Sheffield Hallam University

A Sheffield Hallam University thesis

ProQuest Number: 10694371

ProQuest 10694371

The emotions of individuals during strategic and organisational change: a hermeneutic exploration

Caroline Susan Greeney Cole

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of
Sheffield Hallam University
for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration

August 2007

Abstract

This is a reflexive hermeneutic study exploring the emotions of individuals during strategic and organisational change from an objectivist ontology and subjectivist epistemology. It explores individuals' emotions and individuals' variations from organisations' cultural expectations and cultural fit. It considers individuals' emotions collectively, and the psychology of emotions as a basis on which organisational change could be managed.

It provides insight into the emotional complexity of organisational life during periods of change, the work derived feelings and emotions individuals struggle with on a daily basis, the feelings and emotions that influence and shape, and can in turn be influenced and shaped, by change events, and the stark management conditioning arising from the emotional devoid reality and manipulation of organisational expectations and mechanistically driven change programmes. This emotional insight belies the emotion arid legacy of process driven change solutions, and adds to the growing voice that seeks to usurp the emotionally sanitised picture of organisational life. It informs the debate that seeks to influence the transformation of managerial objectivism, change practise, and behaviour, so that emotions are recognised, welcomed, respected, supported and embraced in the workplace.

The research environment is one of constant strategic and organisational change. Within this context, the early research "hunches", drawn from the author's intuition, and life history, that an individual's feelings and emotions, their nature of being, their self motivation, their relationships, and the nature of control, can be considered a reasonable way of looking at and interpreting how individuals interact in everyday life, and their personal response to change, are brought vividly to life and evolved.

Acknowledgement

I haven't undertaken this study lightly not least because of the subject matter and the many, if not infinite influences there will be on the data, but equally because of the time commitment required to undertake a piece of research such as this, whilst at the same time balancing a very demanding work life with home life commitments. The main challenge has been juggling all my commitments which would not have been as easy without the unquestioning support and understanding from my husband, family, friends, DBA study group and my DBA supervisors. All have supported me in different ways and each has contributed to my thinking on this subject, with the result being that my study has benefited enormously.

I would like to express my thanks and sincere appreciation to:

- Professor John McAuley for his inspiration, supervision, encouragement and patience throughout this long period of work

- Professor Phil Johnson for his support and constructive comments

- Oliver Couch and Steve Chase for their friendship and support

- The participants of my research - you know who you are - thank you for your candour, openness and honesty

- HGAA for their financial sponsorship of my work

- Henry, George, Alfie and Albert - for your company during the many hours of study

- My husband Mark - ever the pragmatist - for his love and support throughout

- My family and friends - for your love and understanding

Table of contents

Appendix A: Semi-structured interviews
    Briefing notes; thoughts on how the early research hunches
    might be demonstrated; schedule of open questions

Appendix B: Merging the Spiders' Webs

Introduction

This study is an exploration of the emotions of individuals during strategic and organisational change within a hermeneutic framework. It is a journey that has emerged from my own experience of organisational change, where the reasons for change are often accepted yet individuals' resistance to change still exists, hinting at the microcosm of emotions and motivations that exist beyond the surface view of organisational life. What does the emotional lens reveal if we pay due regard to our feelings and emotions in the work place, and consider the value they may add? This is the journey I have embarked upon driven by a genuine interest and belief that if feelings and peoples' individuality were better understood and respected more in the work place as the norm and not the exception, the practice of delivering change in organisations may also be different.

There is a growing interest in feelings and emotions in management theory, in which attempts are being made to, develop an understanding of the issues and the implications for management praxis, and in this study, I draw on some of this research, which has been invaluable in giving depth and meaning to my research, and which ultimately have given me the confidence to proceed.

Map of the hermeneutic journey

This is a hermeneutic exploration that I discuss in detail during the study. My objective has been to develop an understanding of how individuals make sense of their world by using an approach in which I could gather information, form impressions and develop understanding from studying the patterns emerging from the research material. The hermeneutic methodology provides a framework that supports this objective, and the following is a simple representation to illustrate the map of my hermeneutic journey. The approach explicitly recognises the pre-understanding and the participation of the researcher in the process. The iterative and triangular approach embracing, reflection, consideration and exploration; interpretation, and literature interrogation is at the core of this methodology.

Life history	Research interest

A HERMENEUTIC EXPLORATION

SELF KNOWLEDGE

LITERATURE (Initial intellectual presuppositions)

In the context of change   *In the context of change*

PRE-UNDERSTANDING

EMERGING UNDERSTANDING (Broader implications)

OBSERVATIONS (Reflections of the empirical world)

HUNCHES (Early research considerations)

THEMES EXPLORED AND EVOLVED (Interpretation and modest theories)

Adapted from Gill and Johnson (1997); Kolb (1979) Experiential learning cycle; Wallace (1971) The logic of science in sociology

In chapter 1, *Pre-understanding,* I share details of my life history and how this has informed this study, directed my initial literature review and helped to shape and inform my early research considerations of feelings and emotions, self motivation, relationships and control as a basis for inspection and association. I have drawn upon some examples and observations from my working life to illustrate what is important to me, my thoughts, feelings and motivation, and I discuss my thoughts on some select texts and how these have helped give shape to my research.

In chapter 2, *My research journey,* I bring to life the aim, purpose and objectives of the study and how my philosophical and methodological considerations have helped to shape and inform my overall approach to this exploration, the research methods I have adopted, my interpretations, and emerging understanding. An important part of this journey has been my own feelings and emotions, which I reflect upon and share within the discourse. This is a reflexive study and it would be misleading to suggest that I had a clear view of how I intended to carry out this study from the outset of the journey or even to suggest that I had a clear view of what my research objectives were going to be; I didn't. Decisions had to be taken on the methods and on the overall methodology I was going to use. The starting point here is my ontology and epistemological considerations, and I have attempted to provide an understanding of the journey; taking ontology and epistemology together, and then my methodological considerations, my methodological choice of the hermeneutic framework, and then a discussion of the methods I employed to collect my qualitative research material, although the journey itself was far from this straight forward.

Throughout the discussion, I seek to bring to life the practical issues that started to give life to my research journey; the research environment, the approach and the methods I use; the individuals who have been willing participants during my journey, and the ethical issues I have deliberated on and on occasions struggled with.

I share my approach to my exploration, and interpretation using the hermeneutic loop. This was not a remote academic exercise that I undertook at the side lines, observing at the periphery of others' lives; my experience, thoughts and feelings had a part to play. This has been a fascinating journey for me and I seek here to reflect on some of my own

feelings and emotions and to share these as an insight into my experience during my collection, transcript, exploration and interpretation of the research material.

In chapter 3, *A hermeneutic exploration*, I endeavour to bring to life my hermeneutic exploration of the emotional experiences of individuals during periods of strategic and organisational change, and the understanding emerging from this.

This is a reflexive exploration during which my objective has been to develop an understanding of how individuals make sense of their world by using an approach, which explicitly recognises the researcher's intuition, interpretation, understanding, and relationship with the research subject. I have adopted a number of core principles that underpin the hermeneutic approach, and in this way, I gather information, form impressions and develop understanding from studying the patterns emerging from the research material. Through my iterative approach, intuition and reflexive responses, I bring the hermeneutic cycle to life.

In chapter 4, *Conclusions and personal reflections*, I review the aim, purpose and objectives of my study, my conclusions and observations, and the considerations for management praxis. I share my thoughts on the strengths and limitations of my study, my recommendations for future research, and my personal reflections of the journey.

1   Pre-understanding

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to provide insight into my pre-understanding as a basis for inspection and association.

In the chapter that follows, I share details of my life history and how this has informed my research interest, directed my initial literature review and helped to shape and inform my early research considerations. A map of the discussion follows, which is presented to illustrate the initial stages of my research journey in an order that faithfully reflects how I have sought to understand and develop my pre-understanding. I reflect on who I am, my experience, my values and beliefs, and why I am interested in this study. I then introduce the literature I initially explore to help develop my pre-understanding and inform my initial research interest. This helps to give shape to my early hunches of feelings and emotions; self motivation, relationships and control, and has given me the confidence to proceed.

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Who I am; my experience;     Introduction to the                                 │
│  my values and beliefs;       literature I reviewed              Interest for      │
│  why I am interested in this  initially to help develop         the              │
│  study                        the concept                        research         │
│                                                                                    │
│  ┌──────────┐      ┌──────────┐      ┌──────────┐      ┌──────────────┐          │
│  │ CHAPTER 1│      │  SELF    │      │          │      │              │          │
│  │  PRE-    │ ───► │KNOWLEDGE │ ───► │ LITERATURE│ ───►│CONSIDERATIONS │          │
│  │UNDER-    │      │          │      │          │      │              │          │
│  │STANDING  │      └──────────┘      └──────────┘      └──────────────┘          │
│  └──────────┘                                                                     │
│                 ┌──────┐ ┌────────┐    ┌──────────┐      ┌──────────────┐         │
│                 │ Life │ │Research│    │Developing│      │Feelings and  │         │
│                 │history│ │interest│    │knowledge │      │emotions      │         │
│                 └──────┘ └────────┘    └──────────┘      └──────────────┘         │
│                              Moving from pre-            ┌──────────────┐         │
│                              understanding to           │Self motivation│         │
│                              modified understanding     └──────────────┘         │
│                                                          ┌──────────────┐         │
│                                                          │Relationships │         │
│                                          Early hunches   └──────────────┘         │
│                                                          ┌──────────────┐         │
│                                                          │  Control     │         │
│                                                          └──────────────┘         │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

The map is presented to provide an understanding of the discussion, although here, at the start of the journey, there is no clear path ahead; no decisions have been taken on how I am going to carry out this study and I have no clear view of what the research objectives will be. In its nature, this is a reflective piece of work, from which decisions to be taken and the theory will emerge as the journey progresses.

Self knowledge

What follows is a little personal introduction about me, the researcher, to share why I am interested in this study through a snapshot of my life history set in a context of change. I have drawn upon some examples and observations from my working life to illustrate my competence to carry out this study and to illustrate what is important to me, my thoughts, feelings and my motivation as a basis for inspection and association. At this stage of my research journey, I have deliberately *not* sought insight from the literature. The focus here is my experience. This is my voice.

In providing an insight into my life orientation, and how I know what I know, I begin to reveal my ontological and epistemological perspective, and the considerations and the interdependencies that shape my reflexive journey. My philosophical considerations and their theoretical reference are discussed in more detail in the next chapter, although, I hint at these in the background, at this stage, to provide an early insight into some of their origins and their influence.

My life orientation – a personal introduction

If you were to ask some people who know me what they believe is important to me, they would more than likely say that I live to work and that the company and my career are the most important things to me. They would say this because I regularly work long hours. Let me set the record straight. I enjoy my work but it is why and how I go about what I do and my family that are the most important things to me. For me this started a long way back. In my younger days, I can remember my Dad regularly telling me, "A job's not worth doing unless you are going to do it properly". I was brought up with this work ethic and at some point in time I readily adopted this value as my own. My friends say I am a perfectionist but to me it just means if a job is planned well and done thoroughly in the first place, it saves what can be huge amounts of rework time later on, time that could be spent doing the next job!

I get a huge amount of satisfaction from the work I do. I work to fulfil my own individual motivation, my pride in a job done well and in the standards that I grew up with and that I have for many years set for myself, both in my dealings with other people and in how I expect to be treated myself. These standards include; treating all people fairly and honestly, with open and honest communication, with respect for individuals' differences, innovation and creativity, and with full recognition of a good job well done. The psychological contract of work is for many, in my experience, an expectation that they will receive consideration along the lines of the standards I have outlined here, or at least something similar to these, although I believe there is some doubt about how visible or understood these are by individuals themselves or the organisational collective. This has been a key area in shaping my interest in this study.

My interest in this study

My interest in carrying out this study has emerged from my own direct experience of change in different organisations; both from my experience of being on the receiving end of change and from my experience of designing and managing the implementation of organisational and strategic change initiatives. It has been a fascinating journey, I have learnt a lot and I have been recognised in the organisations I have worked for as being good at what I do.

When I am designing change, the people that the changes are going to impact are central to my considerations. I feel a great sense of responsibility for them and my objective is always to try and support them through both the negative and positive impacts. In practise, this often means building a process that recognises there will be emotional reactions and which puts in place a support structure to help individuals work through their feelings. I have had many people tell me how grateful they have been for the support provided and I feel a sense of a job well done. In reflecting on this, however, I find that all I am doing and this would equally apply to others like me is building processes that attempt to control and manage people's emotions. I am not persuaded that we ever really get beyond surface level feelings or even that we want to. Most people I find have good intentions, they want to in the main, do the best for their colleagues but despite this, the work environment does not generally encourage

individuals as a matter of course to be open with their feelings, nor in my experience does it place any meaningful value on these feelings. As such, I have started to question the moral and ethical correctness of attempting to manage and control individuals' emotions to deliver change in this way and to ask if there are better ways for both the individuals concerned and the organisation of making change happen.

In my experience of working in a number of typical Financial Services organisations, members try to be in control of their emotions during organisational change, whether they are on the receiving end of change or managing the implementation of change. I ask myself; what if we didn't do this; what if we didn't try and control our emotions and those of others; what would be the situation if we paid due regard to our feelings and emotions; what would be the situation if we respected our emotions and then considered the value they may add? This is the journey I have embarked upon with this research project.

The role I have adopted in carrying out the research has been one of trying to create an environment for open discourse and exploration. I have not been interested in searching for some superior insight or privileged truth. I am, however, very passionate about how change is managed and the consideration afforded to people affected by change. I have a lot to bring to the table on this subject from living and breathing and caring about change in the organisations I have worked for over many years. I intend therefore, to be at all times very much a part of my study and not removed independently from it. My own experiences are directly linked to organisational life and the world we live in and as such, bring not just an understanding of myself and my basic assumptions, values and beliefs, but of individuals in organisations and Society as a whole (Blaikie, 1995; Bleicher, 1982). To this extent, I have attempted in the section that follows, to provide some background about me and to provide an insight into me as an individual, drawing on specific examples from my experience of organisational change to draw out and illustrate what is important to me, my values and my beliefs.

Examples and observations from my working life

I have worked in Blue Chip organisations within the Financial Services environment in the UK for over 25 years and it is through my experience and training during this time that my competence to carry out this study has been developed. For over 20 years I have been employed in managerial roles during which change has been dynamic within the Financial Services industry. For my first 8 years as a manager I was responsible for implementing many organisational change initiatives and over the last 12 years, I have been directly responsible for the architecture, management and delivery of operational and strategic change.

Throughout my career there have been many changes that have come not just from within the Financial Services industry but from general management practice and thinking across the wider business community. We have experienced Soft Systems Thinking, Six Sigma, Business Process Redesign and Total Quality Management amongst others. With them all has come organisational and strategic changes in many guises as business leaders and managers, including myself, have attempted to bring to life the benefits articulated by the latest management guru through; takeovers, mergers, centralisation, de-centralisation, re-structuring peoples' roles and responsibilities, downsizing, upsizing, and Regulatory changes to name a few.

My experience of organisational life started for me like for many people when I began my first real job after college in what was affectionately referred to as the machine room at the local branch of a major bank, keying in the daily cheque reconciliation on a painfully slow, archaic mainframe computer and manually stamping customer details into cheque books for customer requests passed over from the cashiers on the lofty front row. It didn't take me long to realise that change was not really the order of the day and I needed to resign myself to more of the same for the next three years if I wanted to progress to the lofty front row dealing directly with the customer. In short order, five weeks to be exact from my day one inauguration, I moved on and took up a position as cashier on the front row with a large Building Society where change wasn't quite the order of the day, but was at least more evident with a new computer system to replace manual cashiering processes being installed within a month of me joining them. I can take no credit for the new system, but I quickly recognised and embraced the benefits

10

that came with it. I was recognised as a passionate and early adopter of change with this becoming somewhat of a trademark throughout my career. I have never looked back. Within three years I moved into my first managerial role, still passionate about making changes, not change for change sake but to find better ways of doing things with many of my initiatives becoming adopted company practices. After a number of similar positions around the country, I moved into my first multi-site managerial role and with it my first direct experience of large scale organisational change management.

Several years later, the common thread running through my experience in the different companies I have worked for and in the varied roles I have held, has been the design and management of organisational and strategic change. Working with and managing people through many change events during this time has provided a unique and privileged opportunity for me to observe individuals' and their reactions during periods of change. There have been many drivers for the change events I have been part of and I have had the opportunity to talk to individuals about their experiences and with this knowledge, to reflect on the different change management processes adopted by organisations, and equally as part of these, to reflect upon my own approach to change management. What is clear to me is that at a rational level, the reasons for strategic or organisational change events are often accepted, yet to varying degrees resistance to change still exists, albeit often on a more individual basis.

Organisations are made up of groups of individuals who have come together with their collective efforts focused on achieving the goals of the organisations but who equally have their own individual psychological contracts of work. Not everyone has the same work ethic or motivation as I do, but everyone does have their own individual motivation as to why they work and how they go about the work they do. My observations are that managers do not really understand this. They do not generally understand or even care about the underlying deeper psychological motivations of individuals or even the psychological work contract and this I feel often leads to a superficial, clinical, self interested approach to the management of change. This was demonstrated for me clearly during a strategic change programme I was leading. Prior to the communication of a major organisation wide restructure, I asked three senior managers to share how they were feeling about the message we were about to give to the people directly affected by the change. Whilst there was a good news element in the

11

colleagues in pairs along the lines of, "There is only one role now, decide between yourselves who will take it and let me know." Whilst I was not directly affected by this experience, the organisational stories surrounding the event served to highlight to me how change should not be managed.

During an annual strategy development event, myself and other senior executive colleagues arrived to find a new structure chart on each chair, detailing significant changes in roles, responsibilities and reporting lines. In effect demotions, on paper at least were taking place. Whilst changes had been anticipated following the appointment of a new Chief Executive, for some colleagues, this was the first they had seen or heard of the changes being introduced. I, at least had received a telephone call the previous evening. Discussions with colleagues reflected my own shock and upset about the situation and the way the message was being communicated. Other than a brief walk through of the structure there was no other formal reference to it and no searching questions were tabled for debate at the time. The strategy event included team building games and a social team dinner in the evening, all of which, on the face of it went very smoothly. Colleagues who were perceived to have come out of the restructure better than others were overheard to comment how professionally everyone had presented themselves and joined in the fun and games and the social event despite the change communication and the way it was carried out. For me, individuals' psychological work contracts and their expectations arising from these had been ignored. There were no celebrations for some who had received promotions and no opportunity for searching questions and answers before a public communication for others. The need at least from everyone on the day to save face, maintain a sense of pride, suppress emotion be it positive or otherwise, and demonstrate good cultural fit was unanimous. Collectively brought about through individual actions the group demonstrated that an open display of emotions and feelings was seen not to be a justified part of work behaviour and that emotions were perceived to have no value.

From colleagues' feedback, the individual conversations that took place after the event with the Chief Executive were somewhat more sincere, albeit still mindful in most cases of the need to be seen to understand the changes taking place. No one was in any doubt over the cultural expectations of acceptance of the changes. I asked myself some time later what had happened here for an organisation that prides itself on caring about

13

people to decide to carry out a major change communication in this way. The mechanical and superficial process adopted did not give due consideration to the people affected by the changes and the impact on them. Individual feelings and emotions had become lost in the process.

In my experience, for individuals who are affected by a change, if they understand the drivers for the change and accept the change, they are seen as having a good cultural fit by business managers. Individual resistance to change is seen as an inevitable part of the process. It is not welcomed, but is recognised and tolerated as something that needs to be managed and overcome in a timely manner. Resistance to change manifests itself in different ways. It can be obvious with variations being openly expressed verbally or through changes in behaviours. Variations, however, can also remain unspoken, personal, even hidden, with just small changes in an individual's behaviour sometimes being the only indicator of underlying resistance. Management frustrations begin to manifest themselves I find, when resistance to change becomes protracted and with this, questions around the individual's culture fit begin to emerge.

Individual variations from expectations of cultural competence and cultural fit may I believe lead to moral and ethical as well as commercial considerations. This has led me to question if there is a need for organisations in general to better understand the emotions of their employees during periods of change. Interestingly, a director of Human Resources in an organisation once told me that it was better not to share feelings and demonstrate emotion in the work place to ensure one remained in control of oneself and ones situation.

Giving shape to my research

Overall, my experience has led me to believe that there is some doubt about the extent to which, emotions are genuinely welcomed in the work place and this has been a key area for me in establishing the aim for my study and in developing my research.

The ontological implications for me at this stage are; that I consider work as purposive; that I consider organisations as instrumental in that they exist to deliver goods or

services; that I see management as a legitimate activity; that I see change directed towards organisational benefit; and that I consider that even an understanding of emotions would "add value". I explore these issues and discuss their implications in the next chapter.

For me, the salient points are; individuals resist change; emotions drive the actions of individuals; organisations have expectations of individual cultural competence and cultural fit.

Discussion within my peer group and an initial review of the literature, the detail of which I now discuss, have developed my pre-understanding, and my thinking on these points and ontological implications and have helped to give shape to my early research considerations.

Every change event I have managed has been unique. I find it is not easy to predict how individuals will react and to a large extent, their reaction in my experience has been different in every case. There is the informal, often unspoken psychological work contract that exists for individuals and there are the nuances of individual emotion's that are often only partially revealed, not fully understood or in some cases not recognised within the change programmes.

A desire to develop understanding is my starting point, however, and I have drawn out a number of hunches from my own experience as early considerations for my research. These are: feelings and emotions; self motivation; relationships; control.

In the section that follows, I share how my initial review of the literature influenced these early research considerations. This is not a detailed exploration of all the literature but an initial exploration designed to develop my pre-understanding.

Initial literature review

My early research considerations; feelings and emotions, self motivation, relationships, and control, have been drawn from my experience of change in organisational life and it is this experience that has also directed my initial exploration of the literature. This is not a detailed exploration of all the literature. The objective of my introductory literature review has been to develop my pre-understanding and inform my early research considerations with my focus being on change, the leadership and management of change, and stories of emotions in organisational life.

In the section that follows I discuss my thoughts on some selected texts and how these have helped develop my research study. It is important to stress here that this literature review is designed *not* to reinforce my pre-understanding but to develop an understanding of it and to take it further.

Change

I started my exploration of the literature with a consideration of the definition of change and it's meaning that there is difference in the "what is", at different points in time; alteration, transformation and translation being some unimpeachable examples of the types of change that give rise to this. Even here at this early juncture, however, I encountered difficulties with this interpretation. Drawing on writers, such as, Bertrand Russell, change can mean something arising from nothing. Conversely, there is a view, Donald Davidson's (1980) for example, that for genuine change to happen something has to already exist so that it can be changed; and the very existence of change is also problematic for some philosophers like for example, Paramenides (c. 480 BC), and especially for those who hold the view that the past is no different to the present (Honderich, 1995; Magee, 1988). There is no one common understanding. There is, however, I believe at least sufficient empirical evidence to support the view that change can be considered a pervasive feature of everyday life, and it is this all embracing nature of change, even the arguments for and against its existence that has fascinated and attracted the interest of scholars for thousands of years. Whilst there are no new

revelations, their writings and metaphors help to inform our understanding of change through their context and association. Consider for example Lao Tzŭ, the ancient Chinese sage who is thought to have lived sometime before 4000 years BC. Whilst his existence today is in some doubt, he is traditionally viewed as the author of the classic Tao Te Ching, the dialogue of which reflects upon the "what is" and concludes that the world we live in undergoes progressive development with continuous change (Honderich, 1995; Wilhelm, 1989). Like Lao Tzŭ, Heraclitus of Ephesus, a pre-Socratic philosopher in the early 6th Century BC, also writes about continuous change, and is associated with saying that "everything is in flux", "everything flows" and famously, "you cannot step into the same river twice" (Honderich, 1995; Magee, 2001). Benjamin Disraeli delivered a similar message in a speech to the people of Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1867; "Change is inevitable in a progressive country" he said, "Change is constant" (Partington, 1996).

In this section, I have sought to develop my pre understanding of what change means by drawing on the observations and thoughts of others to help guide and shape my research study. I now continue my exploration of the literature with a consideration of change and the nature of being; feelings, emotions and self motivation. This is not a detailed exploration of all the literature but an initial exploration designed to develop my pre-understanding.

Change and the nature of being; feelings, emotions and self motivation considered

In the section above, I consider the definition and meaning of change that has fascinated and attracted the interests of scholars for thousands of years, and this permanent and all-encompassing view of change that continues to be reflected in writings today. Alongside this, however, there is also recognition that the nature of our being, our existence and philosophy are integral parts of the context and as such, begins to provide epistemic support for my early hunches. Consider Warren Bennis, for example, who describes change as, "…the metaphysics of our age," with, "…everything…in motion" (1998, pp. 151). Likewise for Edgar Schein the "what is" becomes something that can be distinguished and consciously influenced with change being "…a cognitive process,

17

which is facilitated by the obtaining of new information and concepts" (1988, pp. 245). Here Schein is clearly advocating the importance of knowledge, motivation and the conscious selection, evaluation and application of knowledge to bring about change, and it is human characteristics like these that were central to some of the early theories of emotion, Aristotle's (384-322 BC) and Aquinas' (1224/5-74) as examples. Theories about emotion vary in how they regard emotions; for example, emotions are themselves cognitions; are caused by cognitions; are part of a motivational process in that they are what cause us to look at things in particular ways and then act accordingly. If this connection between knowledge and emotion exists, then emotions and feelings can be considered a reasonable way of looking at and interpreting how we interact in everyday life (Honderich, 1995; Magee, 1988; Magee, 2001). Conversely, others, Watson (1925) and Skinner (1953) as two examples, suggest that emotion is nothing more than an act or a requirement to act in a certain way, but this omits to recognise that an individual may not demonstrate the behaviours as expected and may even choose to conceal their emotions (in Honderich, 1995). Early psychoanalytic theories of emotions, Plato's (c. 428-347 BC) and Sartre's as examples, suggest that emotion is the result of a reaction to a perception, something that is in our unconscious mind, rather than something that is real, and as such, obscures a true way of seeing the world. This however, can be replaced by the view that emotions complement and improve our understanding and knowledge by opening up and introducing aspects of ethical and moral values (Honderich, 1995; Magee, 2001). Here, however, I suggest, there are still difficulties to consider; Schein's observation about change discussed earlier, for example, becomes much less straight forward in practice where different people have the same perceptual evaluation and the same cognisant response, but where their emotional responses are different.

