand mental illness</b> Wanted to convey the 'horrors of living with psychosis' and to convey her sense of loss and grief</p>
<p><b>Very difficult emotional experience</b> Reliving difficult &amp; traumatic experiences Other peoples stories were very upsetting Difficult telling story to rest of group Power of creative expression</p>	<p>She found the workshop very emotional and found listening to other people's stories very upsetting.</p>	<p><b>Very difficult experience at time</b> Felt like she's been to hell and back Had to relive the events around her son's death</p>	<p><b>Very difficult emotional experience</b> Seemed more raw and real than other therapy Really upset by other people's experiences At one point felt that he couldn't go on</p>	<p><b>Profound emotional experience</b> Really challenging emotional journey</p>	<p><b>Difficult process</b> Felt vulnerable telling his story to the rest of the group</p>	<p><b>Self expression</b> Initially frustration Creative expression very powerful</p>	<p>She was very upset by other people's stories</p>

<b>Supportive context</b> Sensitive caring group and facilitators Felt safe Being with people with similar experiences Felt like they weren't alone with trauma Bonded with group Gave people a voice Being listened to Able to tell story Validated their experience Sense of achievement Positive view of self Empowering process Almost spiritual	<b>Support</b> Being with people with similar experiences helped her to open up She bonded with the rest of the group Mastering the technology and completing a story may have given her a sense of agency	<b>Good experience at time</b>	<b>Very supportive context</b> Very caring group Was really listened to Excellent facilitation	<b>Supportive context</b> Felt very safe Excellent facilitation Almost spiritual	He was able to bond with the group in a way which he hadn't been able to before	<b>Agency</b> Had a rare opportunity to tell her story	<b>Supportive context</b> Full of praise for the sensitive caring facilitation and a supportive group Had never experience such good support before As a carer her voice had often been ignored by MH services but she felt listened to by the group
<b>Positive reframing</b> Insight – able to see more clearly See own strengths Helped people to come to terms with past events Helped people to realise hidden feelings of guilt Helped people to break out of negative cycles and disabling identities Freed people from their past	<b>Positive reframing</b> Able to reflect on how strong she's been as a mother She realised that she carrying feelings of guilt around with her. And this realisation helped her to be free of them.	<b>Still struggling with past</b> Has helped her to come to terms with her son's death, but she is still struggling As an SHSC governor she is continually reminded of her son's suicide which makes it difficult for her to move on	<b>Has helped him get closure / to come to terms with his accident</b> Has helped him to move on with his life – his accident no longer has the power to hold him back Had been going round and round in therapy for years	<b>Cathartic</b> Incredibly cathartic Able to see herself more positively Freed her from guilty	<b>Difficulty moving forward before</b> <b>Empowering process</b> Has broken the chains and the past will no longer control him He was able to see things more clearly	<b>Reframing past</b> Gave her insight into her life Freed from a disabling identity as a carer	<b>Difficulty reflecting on past, self</b> Feels she cannot unpick the past but has to move forward. Not fully come to terms with Ben's illness Not really been able to positively view the past Looks critically at herself, sees herself as partly

<p>Not fully successful for some</p> <p><b>Positive impact on life in general</b>          Freedom, liberation          Able to get more support          Freed from guilt          Healing          Optimistic          Some people still struggling          Most would like to make another story          Brilliant wonderful experience</p>	<p><b>Liberation</b>          Freedom from guilt and blame          Feels more confident and generally happier</p>	<p><b>Helped her get more support</b>          Process has helped but she is still struggling emotionally</p>	<p>Was motivated to 'stop feeling sorry for himself'          Was able to face his demons          Can now talk about his accident without getting upset</p> <p><b>Positive impact on mental health</b>          More positive about the future and wants to live again</p>	<p>Freed her from guilty          Painful but ultimately therapeutic          Wonderful experience</p>	<p><b>Feels more in control now</b>          Freedom, breaking the chains, a new dawn and a brighter future          Thinks it's a brilliant thing to do</p>	<p><b>Positive impact</b>          Very helpful and healing          Is able to respond more creatively to life's challenges          Seeing other people's stories had a big impact on her</p>	<p>responsible for Ben becoming ill</p> <p><b>Helped her to reflect, be more open</b>          She found it very beneficial and wishes she could have done it years          Would like to make another story as has not got closure yet</p>
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## Appendix 11: Final dataset themes with all second order codes