Everyone experiences change differently; new changes, actual or conceptual, invoke emotions as individuals' make associations and draw upon aspects of their lives unique to themselves, their assumptions, expectations, previous experience, and their memories. In his study into emotions in stories in 2000, Yiannis Gabriel emphasises the importance of this and suggests that individuals' differing views of the "what is" following change is influenced not just by their previous life experiences but by their emotions; "The divide is cognitive and normative, but above all it is emotional" (Gabriel, 2000, pp. 169). Change can be an intensely personal experience, where, at the

extreme, an individual's whole being and purpose may become one and the same with the change event, and as such, undistinguishable outside of the event. In his writings in 1983 and 1987, Stephen Fineman found this to be particularly the case for professional and managerial employees whose "self-images" he observes, "fuse with their jobs" (Fineman, 2005, pp. 122). Whilst individuals may make the same cognisant appraisal of the "what is", it is difficult to envisage that some changes, such as workplace changes that affect an individuals' job or career for example, can ever be free from an individual and personal emotional response (Fineman, 1999; 2005). Roger Stuart (1995) found this to be the case during his research with people involved in a workplace restructure with some individuals being significantly unsettled to the extent they started to question who they really were, their beliefs and their very identify. For some people, their job was their identity, which gave them meaning and purpose whereas others adopted a more detached position. The individuals involved here reacted differently when faced with change. Consider also, the following situation where two individuals may both, for instance realise they have been overlooked for promotion during an organisational restructure, and both may take steps to remedy this, but one individual may be indignant, whilst the other is only amused. Fineman suggests an individual's emotions can explain why they might react differently; as he observes, "Emotions will shape the anticipation, the experience, and the aftermath of change. They are not just the consequences of a change "event,"" (2005, pp. 120). George (2000), Goleman (1998), and Sosik and Megerian (1999) agree with Fineman in this context and emphasise the importance of recognising feelings and emotions by offering insights into the experiences of individuals' and emotions in the workplace environment.

Sosik and Megerian (1999), for example, suggest that to manage changes effectively, individuals must understand and be in touch with their own feelings and emotions and be self motivated sufficiently to respond appropriately to these. George, writing a little later in 2000 suggests that individuals can only be effective and self motivated if they are open and honest in how they express and manage their feelings and emotions; the underlying assumption also being that individuals must understand what lies behind their feelings to be able to do this. Goleman (1998) suggests that individuals who are aware of their feelings and emotions are more self motivated and are better able to cope during change situations; for star performance in all jobs in every field, emotional competence is twice as important as purely cognitive abilities. For success at the highest

levels, in leadership positions, emotional competence accounts for virtually the entire advantage (Goleman, 1998). Fineman, drawing on the work of George and Jones (2001) and Kiefer (2002) agrees; "Expectations of change prompt a process of adaptation and learning, which can be long and excruciating, or short and sweet. It rather depends on how the change is construed – what it means to the person or people affected" (Fineman, 2005, pp. 121).

In addition to emphasising the importance of recognising feelings and emotions, Fineman, (2005), George, (2000), Goleman, (1998), Sosik and Megerian, (1999), suggest that there is a relationship between emotional understanding, emotions and self motivation. What we mean by self motivation, however, needs, I believe, careful consideration. If, for example, an individual describes themselves as self motivated, this prompts, I suggest for most people, a positive image of an individual with ambition, enthusiasm, energy and drive; possibly someone who has taken control of their situation, has a clear view of the way forward and is positively committed to their journey. In thinking about this in more detail, however, there must also be an acknowledgement that there can be negative forms of self motivation; working harder for example out of anxiety, embarrassment, fear, guilt or shame. At a practical level, the language used in some of the observations above begins to highlight the importance of some of these considerations for my research; for Goleman (1998), it is about an individual's success and even survival; whereas for Fineman (2005) it is about recognising that the learning process is different for everyone, even to the extent he suggests, drawing on the work of Seligman (1975), that "Some of the managers …"learned" to be helpless, resigned to their fate" (Fineman, 2005, pp. 123). Whilst Fineman implies that individuals have no choice, Schein is more direct and introduces a sense of control and a more divisive consideration with his observation that, "all learning is fundamentally coercive because you either have no choice… or it is painful to replace something that is already there with new learning" (Schein, 2002, pp. 103).

In essence, Fineman (2005), George, (2000), Goleman, (1998), Sosik and Megerian, (1999), are drawing upon the earlier work of John Mayer and Peter Salovey who, following their research into the interaction and the relationship between understanding and emotion in 1980, introduced a concept they termed emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence they observe is "the ability to perceive emotions, to access and

generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Mayer and Salovey, 1997, pp. 5). Essentially, Mayer and Salovey are suggesting that it is an individual's ability to not just effectively understand and influence their own emotions and feelings but to be able to recognise, understand and influence the emotions and feelings of others to bring about a change; the change in this instance being the development of the individual. Whilst the work of Goleman in more recent years has been influential in popularising the concept through his regular publications and vocalisation on the subject (1996; 1998; 1999; 2003), the concept does face some scepticism and the challenge that it is just another mechanistic change management fad. For Tossman, as an example, it is another "prescriptive device" to facilitate change (Tossman, 1999). A view arguably, that could be reinforced by many of the management events I have attended recently in the course of my work, which unlike a few years ago, have included a presentation or have incorporated reference to the subject of emotional intelligence somewhere in the proceedings. Whilst, it would be easy, I suggest, to be sceptical, I prefer to adopt a more sympathetic position, and like Fineman (2000) and Darwin, Johnson and McAuley (2002), to regard this as an indication that there are genuine attempts being made to develop a deeper understanding of the nature of our being, our feelings and emotions, how we understand others, and how we make sense of the world around us.

The extent to which individuals are able to do this though has highlighted a difficulty and a key consideration for my research as it is of course entirely possible for an individual to be mistaken about their emotions or to be misled by the incidental emotions of themselves and others. In addition, the perspective of the individual is an important consideration, and the need to remain aware of this, during my study is reinforced by Frisby and Featherstone (1997) and Darwin, Johnson and McAuley (2002). Drawing on the work of Georg Simmel (1909), Darwin, Johnson and McAuley (2002), suggest that because of the extent, significance, sheer scale and volume of the changes happening in our environment today, it is not possible for an individual to internalise everything that is changing. Consequently, whilst the changing environment is still a key part of an individual's life to the extent that they live in it and respond to its stimulus, it is an individual's nature of being, their mindset, and the aspects of change they have internalised that influences how they respond when faced with new change,

and, as such, they are biased with no choice but to respond subjectively. Frisby and Featherstone suggest that subjectivity in this context has a "...rootless and arbitrary character", which "...robs the individual of any consistent inner relationship to culture as a whole, and casts him back again on his own resources" (Frisby and Featherstone, 1997, pp. 102). This is clearly a situation they regard as being far from satisfactory; their choice of words conveys their sense of aggravation and dissatisfaction in this context. Conversely, Darwin, Johnson and McAuley, (2002), Huy (1999), and Nevis (1987), all suggest that it is this subjectivity and individuality of response that can be used to inform and enrich our understanding of the emotional capability of individuals with emotions being seen as positive drivers during periods of change if they are recognised and understood as such. There are, however, other difficulties to consider, as in my experience it does not necessarily follow that an individual who is in tune with their own emotions and who manages their emotions effectively will go on to openly express their true feelings to others. The extent, to which they will do this, whilst influenced by their appraisal of the context as discussed earlier, will also be determined by the nature of their relationships with others

Change and the nature of being; feelings, emotions and self motivation – giving shape to my research

Throughout this initial literature review on change and the nature of being; feelings, emotions and self motivation, I have sought to identify the observations and thoughts of others that could help to shape and guide my research study. From the discourse at this stage, there are a number of key considerations for my research. These are the ways in which our nature of being, our existence and philosophy are integral parts of the change context. There is a connection between knowledge and emotion from which, emotions and feelings can be considered a reasonable way of interpreting how we interact in everyday life; everyone experiences change differently, however; new changes, actual or conceptual, invoke emotions as individuals' make associations and draw upon aspects of their unique life experiences; change is an intensely personal experience, where, at the extreme, an individual's whole being and purpose may become one and the same with the change event, and as such, undistinguishable outside of the event; care must therefore be taken when exploring emotions, as individuals can be mistaken

22

about their emotions or can be misled by the incidental emotions of themselves and others. As discussed earlier, it is an individual's nature of being, their mindset, and the aspects of change they have internalised that influences how they respond when faced with new change, and, as such, they are biased with no choice but to respond subjectively.

I now continue my exploration of the literature with a consideration of individuals' relationships with others. This is not a detailed exploration of all the literature but an initial exploration designed to develop my pre-understanding.

Relationships considered

In the discussion so far, I have considered some of the issues concerning the individual and their nature of being, their feelings and emotions and their self motivation. What is clear from this, however, is that these considerations are also at the heart of an individual's relationship with others. Whilst an individual's feelings and emotions help them to understand the social context, and influence the decisions they make, they also define the nature of their relationships. Consider for example, Fineman, who suggests that emotions are central to our relationships; they are, he observes, "...the prime medium through which people act and interact" (Fineman, 2005, pp. 1). Emotions underpin everything that happens and shape, he suggests "...consciously or unconsciously, the coalitions, conflicts and negotiations that emerge (Fineman, 2005, pp. 2). Our relationships are born within this emotional background where emotions and feelings influence our choices about the roles we play, who we work closely with, who we trust and what we choose to reveal about ourselves.

James found this to be the case during his research into emotional labour with a hospital cancer care team in 1993. The relationships between individuals in this team, and the interdependency of their roles had a direct influence on how they controlled each other's emotions, and determined what they chose to reveal about themselves and what they chose to hold back. This giving and receiving of emotions James found benefited relationships within the team, helping them to distribute the emotional responsibility across the whole team so individuals could focus on the jobs they could do best (James,

1993). Their individual interpretation of the social context, however, was important in defining the nature of their relationships. Whilst individuals may make the same cognisant appraisal of the "what is", as discussed earlier, their emotional response and the resulting nature of their relationships will be determined by how much they believe it is socially acceptable and safe to share their feelings and emotions with others (Ekman and Friesen, 1975). In James' study, it is clear that the different individuals in the team considered the social context to be safe, and in sharing their feelings and emotions they were able to sustain their relationships during emotionally difficult circumstances with the result that their relationships could be defined by how they chose to communicate and engage with each other. Likewise for Fineman (1999; 2000; 2005), Schein (1992), and Waldron (2000) the *nature* of communication; its nuances and the language used, informs an individual's understanding of the social context, shapes their emotional response and consequently, determines the nature of their relationships.

It is clear that throughout this discussion, there are interdependencies, be they either consciously or unconsciously recognised, between an individual's nature of being, their feelings and emotions, their view of the social context, the decisions they make, how they choose to communicate and their resulting relationships. This web of interdependencies will be different for everyone, which at a practical level begins to highlight the importance of these considerations for my research. Consider Schein, for example, who offers an insight into the experience of individuals attempting to influence these interdependencies through communication during periods of change, (1988; 1992), "…the single most difficult aspect of initiating change", he observes, "is the balancing of painful disconfirming messages with the reassurance that change is possible and can be embarked upon with some sense of personal safety" (Schein, 1988, pp. 245). Attempts to influence individuals using tactical communications crafted in this way, however, introduce more divisive considerations, and raises questions about the morality of these endeavours (Fineman, 2005; Waldron, 1994).

Waldron in particular highlights this issue and suggests that, if our relationships can be defined and maintained by how we choose to communicate and engage with others, they can also be abused in the same way (Waldron, 1994). Whilst all attempts to influence others can be considered abuse in some contexts, there are, at the extreme,

24

some relationships that are defined, by communication that seeks to influence individuals through, for example, bullying, harassment, humiliation, intimidation, manipulation, persecution, ridicule or violence (Fineman, 2005; Waldron, 1994). For Fineman, engagements of this nature between individuals result in "emotional injuries" that can have a profound and lasting effect. Consider for example, when relationships of this nature are defined in change circumstances, such as, changes to an individual's job, change of operational practices and policies within their place of work, downsizing, or unemployment; these situations offer, Fineman suggests, a clear insight into the emotional scars that can result; taking downsizing as a specific example "the distress..." he observes, "is palpable. (Individuals) have been injured – they are hurt, angry, resentful, (and) disaffected" (Fineman, 2005, pp.182). For Waldron and Krone, the impact may "…lead to rigidity in work relationships, misinterpretation of emotional events, and perhaps to more explosive encounters in the future" (Waldron and Krone, 1991). In these circumstances individuals will seek to manage the outward face of their emotions, sharing "just enough" emotion to avoid, as Fineman observes, "…undue collision, between the different interpersonal and political demands" facing them (2005, pp. 196). Waldron and Krone agree, and suggest that individuals often suppress their feelings and emotions during these types of relationships to minimise the damage to their relationships; "largely", they observe, "because they fear the consequences" (Waldron and Krone, 1991). Feldman (2000) and Fineman (1987; 2005) found this to be the case during their research into downsizing in the workplace, and drawing on these studies, Fineman suggests that, "Those who are made unemployed and re-enter the workforce elsewhere, do so with a legacy of wounds and wisdoms from their…experiences", with the result that, "they manage their careers more defensively, (and) are cautious about offering more than a moderate degree of commitment to their employer or role" (Fineman, 2005, pp. 185).

This highlights the impact on the psychological contract of work, a relationship built upon a set of unwritten expectations between the individual and the organisation and based upon give and take; trust and job security in exchange for an individual's loyalty and commitment to the organisation. This is a key consideration for my research as it is this type of relationship that is often tested, as discussed above, during periods of change, particularly where the individual has had little involvement in the nature or pace of the change event taking place (Rousseau, 1995; Fineman, 2005). Like Feldman

(2000) and Fineman (1987), discussed earlier, Thomas and Dunkerley found this to be the case in their study in 1999 into psychological contracts of work following a workplace restructure. They found that for most managers who had survived the restructure, their relationship with the organisation was radically different. For the majority, their previous unquestioning loyalty to the organisation had gone and had been replaced instead by feelings of betrayal, fear and suspicion. Others were prepared to "be seen (to be) working hard", their commitment to doing a good job for their own satisfaction, replacing their previous loyalty to the organisation (Fineman, 2005, pp. 188). For Chester Barnard (1948), these types of considerations emphasise how important relationships are in creating organisational environments conducive to effecting change and like Fineman (2005), Grint (1997), and Peters (1989), he highlights the need for co-operation and participation by everyone; "...the quality of behaviour of individuals whereby they guide people or their activities in organised effort...is the function of at least three complex variables – the individual, the group of followers, the conditions" (Barnard, 1948, pp. 91-92).

Whilst, these studies begin to show that the nature of an individual's relationship with others can be regarded as an integral part of the change context and, as such, begin to provide support for this early research consideration, they also indicate that workplace relationships are more complicated than some of the academic literature suggests. Waldron (2000) and Fineman (2005) for example, agree and suggest that past attempts to measure and quantify our experiences, means that the nuances and complexity of those relationships have been lost leaving behind some rather bland and emotionless pictures of organisational life. This is a key consideration for my research and highlights how critical the choice of methodology and methods are to avoid losing the essence and context of valuable research material. In the next chapter, I share in more detail how these considerations helped me to decide upon the most appropriate methodology and research methods for my research journey.

Relationships – giving shape to my research

Throughout this initial literature review on relationships, I have sought to identify the observations and thoughts of others that could help to shape and guide my research study. From the discourse at this stage, there are a number of key considerations for my research. These are; individuals' nature of being, their feelings and emotions, their self motivation, their interpretation of the social context, and the nature of communications lie at the heart of their relationships with others and the organisational collective, and this web of interdependencies, be they either consciously or unconsciously recognised, will be different for everyone; our relationships can be defined, maintained, and abused by how we choose to communicate, and our experiences here, shape the emotional masks we choose to wear; the psychological contract of work is a relationship that is often tested, during periods of change, particularly where the individual has had little involvement in the nature or pace of the change event taking place.

I now continue my exploration of the literature with a consideration of the nature of control. This is not a detailed exploration of all the literature but an initial exploration designed to develop my pre-understanding.

Control considered

The drive for organisational or strategic change happens for many different reasons as I have illustrated earlier in this chapter with my own experiences. The literature specialising in how to go about developing strategies for leading and managing change is momentous with a continual proliferation of new publications. It is a widely discussed and popular business area with writers keen to share their experiences and thoughts about why we need to change and how we should go about leading and managing change, with, it would appear an equally keen audience eager to read about the latest wisdom. A snapshot of a few of the well quoted authors include Handy (1989), Kanter (1994; 1997), Peters (1989), Peters and Waterman (1982), Schein (1988; 1992), and Toffler (1970). The message that is reflected in varying degrees by all these writers is captured by Peters with his observation that we need to change because, "the turbulent market place demands (it)" and as such, "…we must learn, individually

27

and as organisations, to welcome change and innovation as vigorously as we fought it in the past…" (Peters, 1989, pp. 274); inherent within Peters' observation is not just a clear requirement for individuals to embrace and welcome change but a requirement for individuals' to fit in culturally. There is a sense that to do otherwise, will lead to failure, not just to change but ultimately, to survive.

It is not therefore surprising that the ability to lead and manage change is considered a key skill that all managers should have (Fineman, 2005), and with this, there is no shortage of advice on how relationships during change should be managed and how any resistance to change can be overcome. Many of these ideas, however, are process driven and, as Fineman observes, are "top-down, focusing on change that is done to others" (2005, pp. 130). Consider, for example Schein, who suggests we build upon Kurt Lewin's change management theory where managing change is considered a top down process; a continuous cycle with three important stages; unsettle the current situation; make changes to it, then when all key stakeholders have adopted the change, freeze it (1988; 1992). Alternatively, Peters and Waterman advocate we adopt McKinsey and Company's Seven S analysis approach, again top down, with consideration given to the hard S's; strategy, structure and systems and the soft S's; staff, skills, leadership styles and shared values (Peters and Waterman, 1982). Whilst, these two examples are only a small snapshot of the process driven change solutions, they are included at this stage to illustrate that in attempting to lead and manage change events, we have been attempting to control people by influencing their activity so the desired outcome is achieved. My early hunch that managing change can be considered a form of control has been drawn from my own experience of organisational change, however, I believe there is enough support within the literature to provide early confidence in this position.

Consider Smircich and Morgan (1982) who suggests for example, that leadership infers not just a responsibility, but a right to control the existence of others. Kanter agrees with this idea and argues the case for power, manipulation and coercion skills to effectively overcome opposition or indifference to new ideas (Kanter, 1997). Barnard (1948), suggests that influencing others to cooperate and comply is essentially a form of persuasion and observes that leaders adopt many different approaches in their relationships to persuade, coordinate action and deliver the desired results, which vary from, "…calm poise inspiring confidence, or quiet commands in tense moments, to

28

fervid oratory, or flattery, or promises to reward in money, prestige, position, glory, or to threats and coercion" (Barnard, 1948, pp. 96). This is however, only one half of the story, and as Fineman observes, it is "…the poorer half" (2005, pp. 90). The literature, however, is not short of examples in which leaders have benefited from, "participating in processes through which less powerful people…are mistreated" (Jermier, 1998, pp. 236). These "less powerful people" are the other half of the story, the people being controlled. These are the individuals who have to be persuaded about the choices they have to make if they are to cooperate and comply. They are "…the followers, people seeking comfort, stability, direction, challenge and meaning" (Fineman, 2005, pp. 90). Schein's observation discussed earlier in the context of self motivation helps to illustrate the difficulty with this, if as he suggests the change journey is essentially coercive and inevitably painful for individuals regardless of their level of engagement or the choices they make (2002).

Given the large amount of energy organisations invest in bringing about change, it is interesting that there is often little or no emphasis on the activity or skills required to be a follower (Fineman, 2005). The consequence of which, I suggest leads to a misapprehension of how sustainable our attempts to manage change really are. As Darwin, Johnson and McAuley observe, "…attempts to manage change may be chimeras which present an illusion of control over a precarious world" (Darwin, Johnson and McAuley, 2002, pp. 1). Warren Bennis, writing earlier in 1998 recognises the same challenge albeit with his humorous analogy of considering leadership an exercise in herding cats!

The nature of control – giving shape to my research

Throughout this initial literature review on the nature of control, I have sought to identify the observations and thoughts of others that could help to shape and guide my research study. From the discourse at this stage, there are a number of key considerations for my research. These are; individuals are required to embrace and welcome change, and fit in culturally as to do otherwise, puts our future survival at risk; the ability to lead and manage change is therefore, considered a key skill that all managers should have, with the main focus being on process driven change that aims to

control individuals' activity; as a consequence, the change journey is ultimately coercive and inevitably painful for individuals regardless of their level of engagement or the choices they make; and with this, there is a misapprehension of the sustainability of managing change in this way.

Confidence to proceed

Throughout this initial review of the literature, I have sought to develop my pre-understanding and inform my early research considerations. In doing this I have focused on the subjects of change, the leadership and management of change, and stories of emotions in organisational life. Whilst it appears that leading and managing change in the workplace has to a large extent been facilitated by the application of processes and controls, individuals, their nature of being, their feelings, emotions, and self motivation are themes recognised within the literature. This is not a detailed exploration of all the literature as I have concentrated upon a small number of select writings at this stage, which have helped to develop my thinking, have helped to identify areas to focus on during my research study, and ultimately have given me the confidence to proceed.

Pre-understanding - summary comments

In this chapter I discuss the early considerations for my research, feelings and emotions, self motivations, relationships and control, and how these have been influenced initially by my own experience and then subsequently by my initial review of the literature.

My experience has led me to believe that there is some doubt about the extent to which, emotions are genuinely welcomed in the work place; I see change directed towards organisational benefit and I consider that even an understanding of emotions would "add value". These have been important considerations for me, which have ultimately shaped the overall aim for my study.

Reflecting in the first part of the chapter upon examples and observations from my working life, I have endeavoured to bring to life the things that are important to me,

through my thoughts, feelings and my motivation and to share why I am interested in this study as a basis for inspection and association. I start to reveal my ontological and epistemological perspective and the considerations and interdependencies that shape this reflexive journey.

In the second part of the chapter, I have attempted to identify from the literature the observations and thoughts of others that have given depth and meaning to my early research considerations, and which ultimately have given me the confidence to proceed. I trust I have been able to position my perspective and thinking in advance of embarking on my research journey, the detail of which forms the basis of the next chapter.

2   My research journey

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to provide insight into my research journey.

In chapter 1, I provide insight into my pre-understanding as a basis for inspection and association. I discuss my early research considerations of feelings and emotions, self motivation, relationships, and control, and how these have been informed by my experience of change in organisational life, and my initial review of the literature. In the chapter that follows, I share details of the aim, purpose and objectives of my study and how my philosophical and methodological considerations have helped to shape and inform my overall approach to exploring the early research considerations, the research methods I have adopted, my interpretation of the information, and emerging understanding. An important part of my journey has been my own feelings and emotions, which I reflect upon and share within this chapter.

I have presented the journey in an order that faithfully reflects all the different stages of my research, retaining the essence of the lived adventure, although recognising that the actual journey was far from this logical and straight forward. The map of the journey is as follows;

CHAPTER 2 My RESEARCH JOURNEY

My views on reality and how we know what we know

Focus on the number of interviews

RESEARCH PROJECT → ONTOLOGY AND EPISTOMOLOGY → RESEARCH METHODOLOGY → PRACTICAL ISSUES

Aims and objectives | Philosophical considerations | Choices | The choice - Hermeneutics | The research environment | What

Access authority
Practical issues
Life histories from interviews
Number of interviews
Focus group
Observations
Documentation
Flexibility

How and why; when and where

Reflections

Summary comments

When transcribing and interpreting the research information

Reliving the experience

Whom

Monks in a cave

Mix of experience, theory and practice

Collecting the data

My emotions

Themes evolved | The Hermeneutic Loop

Ethics

FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS ← EXPLORATION AND INTERPRETATION

The emotions I experienced
My emotional involvement

The approach

33

- The research project - the aim, purpose and objectives of the study
- Philosophical considerations, research methodologies, practical issues and methods
  - Introduction
  - Philosophical considerations
  - Positivism, postmodernism, critical theory and critical realism considered
  - Research methodologies considered and discounted; action research, case study, grounded theory, feminism, discourse analysis and ethnomethodology
  - Hermeneutics research methodology – my choice
  - Practical issues and methods - what; how and why; when and where; whom; ethics
  - Practical issues considered
- Exploration, reflection, consideration and interpretation of the research information
- Feelings and emotions
- Summary comments

The research project - the aim, purpose and objectives of the study

The overall aim of my study is to explore the emotional experiences of individuals during periods of strategic and organisational change.

I discuss in chapter 1 my experience and how this has led me to believe that there is some doubt about the extent to which, emotions are genuinely welcomed in the work place, that I see change directed towards organisational benefit, and that I consider that even an understanding of emotions would "add value". It is these considerations and the confidence to proceed arising from my initial review of the literature to develop my pre-understanding, which have ultimately shaped the overall aim for my study.

My purpose is to develop professional understanding and to make a contribution to knowledge, understanding and management praxis in this area through the unique combination of the subject matter, the context and the approach I have taken to collect and interpret the information.

There is a growing interest in feelings and emotions in management theory, in which attempts are being made to, develop an understanding of the issues and the implications for management praxis. Whilst this is encouraging, there is still a long way to go, and my key contribution is focused around organisations that do not have an understanding of these issues. Management theory in which feelings and emotions are generally not represented is still often translated into management praxis in many work places. My modest suggestion is that if this situation was different and emotions, feelings and peoples' individuality were better understood and respected more in the work place as the norm and not the exception, the practice of delivering change in organisations may also be different. A better understanding of emotions could be the basis on which change is introduced and managed more effectively. An important consideration for me, running throughout this study is how the change experience can be developed so it is better for all individuals. I find the opportunity to help inform this debate exciting and consider this to be an important and useful piece of work.

The key objectives of my study are:
- To explore individuals' emotions
- To explore individual variations from cultural expectation and cultural fit
- To consider individuals' emotions collectively
- To consider the psychology of emotions as a basis on which organisational change could be managed

My journey has taken me down a road that has given me a privileged opportunity to study people in a business context. I am grateful to individuals who have allowed me to explore with them areas that would generally be considered beyond that of normal business protocol. Their openness and candour has revealed individuals' emotions that are not often articulated and recognised in business. They have each given me insights not often shared in a business context, which has enabled me to develop my study in a way which would not have been possible had they not felt able to share their feelings and experiences with me.

Philosophical considerations, research methodologies, practical issues and methods

Introduction

In chapter 1, I share why I am interested in this study and my considerations through a snapshot of my life history set in a context of change. I have drawn upon some examples and observations from my working life to illustrate what is important to me, my thoughts, feelings and my motivation. It would, however, be misleading to suggest that I had a clear view of how I intended to carry out this study from the outset of my journey or even to suggest that I had a clear view of what my research objectives were going to be; I didn't. Decisions had to be taken on the methods and the overall methodology that I was going to use; the methods arising from the methodology, with the choice of methodology arising from my ontological and epistemological perspective (Crotty, 1998; Gill and Johnson, 1997; Hussey and Hussey, 1997). The starting point it would seem was logically my ontology and epistemological considerations; my considerations of reality and how we know what we know. Whilst I have attempted as follows to provide an understanding of my journey; taking ontology and epistemology together, and then my methodological considerations, my methodological choice and then a discussion of the methods I employed, the journey itself was far from this straight forward. I draw some comfort from Crotty (1998), who does not give particular regard to the order in which these matters are considered; the robustness of the finished article being of greater consideration.

Philosophical considerations

In the section that follows, I have attempted to share how my ontological and epistemological considerations have shaped my journey by reflecting on my philosophical deliberations and considerations of different philosophical positions; positivist and postmodernist thinking, critical theory, touching briefly on critical reasoning; identifying those where I have felt affinity or where I have been uncomfortable with the prevailing bias.

For a long time, I found myself in a situation alien to me; from being competent and confident in my business world, a recognised sound route finder and decision maker, I found myself in a fog of indecision over my philosophical and epistemological position. During many lectures and study group discussions, and from reading many articles and books, I found myself almost desperately trying to identify snippets of new knowledge that had my name on it, that I could hang on to, to give me the confidence I needed to proceed with the research, so I could finally say, that's me! I'm a positivist, a critical theorist, a critical realist, a postmodernist! I found elements within many philosophical positions that I had an affinity with and I left many a study group discussion thinking I had found the answer, only to find after further reading that I became indecisive again. Was it possible to be a positivist in some situations and a postmodernist in others? I drew comfort from the knowledge that other DBA colleagues were also struggling with the same challenge; but it was a challenge it seemed everyone had to find their own answer to.

The search for clarity became for me an interesting, absorbing, unsettling, personal, and a somewhat lonely journey but equally one that was extremely important to me. I needed to feel confident that the approach I was going to use was the right one for me and my research study. I did not wish to be in a position after the event, trying to justify an approach taken, which I myself did not fully empathise with. This meant for me that alternate positions and approaches had to be considered before they could be comfortably and sensibly put to one side. This is the journey I now share with you.

I reflect back on the many visiting lecturers who were eagerly asked; how did you select your research methodology and your methods? For myself, and I am sure equally for others, the hope being, that the answers would provide some useful clue to the individual's underlying philosophical position from which, affinity may be possible. Interestingly, I cannot remember a single instance when a direct question about someone's philosophical position was asked. It felt as though it was something of a taboo subject; not really the done thing to do; akin almost to asking someone out of the blue what their religion is and then asking them to justify it; it just never happened. And then for me there was a glimmer of light that came from a DBA colleague during my research presentation, in which I shared that I still felt unable to label my philosophical position, something that for me at the time, was still "work in progress". He asked the

question, "why did we all think it was necessary to attach a label to ourselves, would this not only served to attach a confused and confusing set of ideas and values, which every reader would colour with their own values and beliefs?" (Couch, Oliver, Sheffield Hallam University, DBA colleague). This, for me, and the discussion that ensued, was eureka moment.

I had struggled for a long while in an attempt to put a label on myself and fit myself into a particular philosophical box. An exercise I felt was akin to trying to fit a large squashy mass exactly into an inflexible and unaccommodating space; there were bits in the box but there were bits that kept popping back out and there were gaps in the corners. I am comfortable in now happily resigning myself to having no overarching label; no-one I suggest fits neatly into such a box. I am, therefore, reluctant to put a label on myself as by doing so I may advocate that they do. I am not alone here, as Johnson and Duberley observe in discussing positivist epistemology; "…hardly anyone openly applies a positivist label to their own work – despite the odd notable exception" (Johnson and Duberley, 2000, pp. 12). I accept that my philosophical position is always open to challenge and the subjective interpretation of others as the content, gaps and excesses in my box reveal themselves. Undoubtedly, though, from the bits that are in my box, some empathy and common understanding of my philosophical position or my ontology should be possible even taking into account the biases, views and beliefs of others. Although, as Easterby-Smith notes, "…even self confessed extremists do not hold consistently to one position or another…" (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 1997, pp. 22). Some views are relatively clear. Donaldson (1995; 1996; 1997) is an example, as he advocates Newtonian physics with its empirical testing as the best model to use to study organisational theory, and as "the main antidote to fanciful theorising" (1996, pp. 164). He suggests that the social world and the physical world can be studied in the same way by ascertaining the laws that "explain changes…Attention (is) paid to material factors as explanatory variables…The search (is) for parsimonious models utilising as few variables as possible with the variables being of an objective kind. Subjective variables (are only) included to fill in unexplained variance" (1997, pp. 87). The views of others are less clear, especially where individuals' views are dependant on the argument they wish to make at a point in time (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Johnson and Duberley, 2000). The discourse throughout the literature demonstrates this, in illustrating consensus, disagreement, changing opinions, challenge, and critique. With

38

the nuances of life's influences and my reflexivity on them, I am happy that my views and beliefs evolve. This, Gummesson (2000) would say is my "World View".

In the section that follows, I have attempted to share this part of my journey through my reflections on different philosophical positions; identifying those where I have felt affinity or where I have been uncomfortable with the prevailing bias. This undoubtedly provides an opportunity for the reader to interpret and form their own opinions from their own values and beliefs; in doing this though I ask the reader not only to recognise and reflect on their own views but to try and empathise with mine if a difference of opinion is noted. It has not been my intention to attribute a level of importance to the order in which I discuss these considerations, all hold equal importance at this stage, although I have chosen to begin the discussion with a consideration of the positivist epistemology given the financial services sector prides itself on its positivist attitude and this being the milieu that I have lived in for some time.

Positivist philosophy

Positivism in the social sciences is probably the most familiar epistemology in the English speaking world and has evolved from the approach used in the natural sciences. Halfpenny (1982), argues that its assumptions can be found embedded in most theory and research becoming as, Johnson and Duberley suggest "…virtually an aspect of our common sense…part of our taken-for-granted ways…and…the dominant epistemology …" in management disciplines (Johnson and Duberley, 2000, pp. 11-12). It allows for the possibility of superior knowledge that is predictable and that can be managed.

It is not an approach that many researchers feel able to attribute to themselves, it being, "…more commonly used as an epithet for someone else's work" (Johnson and Duberley, 2000, pp. 12). I find this interesting given its widespread familiarity and influence, yet understandable, given my own reflections on this matter. Drawing on the work of Lincoln and Guba from 1985, Johnson and Duberley suggest that alternative approaches invariably start their discourse with a critique and discounting of positivism (Johnson and Duberley, 2000, pp. 12), where the "…tendency to reduce human action to the status of automatic responses excited by external stimuli..." denies "…the

importance of human subjectivity" (Gill and Johnson, 1997, pp. 132-133); a position I find I empathise with as the reader will see later in this chapter.

The key tenet of positivism is that a real world exists, independently and separate of us knowing it, and is waiting to be discovered and known. It assumes neutral observation is possible through dualism, or the separation of the observer and the object being observed. In practise, however, our knowing of this real world evolves. Theories, when falsified or deemed unobservable by the mainstream, even under the positivist umbrella, are only discarded when there are new theories to replace them; new theories that may still themselves be falsified in the future; the world is flat (Thales), cylindrical (Anaximander), flat again (Anaximenes), round (Pythagorus)! And depending on your point of view and the lens you are looking through, it could still be anyone or all of these things. In positivist studies, the basis of explanation is provided by laws which, allows the expectation of phenomena, causal explanation and the prediction of their occurrence; as a result, this allows them to be controlled (Hussey and Hussey, 1997), until of course they are shown to be false or discarded. Until this happens though, laws are privileged and deemed to be "...predicated on the existence of an absolute truth" (Symon and Cassell, 1999, pp. 4). Despite the well documented challenges of positivist type research; Popper's critique of logical positivism (1967), Habermas' challenge of "objectivist illusions" (1974), Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (1781) and George Berkeley's Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge (1710) being famous examples of this, "...the commitment to a theory of neutral observational language and a correspondence theory of truth have remained remarkably unscathed" (Johnson and Duberley, 2000, pp. 12). I find I do have some affinity with the view that there is a real world that we can engage with and understand.

It is, however, worth reflecting on the apparent contradiction to the theory of neutral observational language, born from the famous paradox of "Schrödinger's cat" introduced by Erwin Schrödinger in 1935, and which still remains a relevant and *live* debate today (Penrose, 1999)! The physicist Heisenberg in his "uncertainty principle" in 1958 also suggests that it is impossible to observe and investigate something without influencing and therefore changing what is seen (Penrose, 1999). John Gribben (2002) illustrates how the famous "two hole experiment" continues to challenge physicists around the world with "desperate remedies and counsels of despair" (pp. 16) put

forward seriously by respected scientists demonstrating he observes "what deep (philosophical) water we are in" (pp. 16), and drawing on the work of John Wheeler and Wojciech Zurek (1983) suggests that, "it is only the presence of conscious observers, in the form of ourselves, that has...made the universe exist...everything in the universe exists because *we* are looking at it" (Gribben, 2002, pp. 16). Nearly 200 years after George Berkeley observed "No physical world exists behind the apparent elementary sense impressions subjected to the reflections of the mind" (Berkeley, 1710, in Gribben, 2002, prologue), the debate continues. Habermas' (1974) challenge also focuses on the process by which knowledge is constituted, by drawing attention to social and cultural considerations.

Reflecting on all this, I find I have some affinity with the uncertainty surrounding the views of reality and the challenge that observation can be completely neutral, value free and objective. This is an extremely important consideration for me and one that significantly influences my choice of research methodology, as I discuss later in this chapter.

Postmodernist philosophy

Postmodernism is often considered the antithesis to positivist thesis, its aim being to undermine positivist notions of objectivity and the theory of neutrality in social research (Gergen, 1992; Rosenau, 1992). Originally, it was used to describe art and literature that represented a move away from an ordered structured modernist society to something more random, anarchic, fragmented and indeterminate (Honderich, 1995; Johnson and Duberley, 2000). There is no straight forward description, however, for postmodernism as a foray into the postmodernist literature reveals. There is the need to differentiate between the two fundamentally different concerns of the postmodernist period and epistemological positions, but the philosophy itself it seems to me sits uncomfortably with the Western way we order and live our lives around objective rules and laws.

The key tenet of postmodernism is that in knowing something we create it through language; a purpose of language, therefore, being, not to describe, but to create. Nothing exists independently and separate of us knowing it; instead, everything is equal and

subjective and there are always multiple meanings at play. "...postmodernists...embrace, celebrate and reinvigorate relativism" (Johnson and Duberley, 2000, pp. 91), so in effect, there can be no consensus and no answers. The result being Parker argues, "a fundamentally uncontrollability of meaning...the out there is constructed by our discursive conceptions of it and these concepts are collectively sustained and continually renegotiated in the process of making sense" (Parker, 1992, pp. 3). Everything becomes relative. There are infinite alternatives but there can be no criticism; even silence becomes partisan and supportive of the status quo. Reality, therefore, is random, unstable, constantly changing and inherently unreliable as it is driven and given life by the dominant discourse of the moment, which in itself, creates knowledge, power or truism. For postmodernists, these are one and the same thing and there can, by definition, be more than one truism; from the discourse that is suppressed and from the resulting truth-effects.

For Foucault, the dominant discourse "produces reality...domains of objects and rituals of truth" (Foucault, 1977, pp. 194). It is the dominant discourse that gives rise to the truth-effect; influencing how individuals structure and define themselves, how they think about situations and how they respond to them. Individuals, by definition, become coerced and constrained by the truth-effect. Gergen (1992) and Rosenau (1992) suggest that the objective of the postmodernist researcher should be to unsettle the dominant and established discourses, to undermine traditions and prevailing attitude and beliefs, and to create new knowledge by giving voice to truths, which have been suppressed, through exploring the truth-effect and through deconstruction and exploration of the genealogy of the discourse.

Deconstruction enables the researcher to examine the discourse to reveal the inherent contradictions, assumptions and meaning within in and to explore why some interpretations become dominant and some submerged. The problem is the discourse has to be ongoing; if it stops, it becomes a stake in the ground and therefore, privileged. As human beings, I believe we need some stakes in the ground, but within a postmodernist ontology these do not exist; there is no final truism, just a new version of reality, a new social construction, which in itself can be deconstructed. Critics of deconstruction argue that the approach results in nothing more than armchair theorising

(Alvesson, 1995; Feldman, 1998) or a never ending paralysing activity (Ashmore, 1989).

Genealogy runs in parallel to deconstruction and enables the researcher to explore not just how discourses emerge and how they enable and limit what is knowable, but how they change and become new discourses through examining the socio-historical conditions, almost the mob psychology that make them possible. Barry and Elmes (1997) argue that to do this, the discourse has to gain the approval of its audience by being at the same time, credible and comfortable, new and innovative, and by using authority, ideas, tools and techniques that are familiar to them. There are obvious tensions here; if, for example, the audience gets bored or uncomfortable then the discourse loses credibility.

I remember vividly my introduction to this field of philosophy, in which I found the discussion unsettling; it certainly, however, encouraged my thinking, about thinking about things. My question during the discussion being, "are you trying to tell me, that you all might be a construction of my mind and none of you might really be sat here in this room with me?" The answer being "yes, oh, and the Gulf war was a media simulation! And, you didn't really think we put a man on the moon did you?" So it appeared that acceptance of conspiracy theory, simulated media events, or logic through semantics was pre-requisite for signing up to the postmodernist agenda. It seems to me to be implausible and absurd that these events would be constructs of the mind or media driven simulations, although I acknowledge that one individual's interpretation of an event may differ from someone else's as their pre-understanding influences their understanding. I was intrigue to understand more. Watch the film the Matrix I was told and then reflect on it, this is a postmodernist position at its extreme. I love the film, although in it, whilst life in the main is a construct and subjective, if one can escape from this, reality does exist, albeit found beneath the surface; just as it exists in Descartes' Demon theory and highlighted by Sokal's challenge, to those who believe otherwise, in his 12th storey window argument; jump out if you really believe reality is only a construct of the mind (Sokal, 1996).

Postmodernists reject the concept of neutral management practices and reject, for example, that through their training managers can acquire knowledge that others do not

have because there can be no fixed meaning. There is a paradox, however, that faces postmodernist research; as Johnson and Duberley argue "…if we agree with the postmodernist' epistemic commitment that all knowledge claims are untrustworthy, why should we trust their claims about the relativity of knowledge?" (2000, pp. 111). If all knowledge is socially constructed and there are no good reasons for preferring one representation over another, should this not equally apply to postmodernism? Is there a danger, as Johnson (2000) questions, that postmodernists' "conservative disinterestedness supportive of the status quo lurks behind radical posturing?" or are postmodernists "rebels without a cause" just positioning arguments for arguments sake, where, according to Alvesson and Deetz "resistance and alternative readings rather than reform or revolution become the primary political posture?" (1996, pp. 195).

Best and Kellner also argue that postmodernism "fails to provide a language to articulate what is arguably indispensable concerns with autonomy, rights and justice; it is individualist in its emphasis on desire and pleasure; and it is irrational in its rejection of theory and rational critique" (1991, pp. 220). Whilst I find the postmodernist agenda unreliable and at its extreme, absurd, dangerous, implausible, outrageous and lacking in constructiveness, I have found its focus on contrasting, reflexivity, and a critical awareness of and suspicion towards interpretation, and its sensitivity to the meaning of language interesting and useful to reflect upon during my research. I do, however, have affinity with Parker who observes, "unlike postmodernists, I believe there are limits to human action…I do not believe that the world is infinitely pliable and would want to assert that physical, biological and social constraints exist in a real sense…Language may be the medium for all forms of inquiry…but it does not follow from that premise that language is all there is" (1993, pp. 207 – 208).

Critical theory

Critical theory can be considered as an intermediate philosophy between positivism and postmodernism and it is based on an optimistic view that knowledge can lead to liberation and progress. It is, however, also pessimistic in that it starts from the premise that social structures control, oppress and alienate individuals and in order for them to achieve liberation and progress, they must break free from these constraining social

bonds. Whilst the school of critical theory is widely recognised as being started in 1923 by Max Horkheimer and the Frankfurt School, the thinking, albeit without the label critical theory significantly predates this. Kant for example, in his Critique of Pure Reason in 1781 argued that the fundamental philosophical task is to account for the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge; our minds are not passive receivers of sense data because we make choices, we select, limit, organise and interpret our experiences of the world we live in and in doing this we make assumptions from which we give the world meaning. Kant claimed that although the filters we use to make our choices seem to originate in the external world, they in fact derive from within ourselves, from our innate a priori cognitive structures, from our experiences of life and how we interpret these, which means that we are prevented from neutrally engaging with the world. In challenging this key tenet of the positivist philosophy, Kant argued that it is possible to rationally reflect on the world, based on a subjective epistemology but a positivist ontology; it is not a case of anything goes (Honderich, 1995; Johnson, 2000).

Jürgen Habermas has been a key writer on critical theory, and as noted earlier rejects positivism's "objectivist illusions" and argues, like Kant that positivism ignores individuals' experiences and the part this plays in filtering and colouring sense data to constitute new knowledge (Habermas, 1974; Johnson and Duberley, 2000). Habermas, however, adopts a more optimistic and balanced view than writers, such as, Adorno and Horkheimer, and suggests that there can be two forms of knowledge; instrumental knowledge, where objects are "moving bodies...capable of being manipulated", and social knowledge, where objects are "speaking and acting subjects...structured and understood symbolically" (Habermas, 1974, pp. 8). With instrumental knowledge, Habermas accepts there is an independent reality in the world, which exists independent of an individual's appreciation of it and which restricts human endeavours and he acknowledges positivisms contribution to getting things done and developing new knowledge in this sphere. With social knowledge, however, he emphasises the need for inter personal communication; the key being that human beings cannot rely upon a positivist reality but must understand each other to progress and survive together. To this, Habermas also added his view that individuals' social liberation and progress would arise from what he called critical science focusing on overt and covert forms of social control. This, however, ignores that there are more positive aspects of society and the desire to seek knowledge for knowledge's sake, not just to address issues of social

45

depravation and oppression. This, Alvesson and Deetz (2000) argue, creates an imbalance and narrows the interpretative repertoire.

Similarities can be found between the tenets of critical theory and postmodernism, however, there are distinct differences with critical theory's rejection of relativism and its goals of social liberation and progress. In critical theory, emphasis is placed upon consensus and on individuals acting rationally with self-knowledge and understanding arising from self-reflection. This, however, presupposes that individuals' subjective interpretations, communications and implied assertions of reality can be justified by recourse to argument and discourse, but without resort to power relationships, distortion or duplicity. This is an argument I find I have no affinity with, as I believe this to be totally unachievable in practice. This is Habermas' ideal speech situation, but one which Habermas himself also acknowledges is not attainable in everyday social situations due to the underlying influences of power.

Pragmatically, this is, therefore, problematic if adopting this approach for management research; without this ideal speech situation the result I would argue risks becoming nothing more than an intellectualising theoretical circular debate; a situation I find little to empathise with. For example, if consensus is our goal, how do we know when we have reached it? How do we know if agreement has been reached in spite of, or despite of the underlying power issues? How are managers within the research study to be presented, if no knowledge can be privileged? Are we to class managers as an oppressed group of individuals? And ultimately, what happens if there is no consensus? How do we ensure that the researcher and all participants to the study have been open in sharing their views and social a priori with distortions and duplicity removed?

Pragmatically for this to work effectively in practice, there needs to be a recognition that the philosophy has shades of grey and does not operate within a black and white arena, not just as Habermas suggests because of the underlying influences of power, but because of the taken for granted assumptions and the choices exerted by individuals over what they openly decide to share, all of which are inherent within the discourse. Here, I find I have some affinity.

Critical realism

This leads to my consideration of an "intermediate niche" and the philosophical position of critical realism, a key tenet of which considers that whilst knowledge or truth is not something absolute it is more than the output of discourse, something that I have an affinity with. The practical actions of the researcher are bound by an acknowledgement and a tolerance of reality of both unobservable structures and subjectively experienced social phenomena, the understanding of which arises from the discourse. Where critical theorists seek consensus, critical realists seek practical adequacy arising from "political debate that eschews epistemic privilege and examines the justification of existing gazes, the relevance of their approaches to different audiences, and the sources and forms of support they receive" (Johnson and Duberley, 2000, pp. 174).

Critical realism, however, takes a more subjective epistemological position than critical theory, and it is in these areas that I find I do not have an affinity. Here a number of questions arise; how do we substantiate knowledge claims that are unobservable? On what basis do we decide if the outcome is practically adequate? Who is involved in making this decision?

Although polarised along the subjective epistemological scale, both critical theorists and critical realists recognise the participation of the researcher and those being researched and their values, interests and beliefs in attempting to explore these questions, and is a consideration that I have a strong affinity with.

Philosophies considered

Throughout the discussion of the different philosophical positions, I have attempted to reflect upon my own views and to openly share where I have felt uncomfortable or an affinity with the discourse. Whilst I remain reluctant to be branded with any one specific philosophical badge, it is clear that my ontological and epistemological considerations as a framework for this particular study have a close affinity with the critical theory approach; although this in itself is not without significant difficulties; the ideal speech situation and the focus on a political and oppressed view of society remains problematic.

With my ontological and epistemological perspective in mind, I now reflect upon the next stage of my journey; the research methodologies I considered and discounted before choosing the preferred approach for my research study.

Research methodologies

The qualitative methodologies I have considered and discounted; action research, case study, grounded theory, feminism, discourse analysis and ethnomethodology. In the section that follows, I share my thoughts on these different frameworks; reflecting on their features and benefits and the reasons why I discounted them as research methodologies for my study.

One of my early considerations was to identify the most appropriate methodology for my study, which was not as straight forward as I initially expected it would be. There are differing opinions on how the methodology should be selected, with questions around its ontological or philosophical fit, and with the word methodology itself having different meaning for different people. Methodology, in the Oxford Companion to Philosophy is defined as "the philosophical study of scientific method", through "…description, convention (or) prescription" (Honderich, 1995, pp. 565). John Gill and Phil Johnson make the observation that "Research methodology is always a compromise between options, and choices are frequently determined by the availability of resources" (Gill and Johnson, 1997, pp. 1). Hussey and Hussey suggest that the choice of methodology should "…reflect the assumptions of your research paradigm" (Hussey and Hussey, 1997, pp. 59). Alvesson and Sköldberg, however, indicate there is an opportunity to be flexible and to choose a route between the "…two conventional – and safe – positions…" defined in the literature. Generally, the choice made is, they suggest, "…either empirically orientated or…" made with "…theoretical and philosophical considerations…" although they bring the reader's attention to literature that "gives unequivocal priority to theoretical and philosophical considerations, which tends, they seem to warn, "…to make empirical research look odd, irrelevant, naïve or even feeble minded" (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 3).