<p><b>Very difficult emotional experience</b>          Very painful experience          Revisiting difficult experiences          Exhausting process          Looking through images was hard          Still coming to terms with past          Difficult for her to look back          Difficulty talking about herself          Very emotional          Powerful and upsetting stories          Had to face demons          Very traumatic          Wanted to get it done quickly          Very difficult experience          Having an audience made it harder / more powerful ?          Left him feeling shaken          Surprised by hidden emotions          Spiritual, Deep experience          Creativity          Authenticity, Honesty, Personal          Openness with feelings, Crying          Complexity          Journey          Engagement, Enthusiasm          Moving profound experience          Challenging, Difficult, Painful          Surprisingly moving          Felt vulnerable          Unsettling</p>	<p><b>Wanting stories to help other people</b>          Story is having an effect          Wanted others to learn from mistakes          Wanted to improve services          Powerful story          Wanting people to learn from stories          Talk about Robert          Shared with family          Powerful effect on family          Wanting to vindicate Ben</p>	<p>Did it to help other people          Hopes it has done some good          Utility of stories important          Didn't expect to benefit          Legacy          Wanted to tell his story          Wanting others to see that recovery is possible          Few expectations          Thought it would be good          Does teaching for himself as well</p>	<p><b>Supportive context</b>          Very supportive context          Very good experience          Beneficial          Benefitted from support          Very supportive facilitation          Supportive process          Good facilitators          Sensitive facilitators          Caring group          Supportive environment          Very helpful          Very supportive group          Pleased with process          Being with people who'd been through traumas helped</p>	<p>Empowering          Able to be open          Felt safe          Helped her to share story          Sharing experience          Support          Trust          Wonderful          Rare opportunity          Expression          Controlling content was important          Empowering facilitation          Very supportive facilitation          Facilitation very important          Still feels the support from the group</p>	<p><b>Other / Still struggling emotionally / to come to terms with the past</b>          Still struggling with past          Still feels guilty          Long term effect unclear          Confused by feelings          Fear about the future          Still struggling          Suffers from PTSD          Would like to make another story to help deal with father's death          Still doubts herself</p>	<p><b>Positive impact on mental health</b>          Positive impact          Helped her get more support          Helping her share her story          Helped family come to terms with Matt's death          Cathartic          Helped her to share her story          Powerful effect on family          Doesn't dwell on accident so much now          Helped him to be more open          Definite improvement in his mental health          Less anxious          More positive / optimistic about the future          More effective than therapy he'd had before          Glad he did it</p>	<p>Liberation          Improved self belief          Released from feelings of guilt          Valuable          Healing          Pleased          Feels more in control and powerful          Feels much freer now          Broken the chains          Recovering rapidly          More emotionally resilient now          Would recommend it</p>	<p><b>Positive reframing</b>          Wanted to make sense of the past          Feels better about the past          Enjoyed completing story          Not had much support          Has struggled          Still coming to terms with past          Difficult for her to look back          More willing to look back now          Reflecting on past          Lack of support in the past          Support from SORIT          Looked in more depth than before          Realises that he has to move on          Helped him come to terms with his accident          Making sense of past          Helped him to move forward          Helped him to share his story          Challenge of caring          Former doubt          Looking back          Mystery          Normally focus on present          Old feelings          Rare opportunity          Voice ignored          Insight          Shared with friends / family          Agency, Power          Identity          Change          Aware of own problems before          Had kept his history a secret          Wary of delving into past          Didn't think he could change          Could feel chains holding him back          Couldn't think about the future before          Able to face demons          Demons had lost their power          Empowering stories          Very personal story          Expression and control important          New experience          Helped him to see things differently</p>	<p>Helped him to change          More able to be open          Using story in teaching helped his recovery          Rapid change          Beneficial          More able to bond with people</p>
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## Appendix 12: Final dataset themes with the main second order codes

### **1. Wanting their stories to help other people**

Improve MH services  
 To learn from past mistakes  
 Help others to understanding MI and caring  
 To give others hope  
 Expected to benefit personally as well  
 Having the stories used has empowered the storytellers

### **2. Very difficult emotional experience**

Reliving difficult & traumatic experiences  
 Other people's stories were very upsetting  
 Difficult telling story to rest of group  
 Painful memories  
 Openness with feelings  
 Deep complex experience

### **3. Supportive context**

Sensitive caring group  
 Sensitive caring facilitators  
 Felt safe  
 Able to fully express feelings  
 Able to tell story  
 Being with people with similar experiences  
 Felt like they weren't alone dealing with emotional pain  
 Bonded with group  
 Gave people a voice  
 Being listened to  
 Sense of agency  
 Validated their experience  
 Sense of achievement  
 Positive view of self  
 Power of creative expression  
 Empowering process  
 Profound, almost spiritual  
 Very good experience

### **4. Positive reframing**

Insight – able to see more clearly  
 Rare opportunity to reflect  
 See own strengths  
 Empowering  
 Able to face demons  
 Being able to control the story helped some to realise they could control its power over them  
 Helped people to come to terms with past events  
 Helped people to realise hidden feelings of guilt  
 Helped people to break out of negative cycles and disabling identities  
 Freed people from their past

### **5. Positive impact on life in general**

Freedom, liberation  
 Able to get more support  
 Able to be more open now  
 Freed from guilt and blame - cathartic  
 Healing  
 More optimistic about the future  
 Most would like to make another story  
 Brilliant wonderful experience  
 More effective than therapy  
 Improved self confidence & self belief  
 Feels more in control of life