I took as my starting point John Gill and Phil Johnson's definition of methodology; "the study of methods or procedures used in a discipline so as to gain warranted knowledge" (Gill and Johnson, 1997, pp.177). As to the choice of approach, Gummesson (2000) suggests that this arises logically at the start of a research project, with a deductive approach indicated where there is an existing theory and concept and an inductive approach where the researcher has a pre-understanding from personal experience and

49

observation. Hussey and Hussey (1997), however, believe that it is feasible during a long term study to use both quantitative and qualitative approaches and to combine deductive and inductive methods. I struggle to feel entirely comfortable with the definitive indicated in both these positions as I reflect upon my own early deliberations and considerations. For me, the decision on which approach to adopt, arises from my views on how individuals interact in the world and from how we can reach understanding, and from my belief that we need to recognise throughout the journey that we don't know what we don't know and that we have a genuine desire to change this. Easterby-Smith supports this and suggests that it is the world view of the researcher that helps an individual to decide on the approach to their study and which, ultimately influences the value of the learning arising from it (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 1997, preface). Habermas (1970a; 1970b) has a similar view, albeit he presents this in a more divisive way suggesting that the search for knowledge is a self satisfying experience directed by the researcher's individual interests and how they view the world. Shipman (1988, pp. 13) adopts a similar divisive position implying that there is an inherent weakness in research because researchers do not often collaborate with each other. I find this observation interesting. On one hand, I have some sympathy with a view that collaboration provides an opportunity to advance learning on the other hand I am nervous. In reflecting on my own observations from organisational life, when political considerations are brought into play with collaboration, a virtual circle of restrictive practise develops. To work together and compromise can be limiting but equally, not to do so can hinder progress.

Thomas Kuhn (1970) defined his research methodology as, "the constellation of achievements – concepts, values … shared by a scientific community to define legitimate problems and solutions" and I believe there is scope for me to adopt the essence of this overall idea and relate it validly to my study. In carrying out my study, however, I do not wish to be restricted by existing theories or political considerations in any way. I do not have a predefined hypothesis or theory that I wish to test and it is not my intention to look for causal relationships in my research material. For me, all individuals are richly unique and, as they are such an important part of my study, I have decided against adopting a pure positive approach. My intention is not to reduce individuals to simple independent variables that I then extrapolate. An experimental

approach, or one entailing questionnaires or surveys was not I believe, therefore, appropriate.

Undertaking an exploration of human emotions and the extent to which individuals recognise and understand their own emotions during periods of change must, I believe consider individuals as though they are part of their social context and which, embraces the perceptions these individuals have of their own reactions. My aim is to develop understanding through familiarity and detailed analysis of the qualitative material with my own experience and knowledge playing a key part in this. It is very important to me therefore that my journey helps to facilitate this and before deciding on my chosen route, I consider a number of qualitative research options, some of which I discount quickly, others held more interest and which I took some time to consider before moving on from them.

Action research, case study, grounded theory and feminist approaches I put into my quickly discounted category.

Action research

Action research is a highly structured applied research methodology that is often used in qualitative organisational change studies to explore current change events. It is generally recognised as being first used in the 1940's by Kurt Lewin to explore social problems and to identify actions to resolve them through a process of planning, action, observation and reflection (Gill and Johnson, 1991; Hussey and Hussey, 1997; Lewin, 1946). These studies take place usually in one organisation in a controlled, ring fenced, naturally occurring environment which attempts to bring about change so that the change process can be monitored. Gill and Johnson provide three interesting examples of this approach in action (Gill and Johnson, 1991, pp 61-69). Whilst action research recognises the participation of the researcher and acknowledges their views and beliefs, the controlled nature of the study imposes restrictions, which reduces the opportunity and the flexibility of the researcher to respond to and explore what may be more relevant and interesting findings.

Gill and Johnson (1991), remind us of Rapoport's definition of action research; an approach which he says, "... aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework" (Rapoport, 1970). It is this joint collaboration between researcher and organisation that has led to the challenge that some action research studies are more akin to consultancy or more critically to journalism, I read sensationalism, rather than contributing to the wider debate of problems in the social sciences (Gummesson, 1991; Hussey and Hussey, 1997). Since then, however, Argyris, Putnam and Smith have attempted to address the criticism and have promoted the term action science to reflect that the testing methods generally used in action research provide the opportunity to test theory and develop understanding beyond that of just problem solving for organisations (Argyris, Putnam and Smith, 1985; Gill and Johnson, 1991; Riordan, 1995).

It is not, however, my intention to identify and solve a particular organisational problem or to work collaboratively with a particular organisation as part of my research journey; I wish to avoid situations, like this, which could potentially create tensions over my desire to remain independent. My interest is in revealing emotions during different organisational change situations that individuals themselves recognise as influential, some of which may have happened some time ago. The richness of material for me, I believe will come from being flexible, from being in a position to follow avenues of interest that may open up during the journey and from enabling the time and situation to be of the individuals choosing and not that of myself or an organisation. I am interested in understanding the experience and the journey from the individuals' perspective without trying to artificially create this within a targeted change environment.

Case study

Case study research is another methodology that has been used to explore organisational life and involves collecting qualitative material over a long period of time to develop understanding with the various writers on the subject providing little new understanding on the methodology and varying their terminology only slightly. Eisenhardt describes a case study as research which, "... focuses on understanding the dynamics present within

a single setting" (Eisenhardt, 1989, pp. 534). For Hussey and Hussey, this becomes "an extensive examination of a single instance of a phenomenon of interest…" in which the environment is central to it (Hussey and Hussey, 1997, pp. 65). Hartley writing in 1994 suggests that the environment or context can embrace one or more organisations, groups of individuals within organisations, or individuals per se and still be classed as a single focus for exploration and interpretation. Writing earlier, Robson described the methodology as, "…a strategy for doing research which, involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence" (Robson, 1993).

Multiple methods for collecting material can be used, which is of particular interest to me as my preference is to combine research methods to strengthen and add credibility to my interpretation. Access to an organisation was not going to be a problem as I had already negotiated any access to I needed to help me carry out my study. I am, however, interested in exploring individuals' emotions in a wider context than I believe would be accommodated by using an organisation as a case study. My aim is to understand how organisational change situations affect individuals' emotionally both inside and outside their work environment and I want individuals to feel they can share experiences from their home and previous work lives if this helps them articulate this.

Feminism

Although I discounted a feminist approach very early in my doctorial studies following a discussion on the methodology during a study session (a view that I reinforced by reading further about it), I have included it here for completeness and perhaps because as a woman researching emotions, I find myself seeking to clarify my lack of affinity with this methodology. I am not a supporter of the view that social structures are founded solely on oppression, and this approach to me has too many of the hallmarks of this, predominantly in favour of women. The term feminism is derived from the French word féminisme and in its broadest sense focuses on attempts to identify and address inequality, subordination and oppression between different social groups and in its narrowest sense focuses on how women attain equal legal and political rights (Honderich, 1995).

53

Mary Wollstonecraft was writing about this back in 1792, but it is still not a widely used methodology. It is interestingly absent from Gill and Johnson's first edition of their book "Research Methods for Managers", published in 1991, although it has been introduced in their second edition in 1997, albeit in the further reading section of Chapter 9, "Making methodological choices". This at least suggests that the approach is retaining its voice in the field of research. Alvesson and Sköldberg in 2001, for example, have dedicated several pages to its discussion in their book "Reflexive Methodology", reflecting that feminism, or broader gender research has its focus on social groups which are, "... underprivileged both politically and in research terms" (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 201) and which, "... are often critically explored for the sake of promoting the interests of women" (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 209). Hyde lists three principles of feminist methodology, one of which is that the research will benefit women (Hyde, 1994). Hussey and Hussey (1997) drawing on the work by Gregg acknowledge that using a feminist approach presents a number of problems for the researcher and they raise for consideration the difficulties and tensions Gregg experienced and felt herself when interviewing women with different opinions to her own feminist view of the world (Gregg, 1994).

All this suggests that the researcher must hold views in this guise with a distinct focus on seeking to understand social differences between, for example men and women, if they genuinely wish to proceed with a research study on this basis. Whilst Hussey and Hussey suggest that a feminist approach can bring a "... new perspective to research and offer insights and understanding of problems which would otherwise be unavailable" (Hussey and Hussey, 1997, pp. 69), I find that I am uncomfortable with what I have read and find that I am not sympathetic with the extreme views inherent in many of the arguments put forward in its support, to the extent that I found myself on occasions becoming annoyed with the discourse. I have found it very difficult to fully empathise with this approach; whilst I readily subscribe to equality and fairness in society it is not my intention to specifically explore this in my study.

Grounded theory

Glaser and Strauss are accredited with introducing grounded theory in 1967 with their book "The Discovery of Grounded Theory. Strategies for Qualitative Research", the title which, Alvesson and Sköldberg suggest, reveals the key tenets of the methodology; the focus being on, "…the discovery of theory, on grounded theory and on qualitative research" with the main emphasis being on "…the discovery of theory rather than the verification of theory" (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 15). For Glaser and Strauss, it "is the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research… (which they contrast with) theory generated by logical deduction from a priori assumptions" (1967/2006, pp. 2-3). Gummesson likens this to exploring an iceberg; not the tip above the water, but the greater part that lies underneath (Gummesson, 2000). Chell describes the methodology as one in which the researcher "…abandons preconceptions and, through the process of analysis, builds up an explanatory framework through conceptualisation of the data" (1999, pp. 60). The theory being generated, Hussey and Hussey explain "…by the observations rather than (it) being decided before the study" (Hussey and Hussey, 1997, pp. 70).

There is an interesting split in grounded theory between its qualitative humanistic interest and its insistence on coding. As Alvesson and Sköldberg, observe, however, coding and theoretical sampling are "…a must…" and central to a grounded theory approach, both of which, face problems and have been challenged for the "disregard for emotional aspects" and the detachment of events from their relationships and context, reconstructed only through the researcher's common sense view (2001, pp. 27 – 28). Alvesson and Sköldberg suggest that this makes it very difficult for this approach to be used to study individuals and relationships in organisations as is my own intention. They provide an interesting example; "It would be like trying to analyse music by studying how people talk about and perceive individual notes ("incidents"): in this way we would never be able to discover the essential element – the melody" (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 28). They also suggest that similar theoretical results are possible with less effort and observe that there is an inherent risk of "…belabouring the obvious" (2001, pp. 28). Some, however, have applied this approach successfully to studies into emotions in organisations where there has been vast amounts of process material to analyse (Harlos, and Pinder 2000; Martin, Knopoff, and Beckman, 2000).

Whilst grounded theory remains in part at least, a methodology built upon a statistical processing model (Glaser, 1992; Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001), its focus is on "...a systematic set of procedures to develop inductively derived grounded theory" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, pp. 24). For Strauss and Corbin, the frustrations arise where researchers concentrate exclusively on coding and not on developing theories from this (1994, pp. 277). Whilst I find there is an opportunity to build upon the general inspiration afforded by the approach, it is not my intention to carry out my exploration and interpretation using what could be described as a pseudo quantitative methodology. I am not interested in, as Silverman has summarised, "developing categories to illuminate (my) data" or in saturating these categories to demonstrate their importance to my study (Silverman, 1993, pp. 46).

Although I find I am interested in the concept of grounded theory, the method is not of interest to me as my a priori; my own knowledge, views and experience have been my starting point and a key part of my study. My early considerations and hunches have been drawn from my own experience of organisational change as I discuss in chapter 1 and not, as is generally the case with grounded theory, from the initial exploration and interpretation of the research material. Whilst Glaser and Strauss recognise the researcher's own experience as a source of research information, albeit an unconventional one, (Glaser and Strauss, 1967/2006), Glaser recommends the researcher should look to minimise their pre-understanding as much as possible (Glaser, 1978).

Discourse analysis and ethnomethodology

Unlike the four methodologies discussed above, the benefits and disadvantages of discourse analysis and ethnomethodology were not so readily apparent to me and I took some time to consider each of them before I decided to also put ethnomethodology into my discounted category and adopt just elements of discourse analysis as useful tools.

Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis has its roots in Wittgenstein's work in 1953 on linguistic philosophy in which, the key principal centres on the traditional problems of philosophy or metaphysics, (what really exists, what distinguishes what exists, and what makes it possible), as being not really problems but confusions arising from the misunderstanding of language or the misuse of it (Wittgenstein, 1953; Honderich, 1995, pp. 458 – 461).

The approach emphasises "modes of expression" and variations in the use of language, which can, Alvesson and Sköldberg (2001), suggest, be used to help challenge the underlying assumptions inherent within data orientated research methods, and to explore, through language, how people make sense of the social world we live in. David Stiles (1999), in his study "Pictorial Representation", adopted this approach to help him interpret individuals' verbal explanations of pictures by looking at the patterns of variation and consistency emerging from his verbal research material; although, in doing this, Alvesson and Sköldberg (2001), and Potter and Wetherall (1987), warn that a low degree of consistency across all patterns should be expected.

Potter and Wetherall in 1987 suggested that there are a number of key tenets for carrying out discourse analysis; the aim being to treat the verbal accounts in their own right, taking due consideration of "…clear cut patterns…nuances, contradictions and areas of vagueness…" in the data without reflecting upon "…vague notions about what may have been meant." Another key tenet, which I found particularly interesting and directly relevant to my study, is that, "…the close study of nuances in possibly quite a small number of accounts" is the important factor rather than the number of accounts studied (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 206 – 207; Potter and Wetherall, 1987).

Alvesson and Sköldberg drawing on studies by Van Maanen (1979), Ricoeur (1978) and Säljö (1990) amongst others, suggest that discourse analysis implies a "…critical critique of the so-called realistic view of language, which treats utterances as relatively ambiguous entry points to the understanding of actions, ideas or events…" and "…emphasises that language is by it's nature metaphorical, figurative and context dependent, and not very successful at mirroring complex circumstances…" and that it

"...does not reflect reality but..." individual perspectives (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 202).

Discourse analysis assumes that, "...language is constructed and constructive...the same phenomena can be described in several different ways...there will be variations in accounts..." and "...there is no foolproof way of handling these variations" (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 205). It also assumes that accounts or documents have arisen from language in the natural course of events, rather than in interaction between participants and researcher. This would of course rule out a number of research methods, including interviews and focus groups, which it is my intention to use. Potter and Wetherall suggest, however, that interviews can be considered in a different light from the traditional; if the key tenets of discourse analysis are followed, interviewees can be considered as "active participants in a conversation" and their accounts admissible (Potter and Wetherall, 1987, pp. 165; Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001). This is, I suggest, semantics, and whilst I have found myself empathising strongly with the methodology, it is not my intention to pursue this as an overall approach for my study. I agree with Alvesson and Sköldberg in that an exclusive focus on the use of language and "speech acts" results in "...too narrow an approach..." wherein "...questions are left unanswered..." with a risk of "...the research becoming trivialized" (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 207). In saying this, however, a number of the key tenets remain of interest to me, in particular, the focus on inconsistencies and variation at the level of utterances, which I intend to employ as tools to help analyse my research material.

Ethnomethodology

Current thinking on ethnography is generally considered to have been born out of the work of Garfinkel in 1967 and is essentially the study of social anthropology or human behaviour arising from cultural conditioning. For Garfinkel, it is "the investigation of the rational properties of indexical expressions and other practical actions as contingent ongoing accomplishments of organized artful practices of everyday life" (1967/2004, pp. 11). Although there have been studies since the 1930's that have explored organisational and managerial practices, and how individuals understand each other and work together in business environments; the aim being to reveal the underlying "taken

for granted" culture (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001; Garfinkel, 1967/2004; Gill and Johnson, 1997; Van Maanen, 1979), ethnomethodologists are interested, amongst other aspects, in common sense knowledge, in what happens when there are breaches of common sense understandings, and where, "the "reflexive," or "incarnate" character of accounting practices and accounts (or telling stories), make up the crux of (the learning) recommendation" (Garfinkel, 1967/2004, pp. 1), (my emphasis).

It is this ethnomethodologists principle of what Garfinkel (1967/2004) calls "reflexivity" that I find an interesting consideration for my research; the idea that meaning can be drawn from the reflexive interaction between the organisation of memory, practical reasoning, and talk (Cirourel, 1970), and the idea that as a collective we reach and share implicit definitions of situations some of which are dependent upon hidden agendas, and all of which are steered by unquestioned underlying expectations and implicit rules (Cirourel, 1970; Garfinkel, 1967/2004; McAuley, 2001), which generates common sense knowledge, that is captured in the symbols, myths and stories of organisational life (Cicourel, 1970; McAuley, Duberley, and Johnson, 2007).

Reflexivity, however, means different things to different people; for Holland, it is a "human capacity, which defines our existence" (1999, pp. 482), and for Sandywell (1996), it is an intellectual responsibility, which is a prerequisite of sound research practice. There are, however, difficulties with such prerequisites for the researcher, and as Johnson and Duberley observe, "significant ambiguity since the form that reflexivity takes, not to mention whether or not it is perceived to be possible in the first place, are outcomes of a priori philosophical assumptions" (2000, pp. 178).

For Harding, reflexivity can be distinguished by considering "the beliefs and the behaviour of the researcher" (1987, pp. 9), from which Johnson and Duberley (2000) have defined two forms of reflexivity; methodological reflexivity and epistemic reflexivity; where, methodological reflexivity seeks to understand the behavioural impact of the researcher on the research environment, through the research methods used; and epistemic reflexivity seeks to understand the influence the researcher's a priori knowledge has on the research context. It is epistemic reflexivity or rational reflection that engages us in thinking about our own thinking, and this is where my primary interest lies.

For the ethnomethodologist, however, reflexivity is limited to a critical evaluation of the technical aspects of the methods used in the study, from a positivist or neopositivist epistemology, with the key considerations being the impact of the ethnographer on the research environment, and the balance that is adopted between being part of the research context and observing from the periphery to ensure access to the organisational reality (Goffman 1959/1990; Johnson and Duberley, 2000; 2003), rather than on the a priori assumptions and learning that underlies the methodology (Johnson and Duberley, 2000), which is my preference.

For Johnson and Duberley (2003), the ethnomethodologist's reflexivity is analogous to Kuhn's chess player metaphor (1970, p. 37); the approach is evaluated, it's strengths and weaknesses are assessed, with the focus being on making better moves in the game being played rather than on considering the rules of the game or where they have come from. With epistemic reflexivity, however, the focus is on thinking about the rules of the game, where the rules have come from, and reflecting on the possibility that there are different rules and different games (Johnson and Duberley, 2000; 2003). In thinking about our own thinking, epistemic reflexivity helps us to recognise our influence, and understand how our ethical priorities shape what we know about management (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005), whereas, the ethnographer seeks to retain objectivity through a neutral, questioning authority, and by excluding their own a priori learning and beliefs.

Whilst Mulkay (1992) suggests that methodological reflexivity can be a useful research tool for some, the researcher embracing epistemic reflexivity denies that neutral observation is possible, as they seek to recognise their learning and their own influence within the research process. Here, though, there are still difficulties, as epistemic reflexivity can lead to a never ending reflexive spiral and the challenge of "incipient and debilitating relativism" (Johnson and Duberley, 2000, pp. 179), or at its extreme, even silence.

For Johnson and Duberley (2000; 2003), both epistemic and methodological reflexivity have their merits, which if used together can be very powerful. They suggest that for the researcher who has an affinity with epistemic reflexivity, there should be no reason why methodological reflexivity, such as that adopted by the ethnomethodologist, cannot be

60

embraced to consider the methods used and the way these can be further developed. This is a consideration I find I have an affinity with for my research.

As well as exploring and reflecting upon individuals' feelings and emotions during periods of change, I am also interested in taking account of influences that may have had a part in shaping an individual's emotional development. This is something Alvesson and Sköldberg (2001) and Douglas and Johnson (1977) observe, ethnomethodology does not easily accommodate; "... ethnomethodology never asks the central question: which are the supraindividual structures – such as Bourdieu's social fields – that shape the actors' behavioural dispositions?" (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 43). They also challenge the assumption they say is inherent within the methodology that social structures are re-creatable and certain; "Ethnomethodology seems to us to presuppose a transparent, rational, common-sense process, whereby the actors' lifeworlds are constantly being re-created, somewhat like a kind of sophisticated ant heap; the difference is that the messages are not mediated with the help of pheromones, but by words and gestures." This, they challenge, assumes that individuals interact with each other, "without conflict, emotion or interruption," when, they argue, "... conventions, etiquette, implicit rules are much more shifting, uncertain and flexible" (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 43).

Whilst ethnomethodological studies use a number of methods to collect information, which is my preferred approach, the principle method used is participant observation during which, ethnomethodologists attempt to put themselves in the centre of the research activities, directly involving themselves so they can empathise with how individuals within the study think and feel. A qualifying condition being that they openly recognise that, as participants, their own biases and views will play an influential part in their interpretations (Alvesson and Deetz, 2000, pp. 200). Alvesson and Sköldberg (2001) provide a number of specific research examples where this methodology has been used in recent years in for example medicine, social care, conversation, and art. Typically, ethnomethodological studies entail long periods of intensive fieldwork predominantly due to the emphasis placed on participant observation, and whilst interviews are a recognised method of collecting information within this type of study, it is only as a secondary approach and not the primary approach, which is my preference for my study (Alvesson and Deetz, 2000, pp. 75; Gill

and Johnson, 1991, pp. 93). Whilst, I have some affinity with the methodological reflexivity of this inductive approach my interest is not on studying the overall culture of an organisation, or in undertaking lengthy periods of fieldwork of this nature.

Research methodologies considered

Throughout the discussion of the different methodologies above, I have attempted to reflect upon my journey and to openly share where I have felt uncomfortable or an affinity with the different approaches. I have considered and discounted action research, case study, grounded theory, feminism, discourse analysis and ethnomethodology. My aim in doing this has been to provide an insight for the reader into the considerations that ultimately helped me to determine my methodological approach for this study and, as such, to provide, I trust, an understanding of the background from which this decision was made.

I now share with the reader in some detail my choice of research methodology.

Hermeneutics research methodology – my choice

In the section that follows, I share my thoughts on the hermeneutic framework; reflecting on its features and benefits and the reasons why this is my chosen research methodology.

I have chosen to carry out my research through qualitative investigation and by interpretation of the research information using a hermeneutic framework, the definition of which is, "the science of interpretation" (McAuley, Duberley, and Johnson, 2007), or "the science of the spirit" (Bettleheim, 1983).

I found the suggestion from Silverman helpful that "like themes, methodologies cannot be true or false, only more or less useful" (Silverman, 1994, pp. 2). They must, however, as Easterby-Smith observes be credible if they are to fundamentally overcome any concerns surrounding the validity of the research (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 1997, pp. 8). The hermeneutic approach I have chosen has this credibility and I believe it will be useful in facilitating a greater understanding of individuals' emotions and, as such, may be of greater value in a practical sense going forward.

Hermeneutics has a long history with its name originating from Hermes, who was the messenger of the gods in Greek mythology, with hermēneuein, meaning to interpret and hermēneutike, meaning the art of interpretation. The hermeneutic framework began with the study and interpretation of ancient texts and scriptures. It was used in medieval times to interpret the Bible but developed after the Reformation when Protestants were required to interpret the Bible more accurately through the study of Hebrew and Greek language and through literal exegesis, which is the explanation or critical interpretation of the text (Honderich, 1995). The picture for me always is one of a monk in "a cave" pouring over parchments with a stubby pencil and a glass of deep red wine although the use of this methodology has developed and expanded over the years.

Modern hermeneutics can be traced back to the Plato scholar Friedrich Ast and another Plato scholar and Protestant theologian, Friedrich Schleiermacher who lectured on the interpretation of texts and speech. Dilthey extended this to include all human behaviour and its consequences with understanding arising from interpretation that is imbued with

the imaginative sympathy and analogous experience of the interpreter as they relive the past through the information they have. It is now used to explore the underlying meaning within texts through critical interpretation and with continual reference to context. (Blaikie, 1995; Dilthey, 1976; Gadamer, 1975/2006, 1976/2004, 1989; Ricoeur, 1977; Taylor, 1990; Lindlof, 1995; Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001).

A researcher embarking upon a hermeneutic journey is not dissimilar to a geologist studying rock formations. As each layer of rock is removed new layers are revealed. Understanding or insight comes from digging down and unearthing meaning and as more is revealed our understanding grows through our interpretation of what we are seeing but equally because we have the opportunity to see how all the layers fit together. Foucault in 1970 describes insight as the archaeology of knowledge and Alvesson and Deetz drawing on Foucault's work go on to describe it as, "... the outcome of successful interpretation" (Alvesson and Deetz, 2000, pp. 141).

The evolution of hermeneutic methodology has been complex, not surprisingly as different individuals with different life experiences and different views have attempted to explain how people make sense of the world we live in. One challenge from those who adopt a pure positivist position is on the reliability of the interpretation, the absence of material validation, equivalence or directly reproducible results but equally there are challenges, albeit from looking through a different lens, from hermeneutic scholars themselves. These arise from the differing views on the subject of hermeneutics ranging from what Alvesson and Sköldberg (2001) term objectivist hermeneutics to alethic hermeneutics.

In objectivist hermeneutics, Alvesson and Sköldberg suggest that we can explain how people make sense of the world we live in through intuition that arises from "the understanding of underlying meaning, not the explanation of causal relationships" (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 52). With this ambition, objectivist hermeneutics have attempted to position interpretation as a controllable activity by attempting to develop qualitative criteria that is aligned to quantitative criteria of generalisability, hypothesis testing, reliability, sample selection and representation, and validity (Denzin, 1989). Here, the starting point is often the development of a modest hypothesis, which may be no more than a hunch based on instinct or intuition, where, objectivity and truth

64

considerations are drawn from the traditional qualitative view of information as the outcome of social interaction, and where the objective aspects are those attributes of the subject's life that cannot be changed. The adequacy and validity of the interpretation is considered on the basis of the researcher's ability to account for and explain the ways in which, the subject definitions have been produced (Denzin, 1989; Helling, 1988; McAuley, 2004; McAuley, Duberley and Cohen; 2000). This criteria logic issue has been subject to much debate (Johnson, Buehring, Cassell and Symon, 2006) and is a key consideration for my research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) for example, call for principles within qualitative research that enable the reader to make judgements about its rigour that include, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. For Hammersley (1989), this requires the researcher to critically reflect on the research material to reduce sources of contamination and enhance its ecological validity.

Conversely, alethic hermeneutics, from the Greek word alētheia, meaning truth or to be uncovered, derives from the work of Martin Heidegger, the German philosopher, who argued in 1927, that consciousness is inherent and inseparable within the world and human existence, and as such, meaning, like truth, is extruded from the mind. Alvesson and Sköldberg suggest that alethic hermeneutics has "its focus on truth as an act of disclosure, in which the polarity between subject and object – as well as ... between understanding and explanation – is dissolved in the radical light of a more original unity" (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 52). This argues that people, intuition and explanation do not exist apart from the world but are intimately caught up and immersed in it and it is this basic understanding that must be explored to reveal the hidden meaning.

Understanding the different positions is in itself complex as writers on the subject evolve their views and position over time, Heidegger, being widely recognised as one such individual. The differences centre on how individuals see the world and operate within the world we live in and, as such, the role they believe we can adopt in attempting to understand this. Both the differences and the common tenets recognisable in the hermeneutic literature, however, provide a framework to develop insights that can be useful for organisational research.

From the start of the hermeneutic journey, the interpreter's aim is to understand a text in the first instance at least as well as its author but then through exploration and interpretation to develop understanding beyond this, ultimately to a level, which may be greater than that of the author themselves. The approach in simple terms is analogous for me to baking a loaf of bread with the interpreter, collecting and then iteratively working the research material, drawing out and bringing to life the experience within it, giving it room to grow and reveal itself. Akin to the baker bringing the ingredients together, kneading the dough, experiencing the smells and texture of the mix, giving it room to grow until it is ready to be baked to capture the experience. The quality of the outcome is always due to the ingredients, the effort put into working the dough, patience during the proving process and in knowing when the kneading and proving is done and the bread is ready to cook.

Alvesson and Deetz (2000) develop the work of Deetz (1995) and suggest that there are three parts to the researcher's role; insight, analysis and definition. Writing later in 2001, Alvesson and Sköldberg suggest, as noted earlier, that the inherent meaning in the research material can be revealed through the interpreter's intuition, where the interpreter's own feelings, knowledge and experience complement the exploration and interpretation. In situations where the interpreter's knowledge or experience is greater than that of the individual being studied, be it different or related, it is possible for the interpreter to have a better understanding about the subject individual than the individual has of themselves. This is, they suggest, one of the key principles of the hermeneutic approach (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 54).

The role of the interpreter is to try and become aware of many things through the interpretation of text that the author may have not themselves been consciously aware of. They must recognise that there may be meaning within the text that is culturally dominant and, as such, will not be revealed openly by the author themselves but will be just be a taken for granted part of the context. The text itself can be about anything that is derived from human experience and its consequences, which includes books, poems, songs, sculptures, paintings and so on. A tenet of the hermeneutic approach has always been, however, that exegesis can only be understood if it is considered in context and related to the whole, for example a story. Equally, using this example, the whole story cannot be understood unless the pieces of information making up the story are

themselves understood. There is therefore an ongoing mutual relationship between the whole story and its parts, which leads to a paradox that hermeneutic scholars have referred to as the hermeneutic circle and which they have resolved over the years by adopting an iterative process of study to develop understanding. This is often referred to as a hermeneutic loop or hermeneutic spiral and is made up of interpretation, reflection and consideration in relation to the context and the literature, the three stages of which are repeated until nothing new is revealed (Radnitzky, 1970; Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001). Palmer uses the example of a sentence, the meaning of which comes from understanding the meaning of the individual words, which are understood only by reading them in the context of the whole sentence (Palmer, 1969). Taylor (1990) notes her success using this methodology but like Radnitzky, and Alvesson and Sköldberg above, stresses the importance of interpretation and an iterative approach for analysing and reanalysing the qualitative research material.

Individuals choose subconsciously or otherwise which face they present to the world and it is naïve to believe that it is easy to interpret what lies behind what are in effect individuals' masks. Individuals are different and complex and, as such, the robustness or penetrable nature of each mask will vary enormously. There have been occasions in my business life, for example, when I thought I knew someone well but have been subsequently surprised by their behaviour, which illustrates to me that my interpretation and understanding of these individuals was incomplete at the time in context of the particular situation. Situations like this, however, provide an opportunity to improve our understanding if the interpreter openly recognises their early views and perspective and reflects on, and analyses the situation and new learning in light of these. Over the years, however, researchers have been challenged with the paradox of objective interpretation from subjective qualitative material and the difficulties and tensions associated with this (Denzin, 1998; Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Dilthey, 1976; McAuley, 1997; Schütz, 1967; Weber, 1922/1967). Blaikie (1995) observes that there can be no objective interpretation because it is not possible for a researcher to distance themselves sufficiently from the subject matter. Gummesson reminds us of Sherlock Holmes warning against subjective interpretation "I have no data yet. It is a capital mistake to theorise before one has data. Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suit theories instead of theories to suit facts" ("A Scandal in Bohemia", in Gummesson, 2000). Alvesson and Deetz suggest that constraints within hermeneutic methodology arise when researchers

present their interpretations and understanding as objective without revealing their biases, views and beliefs, "it is not the objectivity of objectified knowledge that creates limitations to such engagements but... it is subjectivity masked as objectivity" (Alvesson and Deetz, 2000, pp. 140). This is an extremely important consideration for me.

It is still not a widely used methodology in business research. I have found no published reference to it being specifically used to explore individuals' emotions during periods of change. Foster makes the point that, with a few notable exceptions, such as, Atkinson, (1990), Krippendorf, (1980), and Marshall, (1994), not many studies into individual behaviour per se have been concerned with analysing text (Foster, 1994). My perception would be that this is probably due to the time hungry nature of the research process. Blaikie (1995) describes this as a laborious process implying he considers this approach to be arduous and boring and by definition something one would not willing wish to engage in. I find his position interesting; whilst it reflects a view, it does not reflect that some researchers willingly embrace this approach, seeing it as an opportunity to embark on an exciting journey of discovery, Taylor (1990) being one such example. Denzin and Lincoln suggest that qualitative research can be "endlessly creative and interpretative" (1998, pp. 29) and I affiliate myself with this view. I do, however, have some sympathy with Blaikie's view; if a researcher does not have a genuine interest in the subject matter and the iterative nature of the approach then it is reasonable to suggest that it will be considered laborious and, as such, human nature being what it is, elements within the research material will be overlooked, the consequence of which, means that any emerging perspective is open to challenge with questions being raised about its practical application (Grant, 1995). This is not just a consideration for researchers using a hermeneutic approach; it is a consideration for all researchers as this situation arising in any study would undoubtedly raise questions over the credibility of the methodology used.

There is also the challenge of persuading individuals in business who often deal in facts and figures and clean measurable solutions, to recognise subjective understanding as a reliable source of knowledge and to wait longer to receive it. MacIntyre and McAuley independently sum up the challenge;

"…what managerial expertise requires for its vindication is a justified conception of social science as providing a stock of law-like generalisations with strong predictive power…." (MacIntyre, 1981, pp. 84),

"Many managers want…certainties, want…"experts" to solve their "problems" for them -…a major issue in many situations is to get the client to accept the legitimacy of the methodology in use…" (McAuley, 1985, pp. 293).

Whilst McAuley (1985, pp. 293) argues that, "…a demand for "law like generalisations"" by managers, "…is not legitimate," he agrees with MacIntyre, (1981, pp. 74) that managers' claims to, "effectiveness rests…on the…claim to possess a stock of knowledge by means of which organisations and social structures can be moulded," but suggests that they, "…will characteristically want to see that "stock of knowledge" as "objective" and also as "rational" (McAuley, 1985, pp. 294), which is a powerful theoretical ploy by managers.

In the normal course of events, obtaining agreement to conduct a study using a hermeneutic approach would face some challenge in the mechanistic financial services business environment where I work given, in particular, the investment in time required. In my experience, many business individuals still want to see proof of concepts with timely solutions that they can identify with and which they can legitimise with tangible results that can be reproduced. They want to see a tangible return on any investment, be it driven by monetary or resource considerations. This is not surprising given there are increasing requirements in business today to drive out transparency in financial and people management practices. I am, however, in a much more beneficial situation and have the opportunity of choosing the methodology that is most appropriate for my study and my preferred way of working without monetary considerations and the pressure of delivering time bound business results. For the purpose of my study, a hermeneutic approach provides an ideal framework from which to recreate individuals' experiences and to develop insight into and from this, understanding of their feelings, emotions and underlying philosophical situations during periods of change. Studies of this nature are often taken to be ideally suited to the hermeneutics approach (McAuley, Duberley and Cohen, 2000; Sievers, 1994; Stapley, 1996).

Understanding individuals' feelings, emotions and the meaning in the qualitative material is developed by reflecting on the themes or patterns that are revealed in the material through the interpretation of these themes. The interpreter's suspicion, perceptions and intuition are inherently recognised as a key part of the interpretation process. Alvesson and Sköldberg recognised that the resulting interpretation is closely linked to the empathy the interpreter has with the qualitative material. If the interpreter becomes deeply immersed in the research material, relives the experience through the research material and draws upon their own experiences and imagination, they can reach a greater level of understanding (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 52-55).

My pre-understanding

My pre-understanding has been drawn from my evolving interpretation of my experience, which has shaped my early research considerations and has been developed further from an initial foray into the literature on the subject. I wished to explore the qualitative material initially to see if these early considerations were revealed before delving into the literature to see if it supported my findings. My motivation was to feel that I had started the journey myself based on my own experience and then to visit the literature to see if it provided comfort by supporting my findings before I returned again to the research material. I have been keen to employ an iterative approach to my exploration and interpretation as I have found from my experience in the business world that this often results in a much more informed piece of work. As my exploration and interpretation progressed therefore I wanted to be able to revisit the literature to draw inspiration from it and from greater authoritative minds on this subject than my own.

Epistemologically and ontologically, I have based my study on a view of an objective reality, that there is a real world that exists that we can reflect upon, and that we can seek to know by reflecting on the reality of individuals, which is personal to them and subjective and shaped by how they look at the world we live in; this being their phenomenal world and not "reality as it is". Consider here for a moment Jostein Gaarder's white rabbit pulled from the top hat of the universe. We have all settled, possibly subconsciously, into different comfort positions in the rabbit's fur. Some of us wish to sit on the tip of the fur, watching what happens, trying to understand, genuinely wanting to know what we don't know. Some of us are content to snug down within the rabbit's fur, making our contribution but happy with the status quo or steady progression of change (Gaarder, 1996, pp. 17). We are all different. I have not therefore undertaken this study lightly. Attempting to understand individuals' emotions has been undertaken with appreciation that all human behaviour is open to interpretation and, as such, there would be many influences, which would have a bearing on the qualitative material I collected.

One challenge of the hermeneutic approach is that there can be no definitive interpretation because the make up of experience, perceptions and pre-understanding of each interpreter is unique and because there are many ways of interpreting a text, which

71

means that the interpretation process is never-ending. I would suggest, however, that the interpretation does not have to be definitive or conclusive to add to learning. As a text is revisited and reflected upon, understanding can be developed over time; if understanding is definitive, new learning arguably becomes constrained. Gummesson (2000) suggests that a challenge with adopting any inductive approach arises from concerns that the interpreter *is* searching for eureka moment and ground-breaking, definitive new knowledge, although the epistemological status of this knowledge is different to objectivist views of knowledge. This challenge, however, could be directed at any research methodology but can be mitigated, I would suggest by openly and honestly describing the research journey; the starting point, each step and the learning taken from them. Research for me is a journey which may for some individuals reveal radical new learning, for others each step provides an opportunity to add to our understanding over time.

Hermeneutics research methodology – my choice considered

Throughout my study, my objective has been to develop an understanding of how individuals make sense of their world in an open way by using an approach in which I could gather qualitative information, form impressions and develop understanding from studying patterns emerging from the research material. In the discussion above, I have attempted to share how the hermeneutic methodology provides a framework that supports this objective and why it is my chosen research methodology. It explicitly recognises the participation of the researcher in the process with the iterative and triangular approach; exploration, reflection and consideration; interpretation, and literature interrogation returning to exploration, reflection and consideration, to begin the iteration process again; at the core of this methodology.

Whilst, it is recognised this approach is very similar to some versions of grounded theory, my pre-understanding has been my starting point and a significant part of my research journey within the hermeneutic framework. The extent to which the researcher's pre-understanding is recognised as a key source of information, within grounded theory is less certain and remains part of the academic debate with some voices supportive and others more cautious. Glaser (1978) in particular recommends the researcher minimise their pre-understanding as much as possible if adopting a grounded theory approach as I discuss earlier.

With the hermeneutic methodology my chosen research approach, I now reflect upon the practical issues I faced during my journey.

Practical issues and methods

In the section that follows, I share details of the practical considerations and issues that I faced in carrying out my research. Adopting the approach I use regularly in business, I have presented these in the context of: what, a positioning of the research environment; how and why, when and where, through a discussion of the support I have received and the approach and methods I have adopted; whom, an insight into the individuals who have been willing participants during my journey; ethical considerations, the ethical issues that I have reflected on.

What

The research environment

My research study has been focused on individuals employed within one large financial services organisation which, like many other companies in this sector has undergone fairly consistent strategic and organisational change over many years. The experiences of these individuals are, like my own discussed in chapter 1, directly linked to organisational life and, as such, reflect a microcosm of individuals' lives in general (Bertaux, 1981; Casey, 1993; Cassell and Symon, 1994; Musson, 1999). Some individuals have worked only within this one organisation and have only experienced organisational changes within this context, others have worked for a number of different organisations and bring with them understanding and perceptions from a broader context. Their experiences reflect the understanding, basic assumptions, values and beliefs of individuals in organisations and Society as a whole.

Throughout this work, this company will be referred to as HGAA. The study has reflected the five years from 2001 to 2006. During this time HGAA is perceived by employees to have moved from a dominant command and control structure. With the appointment of a new chief executive and other members of the senior management team in 1998, a move away from the historical structure was attempted. The stated aim was to encourage initiative, individual thought and empowerment. The appointment of another new chief executive and restructure during this time has been positioned as

building on the preceding years' change strategy, its aims and objectives and its philosophy.

How and why, when and where

A discussion of the support I have received, my approach and the research methods I have used; life histories collected through semi-structured interviews; focus group discussions; observations; company documentation; reflecting throughout on practical considerations including those of; access, communication, location, scheduling, time, my own experience and the need for flexibility.

Gaining access authority and organisational interest and support for my study are my starting point for this part of the discussion.

Access to individuals and the material that I anticipated I would need to carry out my study was negotiated and agreed with HGAA prior to commencement of my research. I also had separate discussions with the individuals I wanted to include in the study to explain the purpose of my research and to make sure they were happy to be involved.

Even with this access, however, it would not have been as easy to combine my research and business life if it were not for the organisational interest and support I have also received and I am grateful for the time and monies placed at my disposal. Having embarked on, and successfully completed a number of studies before this journey, I had, however, my eyes wide open as to the level of interest my sponsors would have during the journey. From my experience, which is not inconsiderable, from being witness, authorising sponsor and in being sponsored, as on this occasion, the interest during the journey is soon relegated to the computer database that records authorisation, financial budget and timescale, with possibly a passing review once a year under the guise of a development discussion. Whilst in some small part, I find this disappointing, in many other ways, I have welcomed the environment of trust and the freedom and flexibility this has afforded me. In welcoming this though, I have also questioned if this level of

autonomy and flexibility gives rise to any ethical considerations; a situation I reflect upon later in this chapter.

Beyond organisational interest and support, I have found that many individuals have been more than happy to help and support wherever they can, and their support has been invaluable, albeit at the end of the day, contributing only a small part of what needs to be done. Whatever my own interest level, I have found the biggest challenge has been prioritising the time available to do it. The sacrifice ultimately comes from ones family life as business life commitments continue regardless. I have taken time from early mornings, evenings, weekends and precious holiday time as it has been within my gift to do this, acknowledging a very supportive husband, dog and cats. The recognition of time not shared with family and friends, missed special events and the feeling of guilt associated with all this, remains an acknowledged consequence and legacy of my journey.

The journey itself has depended on me, my genuine interest, my determination, self motivation and enthusiasm to just get on and do it. I will not, however, insult the intelligence of the reader by suggesting that at times there were not other things, that I would have rather have been doing. At other times, the other things became frustrating distractions where I would rather have been sat with my stubby pencil and a glass of deep red wine. I share this to illustrate that my journey has not been without its challenges and its conflicts. Whilst, I recognise that there will undoubtedly have been missed research opportunities because of this, the situation was not unexpected and I have designed the practical approach to my study with this in mind, as I now discuss.

I collected qualitative material over a two year period, using four different methods within a hermeneutic approach to bring credibility to my study and to help strengthen my interpretation. I also believe that looking at things in different ways can bring richness to the resultant interpretation that may otherwise be absent.

There are difficulties in collecting qualitative material, as the material can often be more a result of the process by which it has been collected instead of it being the information an individual meant to share. Individuals also often find it difficult to recreate and articulate their experiences in a way that provides clarity and understanding for the

listener. There are always elements of the stories that are not shared as understanding is a taken for granted part of the discourse. This of course presupposes that the listener shares the same understanding, which will not always be the case. With this in mind, therefore, it was important to me that the research methods I used provided the opportunity to reflect and revisit the qualitative material often so the underlying meanings in the material could be explored.

I chose life histories, focus group discussions, observations and company documentation as information collection methods for this reason. I transferred the qualitative material I collected from these methods into texts for exploration and interpretation. All these methods are already firmly positioned in the literature within a qualitative, interpretive and reflective framework. In the context of my study, and as I now discuss, they have all been useful tools in exploring the emotions of individuals as they have enabled individuals to reflect on their experiences in different ways.

Life histories

The life histories method recognises the researcher's motivation, values and beliefs and explicitly acknowledges the bias and collusion of the researcher when collecting qualitative material. An early task, therefore, in my study and documented in chapter 1, is a reflection and a positioning of what I am bringing to this study, in effect, an explanation of my basic assumptions, experiences, values and beliefs, or as expressed by Casey; "... (giving) myself shape ultimately from the point of view of the community...to which I belong" (Casey, 1993, pp. 166). Musson drawing on the work of Thompson suggests that life histories can bring understanding of the author and the wider organisation and Society as a whole because individuals' experiences are inherently linked to organisational life and the world we live in and, as such, can be a useful method in studying organisational change situations (Musson, 1999; Thompson, in Bertaux, 1981).

I collected qualitative material from individuals' life histories through semi-structured interviews taking talk as research material. I asked 15 people to participate in these interviews. I have detailed later in this chapter how I chose these people and what I

considered before asking them to help me in my study. A key consideration for me, however, was how many people I should interview. I was very mindful of the amount of qualitative material this approach can generate and I was concerned to not become overwhelmed by a huge volume of information, which practically would have meant that meaningful exploration of all the qualitative material would have been unlikely. I was, however, concerned to achieve a sensible balance between how many people I interviewed and a credible level of research material that could be fully explored resulting in a meaningful contribution to knowledge in this area. At the start of my interviews, I did not have a specific end number of interviewees in mind. Practically, I decided to carry out interviews until I felt comfortable that nothing new or different was being revealed to me that would add value to my exploration and interpretation. After interviewing 15 people, I had reached this position.

My objective for the interviews was to learn about individuals' experiences during periods of change and to draw out their feelings and emotions during these situations. I designed my approach to the semi structured interviews using a schedule of open questions but I used this as a guide only during each meeting. My objective was more to let the discussions themselves and the information people shared during these discussions, lead the conversation, rather than the schedule of questions prescriptively driving the discussion. In approaching the discussions in this way, the flow of individuals' thoughts was not interrupted, which for me, I felt, facilitated a fuller understanding of the information being shared. Whilst I was flexible in how I used the schedule of questions, information was shared that supported every question as a result of the dialogue and the discussions that took place. Musson has used this method successfully in her PhD thesis in 1994 to study change within general medical practise in the Heath Service (Musson, 1994).

My competence to carry out this type of discussion has been developed from directly relevant experience in the organisational roles I have held and from the in depth training and development I have received over many years. This has included competence based interviewing, talent assessment and evaluation, customer Regulatory sales interviewing, assessment and evaluation of individuals in Regulatory sales environments, individual development through coaching and questioning techniques and counselling interviews following traumatic events.

Prior to the interviews, I held a pre-interview discussion with each participant to talk about the purpose of the meeting and to ensure they were happy to be involved. I advised individuals at this stage that I would be recording the discussions on tape and that all the information they gave me would be treated in strictest confidence, that I would be transcribing the interviews myself and that in any transcripts there would be no reference made to individual's names or positions. I advised individuals that the output of the meetings was to be treated by myself as material for exploration and interpretation only and that this, if reproduced in my thesis, would not be aligned to the individual in any way. Most of these discussions took place by telephone, but some took place on a face to face basis. I scheduled dates and times for each interview and booked meeting rooms to ensure a confidential environment for the discussions. I scheduled an hour and a half for each meeting and sent an e-mail invitation to the event to each individual. In the invitation, I confirmed the event details, date, time and place and also reiterated the purpose and confidentiality of the meeting and provided an open invitation for any questions prior to the meetings.

For each interview, I used a desk top tape recording device with speech magnifier, which was set up in the meeting rooms prior to arrival of the interviewees. At the start of each interview, I reiterated the purpose of the interview, the confidential nature of the discussion and that I would be recording the conversation. I advised each interviewee that it was not a problem if they wished to pass on any question if they felt unable to share particular details. I also advised each interviewee to say if they wished to stop the recording and speak "off the record" at any time during our discussion. No-one, however, felt the need to do either of these things. I advised them that a copy of the transcript would be shared with them. A copy of the briefing notes I used for both the pre meeting discussions and the interviews themselves, my thoughts on how I might see my early hunches demonstrated and the guide questions I designed are detailed in Appendix A for information.

During the interviews, I asked individuals to reflect upon the change events they have experienced in HGAA, what they had found constraining or difficult and equally what they had found rewarding. My aim was to help them draw out from their stories their emotions, be these rational or subjective. The ability of any researcher to reach this level of understanding faces challenge in the literature. It is argued that one individual is

unable to really explain their experiences to another individual as there will always be some information that is not disclosed as it is just an assumed part of the context, which the interviewer may or may not understand (Garfinkel, 1967/2004; Jones, 1983; Winch, 1958). This is a valid consideration, if the researcher relies upon the individual to share all aspects of their story without exploring further and asking questions during the discussion. A principle of the life history approach, however, accepts that an individuals' reflection of events and their perception of reality is real for them and can therefore be accepted as such. This has been a recognised position in the literature for many years (Musson, 1999; Thomas, 1966).

The use of life histories can be traced back to the early 1920's since when its popularity has been somewhat variable. It was very popular with social psychologists until the mid 19th Century, with a revival in the late 1960's, yet it was rarely used in organisational studies until the 1990's (Musson, 1999). The method acknowledges the interviewer's interpretation of stories as a basis from which the underlying meaning is drawn from the qualitative material and which can be related back to the material.

I completed 15 semi-structured interviews in 4 stages over a 2 year period. I approached the interviews in this way so I could transcribe the interviews and reflect on the information to assess if there were changes I wanted to make to the schedule of open questions or approach I had adopted and also to help me to assess how many more interviews I felt I needed to carry out. I did not feel the need to change the questions I was using and I continued to use the one schedule of open questions as a guide for all the interviews. As I mentioned earlier, after completing 15 interviews, I felt I had reached a point where I was not seeing anything new in the material and I made the decision to conclude the interview process at that point. An originally unforeseen benefit to approaching the interviews in this way was also the break it afforded me between different groups of interviews. I had not initially considered the emotional impact that listing to people share their experiences would have on me personally. I found this impact to be significant and unsettling to the extent that it became an important part of the research process for me. I have discussed this in more detail later in this chapter.

I found that transcribing the interviews was a major challenge for me. I had not appreciated the time involved in producing exact transcripts from the tape recordings. Each interview had taken an hour and a half as scheduled and this resulted in 20 to 30 pages of typed transcript for each interview. Given the content of the conversations, I did not feel it appropriate to arrange for someone else to type out the transcripts and equally, I was reluctant to go back to the interviewees to seek their permission to do this. I had explicitly stressed the confidential nature of the information they had shared with me and that I would be the only person party to the tapes. I felt I needed to fully respect this and the commitment I had given as I believe that some of the information shared with me would not have been shared under other circumstances. So I persevered to complete the transcripts, albeit a very slow process and equally a process that for me meant reliving each interview and the emotions I felt at the time.

The Warmth and Light and the Spider's Web focus group event

The qualitative material I collected from individuals' life histories through the semi-structured interviews formed the basis of a focus group event I designed and hosted to complement the interviews and which I called Warmth and Light and the Spider's Web. Warmth is the process of sharing experiences, with Light being the process of shining a light on these experiences to help identify what they mean to us. The Spider's Web is a pictorial way of presenting this, a bit of fun to help facilitate the discussion, but it also draws upon my thinking of what a Spider's Web represents. For me, a web represents the centre of a spider's world, where it lives and where it experiences changes in its life, from the capture of its food, mating, expanding, making repairs or rebuilding its web, and always with threats from outside influences. Depending on how you look at it, a spider's web environment can be many things; strong, captive, dangerous, safe, complicated, not too unlike a dynamic organisational change environment, from which individual feelings and emotions arise.

I asked 9 people who had not been involved in my interviews to participate in this event. I have detailed later in this chapter how I chose these people and what I considered before asking them to help me in my study. A key consideration for me was to keep the group small to facilitate open dialogue and debate.

My objective for the focus group was the same as for the interviews, to learn about individuals' experiences during periods of change and to draw out their feelings and emotions during these situations. This was a very different forum to that of the interviews. During the interviews, I was aiming to draw out feelings and emotions in a one to one situation. During the focus groups, however, the one to one situation was replaced by a group event and whilst this was a small group, I was mindful that this was more likely to mean that individuals may be less open in sharing specific details of their feelings.

Prior to attending the event, I hosted a short pre event group discussion to ensure the participants were happy to be involved in this and to advise them that any information they shared should be treated in strictest confidence between us all. In preparation for the event, I gave each participant a copy of the exercise I had designed and asked them each to take the exercise away and to think of their individual experiences of organisational change events that they had been involved in and how they had felt about these during the time. In doing this, I also asked them to reflect on the questions in the exercise I had given them in the context of their change experiences to help them identify one word that best described overall how they felt at the time of each change. I based the exercise questions on the schedule of open questions that I had used as a guide during my interviews.

I advised individuals that the output of the event was to be treated by myself as material for exploration and interpretation only and that this, if reproduced in my thesis, would not be aligned to them, as individuals in any way. I booked a room in a nice hotel for the event, away from the normal place of work, with a social dinner and an overnight stay for the evening, to ensure a confidential and conducive environment and to accommodate continuation of discussions in the evening if this was required after discussions during the day.

During the event itself, I asked the participants to group themselves in pairs to do the exercise. This included sharing their experiences with each other and identifying a word for each change that best described how they felt at the time of the changes they had experienced. I also asked them to make a note of the opposite meaning of each word they identified. Each participant was asked to identify six change situations, which had

influenced their feelings and emotions. They then individually built up their Spider's Webs by noting their pairs of words on their Web, the positive position at the centre of the web and the negative position on the same thread but at the edge of the web. Each participant had 12 words to plot on their Web, 6 being in the centre and 6 at the outer edge. For the next stage, the participants were asked to plot two positions along the thread line for each change experience, a red dot being how the individual felt at the time of the change event and a blue dot being where they felt they wanted to be on the thread. In effect, the Spider's Web became for each participant a picture of their feelings at the time of various change events and a reflection of the emotional situation they would have liked to be in. I participated directly in the exercise working with a colleague and completing my own Spider's Web. The discussions individuals had in their pairs and the information they shared helped to inform the development of their individual Webs.

The next stage of the exercise was to merge the individual Spider's Webs together by building a collective Web through again sharing experiences but with everyone together. I had pre-prepared an A1 sized blank web this time to plot everyone's emotions and feelings. Individuals had already had built up a level of comfort and confidence in sharing their experiences, feelings and emotions through their pair discussions. By approaching the exercise in this way, when everyone came back together to merge the Webs, this continued with, what everyone recognised as a very honest and open sharing of experiences, feelings and emotions. Details of the merged Spider's Webs are detailed in Appendix B.

At the end of the day, I hosted a feedback session, which noted that everyone had not only thoroughly welcomed the experience, but had felt the environment to be one in which they could openly and honestly share their experiences and feelings.

The qualitative material I took for exploration and interpretation from the event consisted of individuals' handwritten details of their change experiences, their individual Spider's Webs, the group's collective Spider's Web and my notes reflecting the detailed discussions that had taken place.

There was also a very practical application to this event beyond that of being an important collection method of qualitative material for my research. It helped to facilitate a greater recognition of what is important to individuals, their values and feelings, and, as such, was beneficial in forging some relationships, helping develop understanding for working together on day to day business operational basis as well as creating a platform for working together during future organisational change events.

Observations

The qualitative material from the interviews and the focus group discussions was supported by my observations within the work environment, which were an important part of the study to ensure the day to day organisational environment was reflected in the exploration and interpretation. I felt this was important to avoid my study being carried out in isolation of the strategic and operational changes taking place in HGAA. My observations took place within the organisational environment on an ongoing basis throughout the research process.

Waddington draws on the work of Jorgensen (1989) in suggesting that this approach is seldom rewarding as it involves fear and apprehension (Waddington, 1994). I find this position interesting as I believe the key considerations for anyone embarking on a research journey is the choice of methods, within which, self understanding and recognition of where they can add most value in the process, have a part to play. I agree with Waddington that the quality of the research material, drawn from an environment of fear is questionable, unless of course this type of environment is the objective of the study. I would, however, suggest that this is more a result of selecting an inappropriate research method when matched with the skills and character of the researcher concerned rather than the method per se as this would equally be the challenge with other methods in the same context.

Observations are an integral part of my work life as well as being one of the methods I chose to collect qualitative material for my research. For some of my observations there was a certain amount of overlap in this context, which meant that my observations did not cleanly fit into being either work based or research based observations. Given this

situation, I was mindful to speak to individuals to obtain their agreement to use the material confidentially, if I intended to use the observation as information for my research. This, I found worked very well, with nobody disagreeing to me using examples of my observations in this way. My objective in selecting the observations to use was to focus on situations that gave me opportunities to consider individuals' behaviour during periods of change beyond that shared within life histories and the focus group discussions.

I recorded qualitative information through taking notes of my observations; the notes of which I originally planned would become text for my exploration and interpretation. In practice, this element of collecting information became a major challenge, given the dynamic change environment that I was working in. The amount of observation material I amassed was huge and I found I needed to be very selective in choosing which pieces of observation text to use for my exploration and interpretation in order that the total amount of information I had remained of a manageable size. I found the selection process difficult as each piece of observation text contained material I was reluctant initially to forego. The selection process I adopted in the end, based on my knowledge of all my interview and focus group material, was to retain examples of my observations that collectively I thought might bring something new to my exploration and interpretation. My observation material to this extent became what I classified as secondary supporting material, in contrast to my interviews from life histories and focus group material, which remained my primary source of qualitative material for my exploration, reflection, consideration and interpretation.

Company documentation

As with my observation material, I used a select number of organisational documents as secondary material to support my primary interpretation of the information and to provide valuable insight into the interactions and communications that took place as part of change events within HGAA; as Musson observes, "... all views, formal or informal, official or unofficial, tell us something about the ways in which people experience and act upon particular phenomena" (Musson, 1999, pp. 17).

I did not at the outset of my research identify the documents I wished to study. As my understanding and thoughts developed, however, I identified a few documents that I wanted to consider. These are documents that make reference to the organisation's stated vision and values, change policies and minutes of meetings taken during the planning and implementation of various change events. This process, Foster observes, "… can help researchers to look more closely at historical processes and developments in organisations and can help in interpreting informants "rewriting" of history in later verbal accounts" (Foster, 1994).

How and why, when and where, discussed

In the section above, I have discussed the research methods I have used to collect my research material; life histories collected through semi-structured interviews; my Spider's Web focus group event; my observations; and company documentation. I have reflected on the practical considerations where I have felt these to be important including considerations of; organisational access, interest and support; communication; location; scheduling; time; and my own experience and flexibility.

I now share with the reader details of the individuals I asked to participate in my research.

Whom

The individuals who have been willing participants during my journey

In considering who to ask to participate in my study, I was interested in choosing individuals who had direct experience of organisational change within HGAA, both from being personally influenced by change and from managing the implementation of change. In order to obtain a group of individuals who reflected the experience of individuals in Society as a whole, I was also interested to involve individuals with different levels of management seniority, length of service and role experience with HGAA.

For the interviews, I asked 15 individuals to take part. 3 individuals have worked only within this one organisation and have only experienced organisational changes within this context. All the others have worked for a number of different organisations and bring with them understanding and perceptions from their experience of change in other organisations. One individual has worked for HGAA for over 30 years. 3 individuals have more than 10 years experience with the others having 5 years or less. All hold senior management positions and are each responsible for a key area of the business with 12 individuals at a senior executive level.

For the focus group event, I asked 9 individuals to take part. Their experience with HGAA ranged from 4 to 15 years, 5 of whom had 10 years or more experience, with the others having 8 years or less. All hold first or second level senior management positions in the organisation.

The individuals represented in the observations I used for my research, were in first level senior management to senior executive management positions in the organisation.

With the practical issues of what; how and why, when and where; and whom in mind, I now consider the practical ethical issues I have deliberated on and on occasions struggled with.

Ethics

In the section that follows I reflect upon the ethical and moral questions that I considered in the context of my research.

Alvesson and Sköldberg observe that "…ethical awareness is all the more important in a research climate" to prevent abuse of bias, narration and rhetoric and the dissolution of the boundaries between empirical data and social constructions (2001, pp. 263). With this in mind, I reflect back to the time I submitted my research proposal to the research degree committee stating, possibly arrogantly, that I did not expect there be significant ethical issues arising in my study, excepting that, in my role as researcher it was beholden on me to remain alive to the possibility, only to be asked to reconsider this

statement further. I reconsidered and penned an appropriate response, explicitly recognising that my own perspective would have a part to play in my research.

In chapter 1, and earlier in this chapter, I have shared openly and honestly details of my own life history and philosophical considerations, revealing an understanding of myself so as to engender, as Johnson and Duberley describe "…a consciousness of (my) own history, philosophy, aims, (and) ethical priorities…" (2000, pp. 188), the intention being to ensure I have "…no new truths to bring to the world" (Melucci, 1996, pp. 224, also in Delanty, 1997, pp. 142).

The importance of doing this was highlighted during some of the confidential discussions I had during my field research where I found myself openly empathising with individuals and sharing a little of my own feelings and experiences to facilitate an environment of trust and mutual understanding. Whilst, the information I shared was factually accurate and genuine in context, I have with hindsight found myself reflecting more critically on how others may interpret my purpose in my sharing information on these occasions. For my part, there was a genuine desire to facilitate an environment conducive to open and honest discussion. I, however, recognise that a more critical interpretation could be that of a political act on my part to manipulate individuals participating in the events. Whichever position one adopts, however, I consider both raise the same ethical considerations as ultimately the result does not change and remains that of the information shared by the participants.

As discussed earlier, all the individuals participated freely in the discussions and in the knowledge that their contribution was completely confidential and would remain anonymous. This in itself introduces another moral dimension, the extent to which the participants have been honest in the information they have shared; individually they have no involvement in how their information ultimately would be used; they are removed from it and, as such, have trusted that the use of their information will have no affect on them. Does this mean they would be less than completely honest in their accounts? I find, however, that such what if scenario exploration and interpretation and speculation lacks value given the design and structure of the study. The methodology and the different methods used have been selected to ensure there can be confidence in the qualitative material, exploration and resulting interpretation.

Another consideration was the senior executive position that I hold within the HGAA organisation and I was mindful that this may have made some individuals feels obliged to participate in the study and then to not be as open as they may otherwise have been. This did not obviously manifest itself during the course of the study, but it remained a consideration and has been reflected in my exploration and interpretation of the information.

Earlier in this chapter, I noted the level of autonomy and flexibility that I had in carrying out my field research. In welcoming this and recognising its benefits, I have also questioned if this in itself gives rise to any ethical considerations. Hussey and Hussey (1997) discuss some of the ethical considerations they suggest can arise during a research study. Interestingly, I find I have an affinity with some of these, although I would position these more in the realm of professional courtesy and consideration, and personal moral standards that go without saying, than ethical dilemmas. Considerations of informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, arose during the course of my study, and which I discuss earlier in this chapter. These areas I position in the category of professional courtesy and consideration that go without saying. I also encountered situations, however, which led to intense personal feelings surrounding my concern for a number of individuals arising from their confidential discussions with me. Whilst, these could be considered personal ethical considerations, for me they remain personal consequences of my research. I discuss these situations later in this chapter when I share my feelings and emotions during my research journey. At no time, however, did I consider it appropriate or an option to break the confidentiality entrusted to me; my management of the autonomy and flexibility afforded to me, I position in the same category; as Gill and Johnson observe "at the heart of the contract lies the matter of trust between the parties" (1997, pp. 126).

Practical issues considered

Throughout the discussion above, I have attempted to share the practical issues that for me started to give life to my research journey; the research environment, the approach and the methods I use; the individuals who have been willing participants during my journey, and the ethical issues I have deliberated on and on occasions struggled with.

I now share with the reader in more detail how I carried out my exploration and interpretation of the research material.

Exploration, reflection, consideration and interpretation of the research information

In the section that follows I share my approach to the exploration, reflection, consideration and interpretation of the research information using the hermeneutic loop.
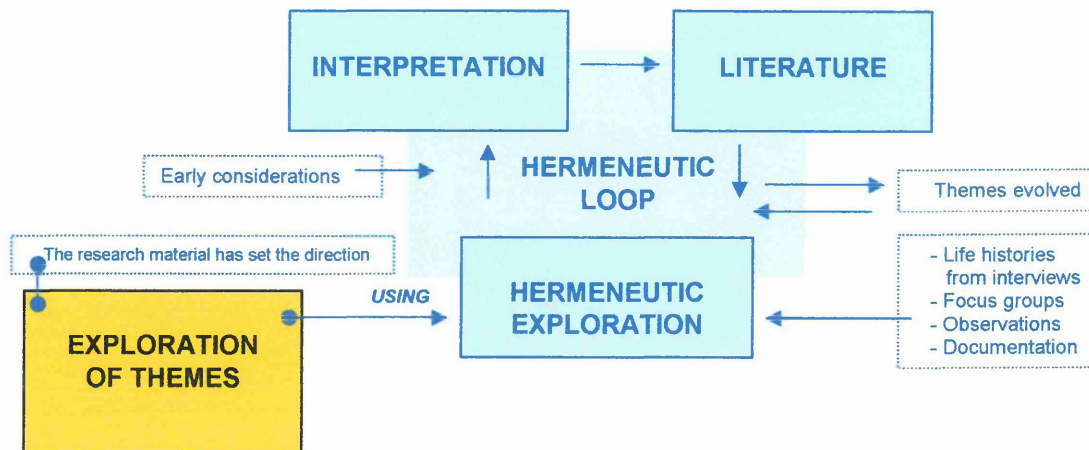
My starting point was an initial exploration, reflection and consideration of the qualitative material I had collected during the interviews and which I had subsequently transcribed. I printed out hard copies of the transcripts and used these for my study. For every interview, I took each question I had asked and each response and noted my initial reflections, considerations and interpretation of the text in green script beneath each response, so I could see clearly what was transcript and what was my interpretation. I wanted to take this approach instead of considering the whole interview initially as one picture and analysing it as such, as I believed that each comment had something important to add. I found this to be the case and whilst my line by line interpretive approach took a great deal of time, I believe I gained a richer insight into the text than would otherwise have been the case.

I then reflected upon my initial interpretations and my early considerations of; feelings and emotions, self motivation, relationships, and control, discussed in the preceding chapter, to see if these early considerations or hunches were being revealed in my

interpretations of the text material. I found evidence of all my early considerations, which gave me, confidence in my pre-understanding, yet these findings also reinforced the need to remain suspicious of the material and not fall into an early trap of complacency. The evidence sometimes was very clear, yet on other occasions it was less so. I found that by keeping an open and suspicious mind as my journey progressed, my interpretative and iterative approach gave me new ideas, which helped evolve my understanding of the deeper meaning in my early considerations and enabled me to draw out the meaning in the material.

I adopted this same line by line approach to my interpretation of the text material from the Spider's Web focus group event, my observations and the company documentation. The difference being only that I divided some of the text material collected from these methods into small chunks where I could see a natural break in the text, in the absence of question and answer demarcation points. Some pieces of text material, I did not focus on in chunks as they were small enough pieces of information as a whole to consider in one sitting. This particularly applied to some of my observation material.

Practically, this approach overall helped me progress the exploration and interpretation in the short bursts of time I had available to so this. I found that I could dedicate focused thought and time each day for 30 minutes to an hour during my working week, to very small sections of the transcripts and in this way make steady progress. I also found that returning afresh to the research material for short periods of time each day helped my ideas evolve and helped to avoid creeping thought exhaustion.

After initial interpretation of my qualitative material, I then revisited the literature on the subject to seek "authority" for the ideas and themes that were evolving. I found that I could not do this effectively in short bursts of time and so I reserved this work for working on at the weekend when I could commit longer periods of time to the review. I found that it was important to be disciplined in reviewing the literature as it was easy to become absorbed in an area that sparked my interest, but which ultimately if progressed, would have greatly increased the scope of my research. Practically again, whilst the desire was always there to explore these new avenues, the time factor, which proved to be a critical consideration for me, prevented this from happening and helped me maintain a focused approach. I therefore used a small favoured number of texts as my

authority and inspiration. I sought out references noted by these authors and restricted my exploration to appropriate texts reference by them. Initially, I had explored further and had delved into the references sighted within the texts referenced by my favoured authors but I found the links became too distant and too unrelated to the scope of my study.

After a foray into my favoured texts, I then revisited my exploration and repeated my line by line approach, reflecting on new information from the literature. In doing this, my considerations evolved and instead of being considerations or hunches, they started to become real and richer in context. I have discussed these evolved themes in detail in chapter 3, but have included them here as headlines for information only at this stage.
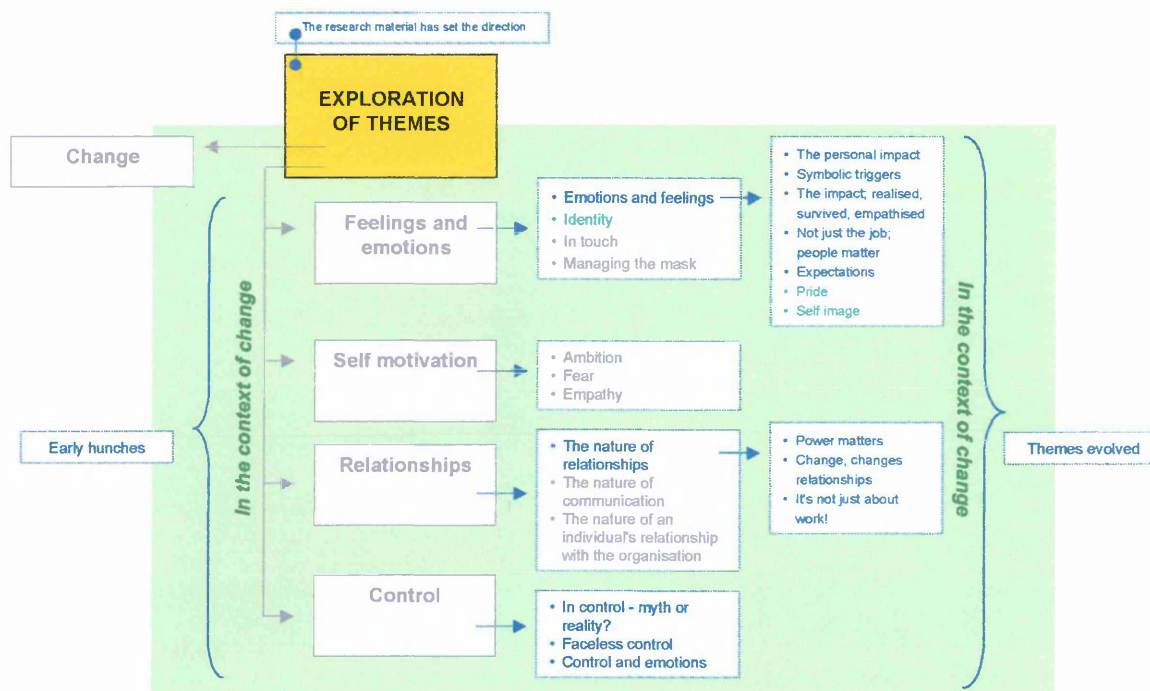
During this stage of my exploration I also started to draw the different interview texts together to link them contextually and to compare and contrast the learning and the themes being revealed within them. I grouped information where I identified common emotions and behaviours. I also began to weave in and reflect the learning emerging from my interpretation from the Spider's Web focus group, my observations and from the company documentation I studied.

As my exploration and interpretation progressed, my understanding went through different phases. Sometimes there was absolute clarity with the material revealing, what on the face of it seemed to be very simple and open, but which on further reflection became more ambiguous and complex, developing to a deeper understanding and more open as my exploration and interpretation continued to reveal new insight into the meaning inherent in the text. I repeated this process many times, both for the individual texts and for the combined position until I felt I had reflected sufficiently and had reached a level of comfort that there was little more to be revealed from the material and that I felt a sense of confidence that all the layers had been removed and understood. I didn't keep track of the number of times I travelled around this classic hermeneutic loop of exploration, consideration, reflection, interpretation, and literature review and then back to exploration, consideration, and reflection. It was, however, a rewarding process, which I lived over many months.

Returning to my image of a lonely monk in "a cave" pouring over parchments with a stubby pencil and a glass of deep red wine; this is how I carried out my exploration and interpretation. Not quite sat in a cave, but using reams of paper pinned around the walls of my study at home, a stubby pencil and yes, quite often a bottle of deep red wine! Whilst I used my computer to write up my research, this was the extent of the technology I deployed. Early in my research journey, my study group was introduced to the world of technology based analysis tools, one of which sounded something like the result of the World's climate change, el nemo! Whilst I believe I am far from having a phobia about technology, these tools did not appeal to me as a way of carrying out my exploration and interpretation. They did not sit comfortably with me. My preference was to use my own mind, drawing on my own experience, and to attempt, like my monk in the cave to carry out my interpretation and reach a deeper understanding without the aid of computer software.

This has been a reflexive hermeneutic exploration during which my objective has been to develop an understanding of how individuals make sense of their world by using an approach in which I could gather information, form impressions and develop understanding from studying the patterns emerging from the research material. The hermeneutic methodology provided a framework that supported this objective, and the following is a simple representation that I have adapted from Gill and Johnson (1997),

Kolb's (1979) "Experiential Learning Cycle", and Wallace's (1971) "The Logic of Science in Sociology" to illustrate my exploration, reflection, consideration and interpretation of the research information. The approach explicitly recognises my pre-understanding and my participation as the researcher in the process. The iterative and triangular approach I have used, embracing, reflection, consideration and exploration; interpretation, and literature interrogation sits at the core of this methodology.
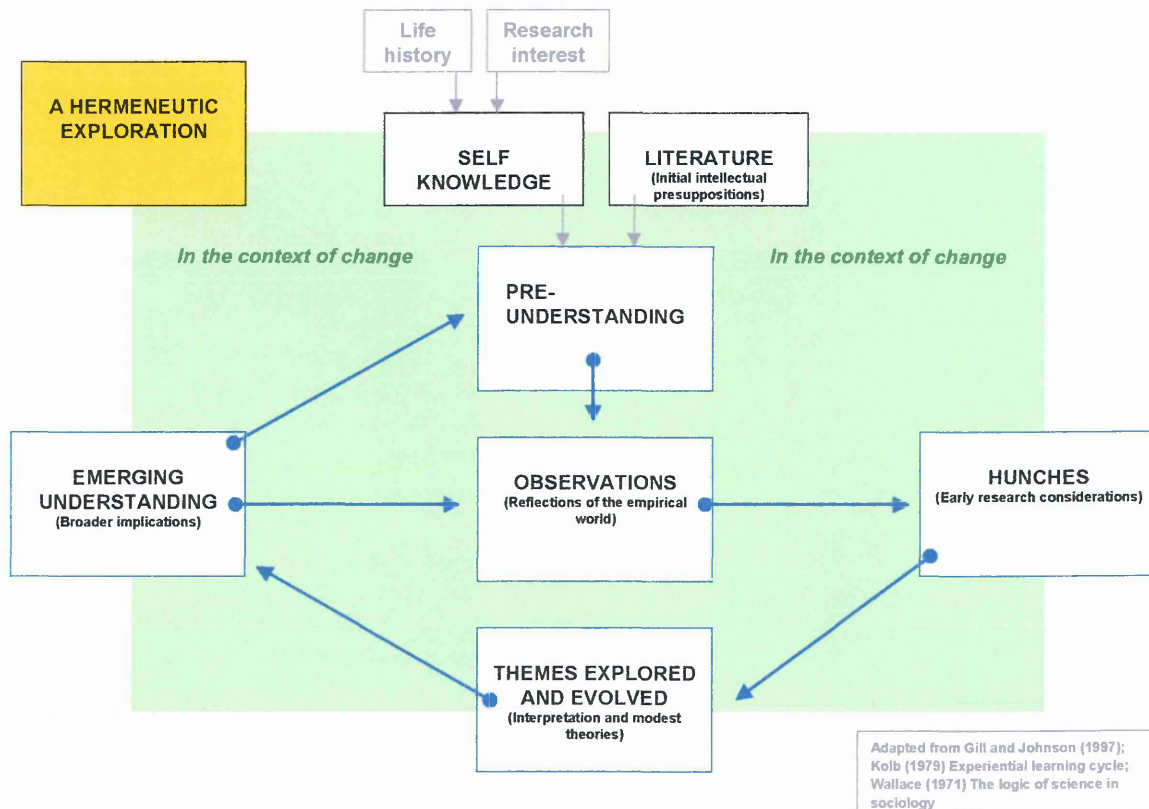
Exploration, reflection, consideration and interpretation of the research information considered

My hermeneutic exploration; reflection, consideration and interpretation of the research information, is similar to analytical induction and grounded theory, although there are some key differences. With grounded theory, "... the differences are more marked, particularly as regards perceptions of the empirical material, which... in hermeneutics is always a result of interpretation, not a first starting-point for interpretation" (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001, pp. 32). Grounded theory has also been challenged for its disregard of emotional aspects as I discuss earlier, and grounded theory and analytical induction have both been challenged for the restrictions the structural procedures and techniques used place on the researcher's creativity and inspiration (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2001; Hammersley, 1989), although there are some who are now seeking to move grounded theory away from it's objectivist and positivist history (Bryant, 2002; Charmaz, 2005; Seale, 1999), and build a link between social constructionism.

These have been important considerations for me in choosing my research methodology, and I have embraced the hermeneutic approach as I have found I have more of an affinity with its history, principles and underlying philosophical commitments. It has complemented my own epistemological and ontological perspectives and at its heart is the explicit recognition of the researcher's intuition, interpretation, understanding, and the researcher's relationship between the research subject and the reader (McAuley, 2004, pp. 192), which has been a key consideration for me in undertaking this study.

A number of core principles underpin the hermeneutic approach that constitute the hermeneutic circle or hermeneutic loop that have been advocated by Dalton, (1964); Gadamer, (1975/2006); Gummesson, (2000); McAuley, (2004) that I have adopted as I discuss in my approach above, as a basis for evaluating my exploration and interpretation, without which, Johnson, Buehring, Cassell and Symon (2006), suggest that the study will struggle to convince some audiences of its legitimacy.

Through my iterative line by line interpretation of my research material, my purpose, as I discuss earlier, has been to develop an understanding, as Gadamer suggests, of the "whole in terms of the detail and the detail in terms of the whole..." (1975/2006, pp.

291). My iterative approach has brought the hermeneutic circle to life, and as Gummesson observes, "each stage of the research (has provided) knowledge" (2000, pp. 70). By delving "further and further into the matter by alternating between part and whole", I have, as Alvesson and Sköldberg observe, been able to bring "a progressively deeper understanding of both" (2001, pp. 53). I have also laid bare in the section that follows, my own feelings and emotions as I have undertaken this journey, and my reflexive responses that have become a part of the interpretation rather than, as McAuley observes, "a polluting element" (2004, pp. 198).

I have undertaken my study with an awareness and acknowledgement of my intellectual pre-understanding and perspectives and recognition that these, and my intuition, will inevitably have influenced my interpretation of the research material. For Gadamer, the assessment of the research material can only take place if the researcher is conscious of their pre-understanding and perspectives and where, the research material, "as a manifestation of a creative moment, belongs to the whole of its author's inner life" (1975/2006, pp. 291). For McAuley, "researchers inevitably bring (and positively embed) something of their objective and subjective selves to the feast of the research activity…and an intellectual pre-understanding" (2004, pp. 195). For Kincheloe and McLaren, researchers must reflexively seek to understand "the epistemological and political baggage they bring with them" (2005, pp. 306).

I have not started my research with a hypothesis to test, but with my early hunches drawn from my pre-understanding and initial review of the literature in the same way that Dalton in his study "Men who Manage" shunned explicit hypotheses in developing his research in favour of hunches which served him "as less exalted guides" (Dalton, 1964, pp. 53).

My pre-understanding has been drawn from my evolving interpretation of my experience, which has shaped my early research considerations of feelings and emotions, self motivation, relationships and control and has been developed further from an initial foray into the literature on the subject. My research considerations have been evolved as my interpretation of the research material progressed. For McAuley, "it is important to note that (the) themes were those that came to the minds, intuitively, of the researchers" (2004, pp. 195). For Geertz, "we begin with our interpretations of what

our informants are up to, or think they are up to and then systemize those" (1973/1999, pp. 15). This has been my approach.

Drawing on Thompson, Locander and Pollio (1990), my interpretation can be validated in a number of ways; the research material supports my interpretation of my themes; my themes are accessible by readers; and my early research considerations and evolved themes are consistent with the aims motivating my study. My themes are supported by participant descriptions, and my interpretation provides insight into my research area. Confidence in the adequacy of my interpretation can be taken from the transparent, reflexive and triangular nature of my approach using information drawn from different qualitative research methods and from the consensus of the participants.

Drawing upon Blaikie (1995), and Bleicher (1982), my ability to carry out this type of interpretation is supported by the "belief that all human beings have something in common" (Blaikie, 1995, pp. 33) and that this commonality enables my research to claim a universal character (Bleicher, 1982). For McAuley, there are two ways in which the hermeneutic approach can be legitimised as a mode to understanding, "the professionalization of the hermeneutic researcher, (and) the methodic process through which hermeneutic work is conducted" (2004, pp. 196). I trust during the course of this study, I have been able to provide confidence and satisfy the reader in both these areas.

Exploration, reflection, consideration and interpretation of the research information – summary comments

Throughout the discussion above, I have reflected upon how I approached the exploration and interpretation of my text material; individuals' life histories taken from interviews, the focus group event, my observations and consideration of company documentation, using the hermeneutic loop.

This journey, however, wasn't a remote academic exercise that I undertook stood at the side lines, observing at the periphery of others' lives; my experience, thoughts and feelings had a part to play and it is my feelings and emotions that I experienced during my journey that I now share with the reader and the implications these have had for my study.

Feelings and emotions

This has been a fascinating journey for me and I have attempted as follows to reflect on some of my own feelings and emotions and to share these as an insight into my experience during my collection, transcript and interpretation of the qualitative material.

Collecting the qualitative material – my emotions

With the exception of individuals' life histories collected through the semi-structured interviews, the methods I used to collect qualitative material, the focus group event and my secondary material from observations and company documentation were, for a large part, business as usual for me, with no more emotional involvement than I expected. That is not to say, I had no feelings at all; I did. I had the usual feelings of concern, frustrations, exasperations; all manageable day to day considerations that invaded no further into my reflections other than for due consideration that we must strive to be better and learn from the positive as well as the negative. They provided no moments of undue disquiet, and no moments of restless thoughts; I had no need of my "middle of the night notebook" for capturing thoughts invading and obstructing my sleep. It was, however, different when individuals were sharing their life histories with me; at these times, I found my emotional involvement was stronger than I had envisaged; I found I had need many times of my "middle of the night notebook".

When I embarked upon this journey, I did not realise how much of themselves, of their feelings and emotions, individuals would be prepared to share with me. For many years in my business life, a key part of my roles has been to provide support for the individuals I have worked with, and this support has embraced many different emotional situations, born out of both individuals' personal and business related issues. I have found that individuals are able to talk to me openly and share their feelings, and it was these experiences that gave me the confidence to undertake this research. Whilst this has been my business life experience, I did not anticipate that my experience from working with individuals would translate directly into similar open and honest sharing

100

of feelings during my research study. The key difference being, I believed that the research discussions would be at my instigation and for all intent and purpose would be for my benefit. Whilst individuals must always be willing participants to a shared discussion centred upon their feelings and emotions, I questioned the extent to which they would be open with me in circumstances where there was no obvious benefit to them. In this consideration, I found my concerns were unfounded.

I was surprised by the openness of individuals and the depth of feelings and emotions they shared with me when gathering my research material. With hindsight, I feel extremely privileged that individuals felt able to trust me and share their thoughts about very personal matters as openly as they did. At the time, whilst I recognised the trust being placed in me, I also selfishly, felt elated and excited over the richness of the material that was being shared. To varying degrees, individuals relived their stories with me. Nothing for some individuals it seemed was to be missed out; confidences; the impact on business and personal relationships, and personal health implications. With very few exceptions, this resulted in a reliving of their emotions and feelings, demonstrated visibly and openly on occasions with tears, body language and changes in their language, voice level and tone.

How did this affect me? Throughout my career, it has been observed that I can remain emotionally disengaged from change situations, able to continue to professionally work within these environments in spite of individuals' emotional turmoil. Observations, such as these, however, for me belie the reality, if we are in control of ourselves; there are the masks we choose to wear, the demeanour we choose to present; the surface view does not always provide the full story. It didn't on occasions during my research both for me and for the individuals who participated in my study. I am confident, however, that my feelings of elation and excitement did not break through my empathetic mask during the semi-structured interviews; I would have been mortified if anyone had even the slightest inkling of this; my concern, on occasions, however, I did choose to reveal. I felt I still had a role to play, other than that of researcher during these confidences. Whilst there are always different versions of stories and different views, the perception of individuals, I believe, is often reality for them, and I genuinely felt very concerned for some individuals who participated in my study.

An example to illustrates this came at the end of one particular interview, during which I had become more and more concerned for the individual. Emotionally the individual was struggling; fear of being seen to be failing preventing him from taking action; his marriage suffering badly; his health suffering; his boss, seemingly oblivious to the situation, continuing to demand more and more. I asked the individual if he wanted me to help him, to maybe talk with his boss, who was a colleague of mine. His confidence as shared with me, if shared with me with my business world hat on, would facilitate an immediate response and call to action; I would seek to facilitate a resolution; it would be my responsibility to take action; despite wearing a different hat, I wanted to help to make life better at work for this individual. I could immediately see that he was very concerned that he had taken his confidence too far. He asked me to *please* not discuss this further; this was something he needed to and wanted to, deal with himself. I assured him that I would respect his request and reiterated the confidential nature of the meeting. I acknowledged that I had crossed a boundary with my suggestion, but I still felt I needed to give him an open offer of my help should he want to take me up on this afterwards. Whilst, the researcher, participant relationship was not affected on this occasion, I was very conscious that I had overstepped the boundary and in doing so had placed this relationship at risk.

I knew that I would respect his confidence and trust; I had given my word. This did not, however, prevent more than a few reflective moments. This was a moral dilemma for me; I chewed upon how I may be able to try and help without breaking his confidence; could I perhaps "observe" something not quite right and have a quiet word with my colleague?; it would not be unusual for me to do this wearing my business hat. In the end, however, I did nothing; it was not after all a life or death or criminal issue. I chose to regard the knowledge shared as though in a protective bubble that only the individual himself could choose to burst open. Without the confidence shared, I may of course have "observed" something not quite right in the normal course of business life and have taken action on this. The absence of this "observation" and action remains a possible moral consequence of my research.

During other discussions, some of the qualitative material collected was on the face of it, comparably grey, less obviously open and exciting in contrast to the bare soul sharing of others. I have to admit to a feeling of slight disappointment during the first of these

102

meetings, and fleetingly I questioned if I had chosen the right individuals to participate in this part of my study; having been faced it seemed with the whole sweet shop on display, I was now faced with, what seemed to be, not a great deal to inspire on the display counter. I revisited my rationale for the individuals I had chosen, reflecting alone and also discussing this with my DBA supervisor and study group, to challenge myself on this before collecting further life histories. This was a useful and reflective exercise as it not only refocused and reinforced the benefit of the hermeneutic approach and the possibility that there may be more to be revealed beyond the initial view, but because it highlighted to me early in my journey how important it is to look beyond the surface view, however wonderful or uninspiring that initial surface view might be. As a small reminder for the rest of my journey, I put a picture of a molehill and an iceberg on the wall of "my cave". The iceberg is self explanatory; unquestioningly an inspiring surface view with even more to be revealed underneath. The surface view of the molehill is uninspiring, a small pile of earth, but equally, like the iceberg, is also the tip of something much more; a complexity of tunnels hosting a richness of life lies beneath it, waiting to be revealed.

Reliving the emotional experience – transcribing and interpreting the research information

Whilst my feelings during collection of the research material were both unexpected and expected, I had not envisaged that I would relive these as I did when transcribing and interpreting the material. I found during the exploration and interpretation of the material that some of my initial feelings and thoughts polarised, evolving quite substantially, whereas others were reinforced becoming even more intense; a situation I found was made more intense and more pronounced by the iterative nature of the hermeneutic approach I adopted.

This was keenly demonstrated during the interpretation of one particular life history. I empathised with the individual, both during the interview itself, reliving this during my transcript of the meeting and during my first interpretation of the material. I consciously took, at face value, the feelings that she shared with me; only considering at that stage

the surface view of the situation she described to me. I silently sympathised with her and fiercely questioned myself how a changing work environment could be allowed to result in, and give rise to such extreme emotions in an individual, culminating in declining health and marital issues. I felt upset for her and angry that the circumstances and her engagement with others had resulted in such an extreme emotional situation; a situation that had been allowed to gallop forwards it appeared without harness or redress or resolution for the individual. I found myself reflecting cynically that nothing had really changed throughout 25 years of my business life and whilst some individuals, and I put myself in this category, always tried to do things differently to militate against this type of result, the reality was we were not making a difference, the evidence having been sat before me.

After several of such meetings with different individuals, I began to silently question my own business role within HGAA. I was dissatisfied and upset by the related reactions of senior colleagues to individuals' particular circumstances and I found myself reflecting unfavourably on the apparent actions that had been taken. I also questioned if I was becoming too emotionally involved in my study and in consideration that this might be the case, I took a break from interpretation of the information to reflect on the thoughts it had provoked and to take a foray into the literature to explore this more abstractly.

On revisiting my interpretation of this material, I decided to adopt a more critical and suspicious position and embarked on the review of my first interpretations steeled with this resolve. I questioned everything; I looked for contradictions in the material. I asked the questions; so what? How do I know that? Why have I taken that meaning? Is there another meaning from the material? Continuing with the example I started earlier; my feelings polarised from where they had been. Mindful that everything had to come from the research material, I found contradictions in the information that indicated more depth to the story than had initially been revealed; looked at clinically, albeit with my own experience playing a part, I found I was less sympathetic and therefore more able to challenge the information; I became suspicious and distrustful of the face value of the text as each interpretation evolved the initial picture view. The individual in question acknowledged no responsibility for her situation, the fault was everyone's but her own; a situation I found little to empathise with. My feelings evolved from those described

earlier; I became less tolerant of the emotions laid bare as the meaning in the material was revealed.

My experience during collection, transcript, exploration, and interpretation of the research material was not a clinical, academic exercise; it became one enriched with emotions, both my own and those of the individuals involved. In the section above, I have reflected on these feelings in order to provide insight into my experience and to share how my emotions helped to shape and influence my approach to the research study.

My research journey - summary comments

In this chapter, I have detailed the aim, purpose and objectives of my research journey. Reflecting upon a mixture of theory, practice and my personal views and experience, I have attempted to share how my philosophical and methodological considerations have helped to shape and inform my overall approach to this study, my choice of a hermeneutic methodology, and my information collection methods; the collection of my primary material from individuals' life histories and the Warmth, Light and Spiders Web focus group event, with supporting secondary information collected through observations and company documentation.

Throughout the discussion I have attempted to bring to life the practical and emotional considerations that have given depth and meaning to my research journey. I have endeavoured to retain the life essence of the study by providing a human insight into myself as the researcher, revealing my own perspective and by identifying through examples where I have been uncomfortable or where I have felt an affinity with the discourse. This in effect is myself laid bare and serves, I trust to position in advance how I have undoubtedly influenced the exploration and the considerations emerging from my interpretation of the research material detailed in the next chapter.

3   A hermeneutic exploration

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to provide insight into my hermeneutic exploration and interpretation of my research information.

In chapter 1 I discuss my early research considerations of feelings and emotions, self motivation, relationships, and control, and how these have been influenced by my experience of change in organisational life, and my initial review of the literature. I position my perspective and thinking as a basis for inspection and association prior to embarking on my research journey, discussed in chapter 2.

In chapter 2, I share details of the aim, purpose and objectives of my study and how my philosophical and methodological considerations have helped to shape and inform my overall approach to my exploration of the early research considerations, the research methods I have adopted, my reflections, considerations, interpretations and emerging understanding. I introduce the research environment, which is one of constant strategic and organisational change, and the individuals who have experiences directly linked to this changing organisational life. These individuals are the focus for my study. Their experiences reflect a microcosm of individuals' lives in general.

Informed by this background, in the section that follows, I endeavour to bring to life my hermeneutic exploration of the emotional experiences of individuals during periods of strategic and organisational change, and the understanding emerging from this.

Map of the journey

The map of the journey is as follows, which I have developed to illustrate how I have approached my exploration, reflection, consideration and interpretation of my research information using the hermeneutic loop and how I have developed my research themes.
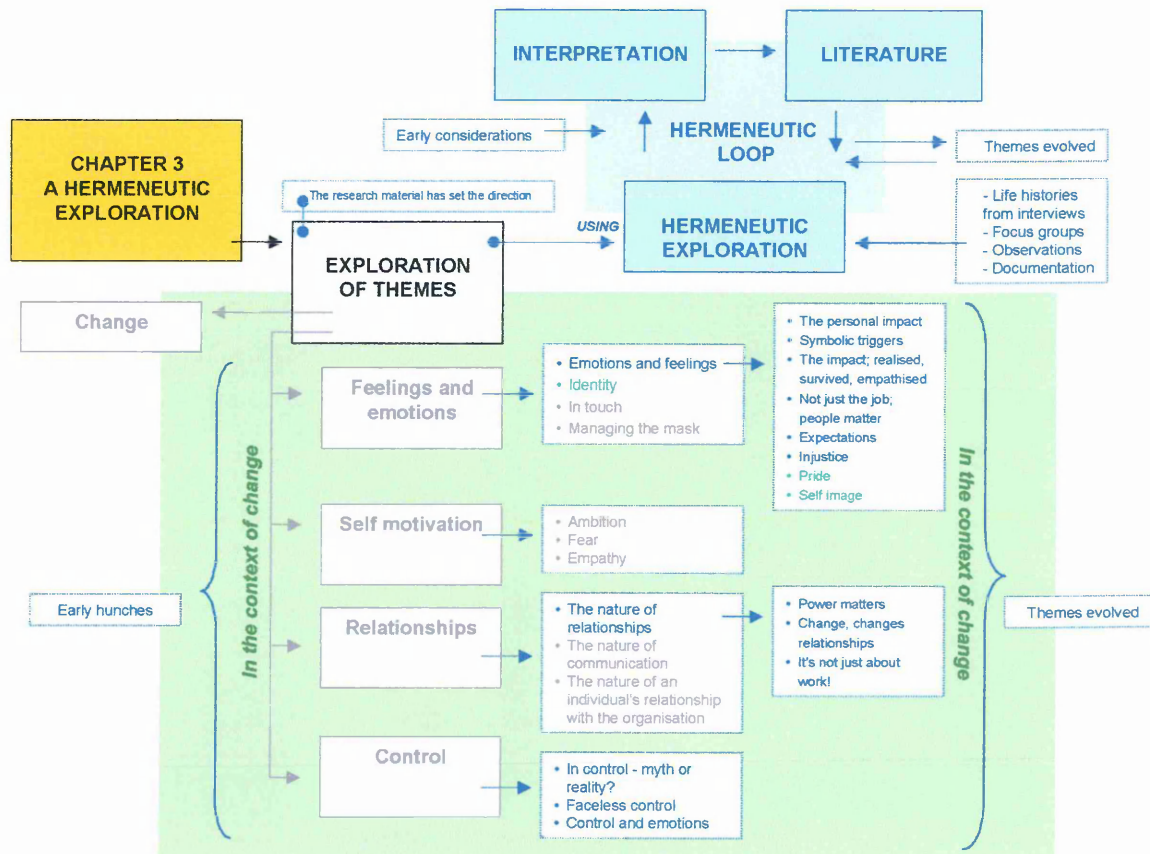
My starting point has been my initial exploration, reflection and consideration of the qualitative material I collected during the interviews and which I subsequently transcribed. I have then reflected upon my initial interpretations and my early considerations of; feelings and emotions; self motivation, relationships, and control, discussed in chapter 1, to see if these early considerations or hunches were being revealed in my interpretations of the text material. I found evidence of all my early considerations, which gave me confidence in my pre-understanding. As my journey progressed, my interpretative and iterative approach gave me new ideas, which helped evolve my understanding of the deeper meaning in my early considerations and enabled

me to draw out the meaning in my material. After initial interpretation of my qualitative material, I revisited the literature on the subject to seek "authority" for the ideas and themes that were evolving. I then revisited my exploration and repeated my interpretation, reflecting on new information from the literature. In doing this, my considerations evolved and instead of being considerations or hunches, they started to become real and richer in context.

During this stage of my exploration I also started to draw the different interview texts together to link them contextually and to compare and contrast the learning and the themes being revealed within them. I grouped information where I identified common emotions and behaviours. I also began to weave in and reflect the learning emerging from my interpretation from the Spider's Web focus group, my observations and from the company documentation I studied. I travelled around this classic hermeneutic loop of exploration, consideration, reflection, interpretation, and literature review and then back to exploration, consideration, and reflection many times.

Change

My interest in this study has emerged from my own direct experience of change in different organisations. In chapter 1, I share a snapshot of my life history set in a context of change to illustrate what change means for me. I have also sought to identify from the literature the observations and thoughts of others that have given depth and meaning to my early research considerations. I start my exploration of the literature with a consideration of what change means and I find that there is no one common understanding. There is, however, I believe sufficient evidence to support the view that change can be considered a pervasive feature of everyday life, and whilst there are no new revelations, there are the writings and metaphors of many scholars, which help to inform and develop an understanding of change through their context and association.

These observations form the starting point for my exploration and interpretation of my research information and in the section that follows, I endeavour to bring to life what change means for the individuals taking part in my study. Whilst it is not, as I discuss in the previous chapter, my intention to seek a new version of the truth. I do, however, begin with an expectation that individuals' experiences, thoughts and observations will help to set the scene and provide an understanding of what change means for them as a basis for association before embarking on a detailed exploration of my main research considerations of feelings and emotions, self motivation, relationships and the nature of control.

What does change mean?

"Can you tell me what change means for you?"

It is clear from the insight that individuals have afforded me, that conditioning arising from years of management training, and from cultural expectations of support for organisational change, (often appearing as key requirements within job roles), has been at least partially successful in shaping how thoughts about change are expressed.

We have, it appears, at least at a superficial level become collaborators in using a common language to discuss change, with rational and dispassionate expressions about the inevitability of change and the opportunities it provides securing equal and regular space in the discourse. There is an overarching view that change is a prerequisite for improvement alongside which, the discourse also reveals there is a clear expectation for individuals to demonstrate positive and proactive behaviours to facilitate and support change. In this respect, the extent of management conditioning is stark.

Change is inevitable

"Change is inevitable but it's healthy as well." (Fred, Senior Manager)

"I think change is inevitable. I expect people, for example, at an operational level to think about the way they do things with a view to making them better. We should be continuously looking at change." (John, Senior Executive)

As I interpret individuals' comments on change and its inevitability, the consistency in how individuals express themselves borders on being uncomfortable, and is, I find, somewhat unsettling. There is, it appears, again at a superficial level, nothing different to say, almost as if an exercise in how the same words can be mixed up and strung together has been exhausted. We are, however, only scratching the surface at this stage. We are at the start of the journey. The discourse is repetitive, conditioned and superficial. Individuals are playing the game, meeting cultural expectations, the organisation's vision and values are being brought to life, and comments are being tempered. The surface, having been scratched however, starts to reveal the underlying layers as they break through. This is a rapid melt for some, for others it is a careful and considered de-layering.

Change is consistently acknowledged as inevitable and an organisational status quo and whilst mechanical, process driven, text book derived statements about change make a regular appearance in the discourse, individuals also introduce a more personal perspective. Here, individuals' opinions and thoughts about change are not all mechanistic, positive or certain. Whilst these opinions and thoughts that take us beyond

110

the realms of text book learning are only hinted at by some individuals, they are explicit and shared in some depth in the personal qualifications of others.

I have grouped like thoughts and opinions together under a few select headings drawn directly from the discourse, to provide a sense at this stage of the issues that are important to individuals and what change means for them. I have found a niche for all their observations in this context, although in doing this, it has not been my intention to suggest there can be no overlap or merging of meaning as each niche clearly lends itself open to this opportunity. In the section that follows, I share these observations.

Change happens – get used to it!

"The thing with change, to use the old term, is it's a constant thing, and it's just never ending. It never will end. Change is something you just have to get used to." (Alfie, Senior Manager)

"You've got to evolve, and you've got to work at doing this. You've got to be looking to change just to keep up." (Henry, Senior Manager)

Change is often described as something that is done to us and, as such, is something that is outside of our control. Change happens. Whether we like it or not, we are resigned to it. It is a fait accompli that we internalise as part of our organisational life. We perpetuate the impression that we like change and want to change, and that it is not only possible, but essential to be in charge of events that equip us to survive change. In this regard, being an advocate of change, with a positive attitude and proactive approach are important aspects of how individuals define themselves. As one individual declared;

"I'm a real change creature." (Fred, Senior Manager)

The conditioning, however, is evident. As Fineman, Sims and Gabriel observe, stated images, such as this, "…define how we are seen and valued by others, and where we fit into society's pecking order," they do not, however, easily survive close scrutiny, as they serve only to "reflect highly prized values in industrialized, competitive, societies,"

111

which have been individually internalised (Fineman, Sims, and Gabriel, 2006, pp. 236). In this way, the individuals participating in my research clearly align how they express themselves with the vision and value change statements of HGAA and the organisation's leadership objectives. In doing so, they highlight the anchoring effects of these messages and provide an insight into how far these messages have been internalised. There are, however, difficulties in going beyond this insight to gain a deeper understanding of the extent to which there is genuine alignment between personal goals and aspirations and those of the organisation, without an appreciation of the nature of individuals' previous experiences of change and the influence this may have had on them. How confident and secure an individual now feels both in their current role and in openly expressing their thoughts on the matter are revealed as key considerations here.

Change - but do it right!

"Change is good but only if it's done in the right way." (Fred, Senior Manager)

Consider Gabriel, who suggests that "for a majority of organization members, meaninglessness and powerlessness are compounded by chronic insecurity – the sense that one's fate may be decided in distant boardrooms and offices, by people one has never met, whose preoccupations and priorities entail only a limited concern for one's well-being" (Gabriel, 2000, pp. 95).

For Fineman, Sims and Gabriel, this is particularly emphasised in financial service organisations where a traditionally secure and stable employment environment has been replaced by one of constant change in which individuals' jobs, lives and their relationships surrounding their jobs are now regularly, "thrown into disarray", and where individuals are faced with making decisions where the choices about their jobs that are afforded to them, are often determined by expediency against a backdrop of uncertainty or opportunism (Fineman, Sims, Gabriel, 2006, pp. 236 – 237).

Here, the messages are clear – for individuals, this is not the "right way" to bring about change – but what is the "right way"? The ambiguity around this is evident. Despite the

many views shared with me on how change should be managed, individuals consistently highlight that events do not often manifest themselves in the same ways and so deciding how to manage change is not as easy as simply adopting an off the shelf text book solution. For some individuals there are some ideas about what life should look like during and after a change event managed the "right way", but often the picture is more arbitrary and uncertain than they would like to admit. Often individuals do not really know what else needs to happen until they have made the change and tested it out. The indications are they may still not really know even then.

In attempting to bring to life, the "right way" to manage change, individuals shared experiences with me, which had clearly been significant for them, but which emphasised not how to instigate change but how *not* to instigate it. Their observations surrounding the resulting impact for individuals are mirrored by Gabriel, (2000), and Fineman, Sims and Gabriel, (2006) who highlight the shock, insecurity, disregard from others, bitterness, disappointment, and the catastrophic sense of loss that result from getting change wrong.

Whilst these difficulties are recognised by the individuals in my study, there is also clear agreement that adopting the "right" approach and attitude to change matters. Individuals' expectations of the "right" approach, put individuals at the centre of change considerations, and treats them fairly with decisions taken that consider their interests, their survival and their well being. It is these expectations considered alongside the difficulties highlighted, that begins to hint at a gap in the psychological contract of work.

As Fineman, Sims and Gabriel observe, "Once, an employee traded his or her loyalty for security and lifetime employment. Now employers tend to regard themselves vulnerable to international market forces and unable to protect their workforce from recessions and takeovers. Ownership, and management, of organisations can change rapidly. People get knocked off the corporate ladder in this process, which can be catastrophic for those whose career and identify has been wrapped up in a company for many years" (2006, pp. 237).

The message is, get change wrong, and the loyalty of individuals' changes.

Unwarranted change happens!

"Some changes are questionable as the benefit isn't apparent." (John, Senior Executive)

"I certainly swallowed the whole theory about change being potentially a factor for good, for improvement rather than something negative. Having said that, I don't agree with the gratuitous change that I see and I know there are some people who are suspected of just stirring things up and instigating change just to see what the reaction is. Gratuitous change doesn't have any value." (Norman, Senior Executive)

These observations introduce questions that most individuals raised about how justified the majority of change really is. Where the purpose of change is ambiguous or morally suspect, the meaning of change for individuals becomes allied with unhappiness, disagreement, and ethical challenge.

Wright found extreme examples of this in his study into executives managing downsizing in 1998, where changes considered unfounded became allied with acute feelings of distress, guilt, shock and horror. Even though it was ten years after the event, an executive vividly remembered; "…we put all the names on the board, and we just sat there, and I can remember, it gave me the creeps, there was a stunned silence, and we felt it was like the Vietnam War or something. We were all that upset, all of us…Saying, look what are we doing to all those people! Isn't there any other way? Why are we doing this? It was horrible." (Wright, 1998, pp. 340).

Change – an opportunity and a threat!

"Looked at in a positive light, change brings opportunity, although more often than not, change is more of a threat in a negative sense." (Molly, Senior Manager)

"People need to be involved and understand why changes are happening and understand it's for their benefit and not a threat to the whole human being - potentially though all changes are a threat." (Albert, Director)

Not unexpectedly, whilst the opportunistic nature of change is acknowledged, change is still seen as a threat for the majority of individuals. Whilst individuals express themselves using either sanitised text book derived statements that serve to de-personalise the context, or intensely personal observations arising from their association with, or direct experience of change, there is a suggestion that some individuals transfer their baton of expression between opportunity and threat depending on whether they are on the delivering or receiving end of change, and how recent this change experience has been. The unifying position, however, appears to be one that acknowledges that individuals will adopt a niche position or even sit on the fence as they reflect upon their previous experience of change and translate this on a just in time basis into what any new change now means to them.

There is a suggestion that an individual's attitude matters here. Why, for example, are some changes seen as opportunities for some yet are seen as threats for others? Individuals echo expressions of injury, insecurity, powerlessness, and tension but also authority, direction, flexibility, and freedom. For Gabriel this is not surprising as, "From being unique members of a family, organizations from school onwards consign us to the status of cogs, important or critical perhaps, but dispensable and replaceable" (2000, pp. 185). Gabriel suggests that it is how individuals see themselves here, drivers, survivors or victims of earlier experiences that can profoundly affect how an individual constructs and interprets current change situations and influences how they will react to them (2000, pp. 172).

Change – the hidden agenda!

"If I fundamentally am comfortable with and trust an organisation then I wouldn't be ambivalent and probably regard structural or strategic change positively. I'm prepared to regard change positively if I can understand the logic behind it. If, however, you distrust an organisation then you question the motives behind change, you have a suspicion that there is a darker view of life." (Norman, Senior Executive)

"Intellectually, I like to understand what we are trying to achieve, and to see if I agree with the change being something that would achieve that. I suppose I'm a cynic, I just want to make sure that there isn't anything dodgy going on as well. I want to make sure that I am comfortable with the background to it. In my last job, there was a much more hostile aggressive management style – any changes there and my first reaction was to think, "What are the buggers up to now?" Whereas here, it's more along the lines of, "What are the buggers doing now?" - More sort of bemused rather than suspicious; assuming incompetence I suppose, rather than something devious." (John, Senior Executive)

"Basically, if the organisation is broadly benevolent and has a benevolent atmosphere, then I don't approach change from a position of mistrust, even though there's always something you're not being told and only find out afterwards. The next thing is to understand the rationale, to sense check that I understand what it is we are planning. So I'm not starting from a position of distrust, but I just like to confirm that I do trust what it is we are trying to achieve, and to see, if you like, that emotionally, I've got some buy in to what it is the change represents." (Margaret, Senior Executive)

At the heart of individuals' observations is a strong message about the importance of trust. This for some, however, highlights a paradox in the context of change. Some individuals start from a basis of trust and confidence in the organisation; they accept change messages at face value and have an expectation that their trust will be reciprocated. For others, trust is not so easily given; they are initially sceptical and they seek signs, explanations and assurances to provide them with the confidence and reassurance they need. To trust or not to trust is defined by an individual's previous

116

experience, their judgement of the current situation, their expectations and their goodwill.

For many of the individuals in my study, their previous experience of unvoiced aspects of change, be they consciously hidden or unstated as a result of incompetence or insensitive planning, serve to sow the seeds of suspicion and uncertainty and hint at a threat to the psychological contract of work. As Fineman observes, "not all change in organizations is smoothly and sensitively executed. Change-management skills can be elusive or non- existent. Secrecy, hidden agendas and vested interests can mean that change is forced, without warning. Uncertainty and fear can dominate." (Fineman, 2005, pp. 130).

Change – but don't be naïve about it!

"Anyone who says that some people are more adaptable and more flexible to change – well, I think that is quite a naïve statement. I think there are a number of dimensions to this which means, that all change needs to be handled with great care." (Tom, Director)

Change happens; for the individuals in my study, it is part of the weft and weave of everyday organisational life; they expect it; they joke about it; they are happy to tell stories about it, and for some, the highs and lows of their experiences of change have helped to define how they deal with it. For Fineman, Sims and Gabriel, "there have always been (individuals who are) flexible, inventive and unfazed by the next change in their lives" (2006, pp. 239). As one individual during my study observes;

"We worry unnecessarily about change. Think back; there was a time when we used to be scared of travelling 70 miles an hour in a car - look where we are now. Times have moved on and we have evolved." (George, Senior Specialist)

When it affects individuals personally, however, there sometimes can be a clear divide between their objective statements about change and their personal lived experience in the face of change. The same individual shared this story;

117

"It was ridiculous really; It was snowing, the traffic was not really moving, and I was running late for an interview, an interview which was part of a major organisational restructure and was to determine if I still had a job or not. I was in a panic, literally, and I didn't have the telephone number with me for the place I was going to. I telephone my wife to get it and completely lost it with her over the phone; completely lost it. I was distraught - she was to blame for making me go through this! She tried to keep me calm, but I hung up. I got to the interview on time after all and telephoned her to apologise; I felt so bad about it. Still do in fact. She wasn't to blame, how could she be? No one in work would have had any idea I felt like that, I was Mr "supporting the change"; laughable really…If it happens to you often enough I suppose then you must just get used to it!" (George, Senior Specialist)

Whilst some observations about change are clearly rounded and depersonalised summations, it is only when they are interspersed with personal lived experiences of change, and considered together that they begin to bring to life what change means for individuals. The observation at the start of this section illustrates that labels of "adaptable and flexible" and others of this nature cannot confidently be attached to individuals, unless there is no interest beyond the surface view. For myself and others, however, there is a great deal more to consider.

Change - summary comments

In the section above, I share what change means for the individuals taking part in my study as a basis for association. Whilst the extent of conditioning in how individuals express themselves is stark, there are also hints along with explicit observations that introduce a more personal perspective. Their key messages are; change is inevitable; change happens – get used to it; change – but do it right; unwarranted change happens; change is an opportunity and a threat; change has hidden agendas; change, but don't be naïve about it.

Within the discussion, individuals reveal that people, their lives, their experiences, their relationships, their motivations, their feelings and emotions are important considerations. A sense of control is thinly veiled in the background, hinted at by some

individuals. For individuals, it is clear that organisational change does not pamper to nostalgia or wishful thinking as they share experiences that hint at influences that drive change forward on a theoretical emotion free basis. These suggestions echo Fineman, Sims and Gabriel who indicate there are limitations to how much an individual can influence change in their working lives; as they observe, "full control over ones destiny may be fiction" (2006, pp. 236).

Within the discourse the psychological contract of work finds a niche, providing support for my early considerations along with my thoughts about feelings and emotions, self motivation, relationships, and control. In the section that follows, I embark on a detailed exploration of these early hunches in this order. In doing this, it is not my intention to attribute a level of importance to the order in which I discuss these considerations, as each theme clearly lends itself open to overlap and merger as I discuss earlier, and as I illustrate during my initial literature review. It does, however, form the basis from which I seek to illustrate the relationships and interdependencies between my different research themes. Feelings and emotions influence an individual's self motivation, from which their relationships are defined in environments where control can permeate all aspects of change. I start with feelings and emotions to develop the context. As Fineman observes, change in organisations succeeds or fails as a result of the emotions that engage or freeze people. "…feelings shape (change) events and (change) events shape feelings" (2005, pp. 1).

Feelings and emotions

In chapter 1, I introduce the view that emotions and feelings and our nature of being can be considered a reasonable way of looking at and interpreting how we interact in everyday life (Honderich, 1995; Magee, 1988; Magee, 2001), and that individuals' previous life experiences, their learning and understanding, and their emotions influence their personal response to change, and also, influence change itself (Fineman, 2005; Gabriel, 2000; Schein, 1988).

I also introduce the consideration that, an individual's personal response to change is shaped by how much their identity or "self image" is defined by their job, (Fineman, 2005; Stuart, 1995), along with how in touch individuals are with their feelings and emotions, how they choose to manage these, and how open or otherwise they are in demonstrating these (George, 2000; Goleman, 1998; Sosik and Megerian, 1999).

These are all key considerations for my research, and in the section that follows I explore these themes in more detail. In the context of individuals' experience of change and their reflections, I have, once again, grouped like thoughts and observations together under headings I have drawn directly from the discourse; these are, emotions and feelings, identity, in touch, and managing the mask. This is my favoured approach, and as I discuss earlier, in finding a niche for all observations in this way, it is not my intention to suggest there can be no overlap between them. The discourse within each heading clearly lends itself open to this opportunity.

A map of this part of the exploration is as follows,

INTERPRETATION → LITERATURE

CHAPTER 3
A HERMENEUTIC
EXPLORATION

Early considerations

HERMENEUTIC
LOOP

Themes evolved

The research material has set the direction

EXPLORATION
OF THEMES

USING

HERMENEUTIC
EXPLORATION

- Life histories
  from interviews
- Focus groups
- Observations
- Documentation

In the context of change

Early hunches

Feelings and
emotions

- Emotions and feelings
- Identity
- In touch
- Managing the mask

- The personal impact
- Symbolic triggers
- The impact; realised,
  survived, empathised
- Not just the job;
  people matter
- Expectations
- Injustice
- Pride
- Self image

In the context of change

Themes evolved

Emotions and feelings

In the section that follows, I explore the consideration that an individuals' emotions and feelings can be considered a reasonable way of looking at and interpreting how they interact in everyday life, and their personal response to change. Whilst emotions and feelings are intensely personal, there are a number of like conditions and circumstances that arise consistently in my research. I share my thoughts on these different ideas, reflecting upon how emotions and feelings arise, the nature of these emotions and feelings, and how they influence, and are influenced by, an individual's nature of being, their previous life experiences, and their learning and understanding.

I group my considerations and ideas, and discuss these under headings I have drawn directly from the discourse. These headings are; The personal impact; Symbolic triggers; The impact: realised, survived, empathised; Not just the job, people matter; Expectations; and Injustice. In grouping like thoughts and ideas together in this way, however, I recognise that they are not mutually exclusive, and there is a clearly the opportunity, for considerable overlap between them.

Many individuals taking part in my study use the expressions emotions and feelings interchangeably, however, Fineman, Sims and Gabriel make a distinction between these, which I have found useful. Feelings, they suggest are intensely personal and can result in physical and emotional experiences. "They provide an essential, personal, readout on how we are doing, how we are relating to the world as we try to deal with it." Whereas emotions are the expression of our feelings "through learned social codes" (2006, pp. 187-188). I use this distinction during my discussion.

The personal impact

"The reorganisation was the biggest reorganisation that I had seen and I would probably say for the organisation as well. I hadn't heard of anything so fundamental before. It was a big change. The speed at which it happened was scary. I have been involved in a lot of changes, but this has been the one I hated most, for one reason, the threat of redundancy." (Alfie, Senior Manager)

The language used by the individuals taking part in my study, indicate the extent to which some change events affect them more than others. Whilst the speed and scale of change events are noted as contributory factors to how individuals feel and respond to change, there is a clear sense that the depth and strength of their feelings are more a consequence of considering what the personal impact for them might be. Individuals' assessment of change situations and symbolic associations contribute to their level of uncertainty and nervousness.

Symbolic triggers

"It was the fear of the unknown, you knew something was coming, but we didn't know the extent of it I have to admit. At that time there was a threat of redundancy, but we didn't know that; I have to admit I hadn't even thought of redundancy. I just knew there could be significant changes, but it wasn't until the day when the pink envelopes arrived, that we realised. That was the worst day I've ever had in work." (Henry, Senior Manager)

Pink envelopes in HGAA are symbolic and associated on a conscious level with communications of a strictly personal and confidential nature from pay slips to dismissal notices. If they are not expected, they become by association, emotional triggers. As one individual remembered,

"I saw the pink envelope on his desk as I went in. All I could think about was, "Please, no, I can't go through it again". I felt cold and physically sick. He was smiling and making pleasant conversation; I couldn't tell you what about, I just remember nodding and agreeing, and hating myself for being so weak. I remember thinking, "Just get on with it so I can get out of here!" Then he pushed the pink envelope towards me and said he was delighted to let me know that the remuneration committee had agreed to increase my salary in recognition of the work I had been doing. I don't remember what I said. I'm sure I expressed my thanks. All I remember is sitting in my car afterwards crying. I thought I'd got over it, the way I'd been treated before, but I hadn't. It had all come back as soon as I saw that envelope." (Sarah, Senior Executive)

Notwithstanding the fact that individuals receive their payslips monthly in the same pink envelopes, when they are received outside of this context, individuals' stories and behaviours consistently resonate their unique symbolism and bring to life feelings and emotions associated with their memories. As Gabriel (2000), observes, symbolism, such as this, exists at both a conscious and unconscious level. At a conscious level what the pink envelope represents is very clear to individuals in the organisation; simply, it means you have been paid and the monthly salary is in the bank; although even on this level it is still capable of triggering emotions, and driving action. At the unconscious level, however, the symbolism of the pink envelope is intensely personal. For individuals, there may be a deeper meaning beyond the surface view, which hides their feelings and emotions without form until something happens to bring them to life (Gabriel, 2000). For Jones, unconscious symbolism arises "as a result of intra-psychic conflict between the repressing tendencies and the repressed…where only what is repressed is symbolized; only what is repressed needs to be symbolized" (Jones, 1938, pp. 158). For Gabriel (2000), we should not be surprised if these underlying feelings and emotions, when given life find form in a diversity of emotional expression that may reflect self-pitying, unreasonable and contradictory meaning.

The impact; realised, survived, empathised

Change has a profound emotional effect on some individuals. At the extreme, there is fear, which arises from situations that are outside of an individual's control and which threaten their nature of being, and their identity. Individuals are consistent in drawing upon experiences where there is a possible loss of jobs exacerbated by periods of unwelcome uncertainty to illustrate this. Whilst speculation also serves to inflate individuals' emotions during change events, it seems to be the process of assessment and rationalisation of the situation after the event that justifies their emotions and even gives a name and life to them.

The strength of feelings that individuals experience, their desperation and sense of panic can be overwhelming. There is a sense for many individuals of living through a traumatic incident. For some this arises from threats to their jobs, for others it arises

when they keep their jobs and others do not, for others it arises by association and from empathy. As one survivor observes,

"The day the changes were announced, well, that particular day was a shocker as far as I'm concerned. We all got a slot in time to go up and see the Director and I was the last one of the group to go. All the ones who came down before me had been made redundant. They all told me as they came past with their pink envelope! I was scared to death when I went in, I saw this pink envelope with my name on, and everything just shut off. All I could think was I've been made redundant! And I'm thinking, oh no, my family, children, me, and I'm not listening to anything. You know, you don't assume that of all your colleagues, you're the only one who hasn't been made redundant. I was actually more upset when I came out even though my job hadn't been put into that pool of redundancies." (Alfie, Senior Manager)

And as one call centre agent noted in his passionate e-mail copied to the entire company in response to another colleague's internet chat room comment bemoaning the inability of her manager to sort out a shift swap for her,

"For god's sake, b* get off your backside and sort it out yourself! The least we can do whilst our team leaders are reapplying for their jobs is support them as much as we can. This goes for everyone else out there as well!" (Andy, Call Centre Agent)

Both these observations echo the feelings and emotions that Fineman (1983; 1987; 2000; 2005), George and Jones (2001), Kiefer (2002), and Stuart (1995), suggest arises where individuals survive change or empathise with change happening to others they work closely with. Fear, uncertainty, shock, relief, embarrassment, guilt, anger, and frustration are mirrored throughout the discourse as individuals attempt to understand their position, internalise their experience and rebalance their workplace expectations.

Not just the job; people matter

It is not just change events that involve job losses, however, that invoke extreme emotional responses. Some individuals, for example, have been attracted to HGAA or even remain working for HGAA because of a manager or people they will be working with and not just because of job content. The opportunity to learn from other individuals is important to them, as is working with people they believe will create an enjoyable working environment. Where events happen that change these situations, individuals reveal a heightened level of emotional response; many individuals mirror Fineman (2005) and tell of experiencing feelings of bitterness, lack of confidence, uncertainty and vulnerability with some going so far as to question their ability to continue to do their job.

As one individual observes, when his new boss, the reason he had left his old company to join HGAA, told him she was leaving HGAA, less than two months after he had joined;

"I'd only been here about a month and Linda handed her notice in. I was absolutely devastated. She made it really difficult for me. She brought me in to do a specific role, and suddenly, I'd lost my sponsor and my manager, and at the same time she poached two of my staff, the most senior ones underneath me. So I was exposed both ways." (Chris, Senior Manager)

For some individuals participating in my study, change involves loss that erodes the environment, the people and the structure that they have built up around themselves. As one individual remembers;

"It was a bit like, it was very extreme, what I will say will sound quite an extreme way of putting it, but I don't think that it's totally out of place, it's, it's a bit like a bereavement with the different phases of grieving if you like. There was the initial weeping and wailing; there really was weeping and wailing; horrific scenes. Then there were phases of complete depression, and finally you also had then people who were thinking "right, how on earth can we get on with this and make the best of it." It was interesting to see how quickly different people got through those different phases.

126

Everybody went through the weeping and wailing, although not everybody physically cried, but they were all absolutely knocked for six. Then they went through the down; a few of them went into the sort of, almost like gorilla warfare; how can I do the worst damage to this company type, but a number of others very quickly went onto the "right, I'm going to sort this one out then, what am I going to do?", and thankfully everybody finally, with a little bit of a leg up and push and help, got into that final phase." (Albert, Director)

The way individuals express themselves, and the emotion in the voices of some individuals as they share their experiences, reveals the very personal impact organisational change has had on them. Many are nostalgic in remembering what they were trying to build up with their teams and the people in them. The regret surrounding the events that intervene to change their ambitions and their aspirations is consistent throughout the discourse, and echoes Fineman (2005), Marris (1986), and Parkes (1986), who liken such experiences to the emotions individuals experience following a close bereavement. One individual is very emotional with tears very evident as he relives a major restructure he had been tasked with delivering;

"I was so, so depressed inside because I felt we had such a lovely team, that we could see where we were going, and with lovely, lovely people in it, and I felt cut off at the knees in trying to deliver something that I really wanted to deliver with them, but not being able to... we'd had a lovely cosy atmosphere and not in just the soft, pretty sort of way, but also driven and passionate, very positive and excited, and wanting to make things happen. The stark change in atmosphere would put a chill in anyone's stomach between that and how it suddenly became. Very shocking! I've never ever, maybe I've led a sheltered life, but I've not come across many situations like that. It was a real shock. I could see no positives in the change at all." (Tom, Director)

Expectations

Individuals' stories and behaviours emphasise how inextricably intertwined their feelings and emotions are with their workplace expectations, with emotions consistently being brought vividly to life where there is a mismatch between an individual's expectations and their organisational experience. As one individual explains;

"Disrespect being shown to people, that makes me really angry. I can understand business decisions and I'm really for business decisions. Although I've got to say that I'm somebody who feels that staff should be right up there with customers and with shareholders. There should be some <u>real</u> consideration for staff. During that change, (a major restructure), I think it's was that, disrespect for people that made me most angry. The young whipper snappers, because they were in a position of dominance, they abused it. There were people who at that time, you know, the cycle of change had just gone against them, but they were still just as good or better, than these guys. It was that that made me angry. There's nothing more guaranteed to get me angry actually than disrespect." (Bill, Director)

Whilst individuals' expectations are shaped and defined in many different ways, the individuals taking part in my study reveal the intensely personal nature of these expectations. At the heart of these lies trust, respect and assumptions of fair, open and honest treatment arising from individuals' ambitions, associations, motivations, previous experiences, and from cultural stories, discourse with others, espoused statements from senior managers, policies and procedures, and the organisation's stated vision and values. Even where an individual's current or previous experience indicates that their current expectations in practice will not be fully realised, it is clear that many individuals still want to believe they will be, and they cling to their expectations in spite of organisational practice and despite feelings revealing bitterness, dissatisfaction and falling confidence. In this regard, the durability of individuals' current goodwill or faith in the organisational collective was surprising. Although, as Fineman, Sims and Gabriel suggest, some individuals internalise their organisation's messages to the extent that they are no longer clear about their own expectations (2006, pp. 193).

For some individuals, it is clear that self justification and rationalisation plays a key role in reaffirming their expectations. In some situations where an individual's expectations have not been met, it is clear the perceived incompetence of a senior manager in not doing their job effectively or in not recognising the talent of the individual are considered to be the significant factors. The organisation is given the benefit of the doubt and another chance to get it right. Where individuals' expectations are repeatedly disappointed, however, there are two clear routes identified in the discourse, and individuals either choose to leave the organisation, broken or defiant, or they remain, albeit persevering or resigned to the fact they are unable to make a difference because the organisational collective dominates. As one individual observes;

"The organisation has a very narrow point of view, when it comes to women, but saying that, it's down to me as well. I've got to make the decision. Do I want to rock the boat and then really have to go? That's what Helen did. She was basically told her subject area would take her nowhere beyond what she had already got. They completely ignored her ability and transferable skills. So, she rocked the boat and then she left. When she left, I was the natural successor but the business didn't acknowledge that was the case. They weren't fair with me at all, or even clear with me as to what would happen as Helen left. Her job wasn't advertised. It wasn't even discussed with me what would happen all through the period leaving up to her leaving, which was three months! Four months later, they sort of said, "Well the Board think you are ok to do this job", it was said very grudgingly! ...I felt the business lacked confidence in my ability, so I began to question my own abilities. I've never felt so de-motivated or uncertain. I felt like saying, "I don't want your pissing job! But of course I didn't... So I suppose I'm realistic now and think that well, that's probably my lot by way of moving up the ranks here. So I either stick with what I've got, or I can look to what else I can offer the business, and I have done that a few times, looked at other jobs and gone for interviews, I always get down to the last two but then that's where it ends, or alternatively, I leave along with family upheaval... what makes me most angry is the business's lack of acknowledgement of my contribution and my competency." (Polly, Senior Manager)

As discussed earlier in the introduction to this chapter and in chapter one, in situations like this, individuals' allegiances change and the traditional psychological contract of work is reformed. Mutual obligations on the part of the individual and the organisation

are now being replaced with narcissistic goals. Whilst this creates opportunities for some individuals, others find that they are forced out of jobs they are considered no longer suitable for, to also find that their traditional career paths are no longer available to them (Fineman, Sims and Gabriel, 2006).

Injustice

Of note within the stories of many individuals are hints that suggest there may be an underlying gender issue. There is clearly a trend where there have been a number of senior *female* managers who have left the organisation having been overlooked for promotion and who have shared their feelings openly with their team members on departure. Their departures have created change situations which have impacted emotionally on the remaining staff. Their shared feelings have heightened the sense of unfairness within the staff left behind. There are also indications that the ways in which the resultant change scenarios have come about have heightened the level of emotions of employees who remain. Whilst an exploration of gender matters in the workplace is not a direct focus for my research, and, as such, I have not specifically sought to explore these hints further, I mention it here given the influence these departures have had on the feelings and emotions of the individuals participating in my study and also as a consideration for further research.

The sense of unfair treatment and perceived injustice, however, are not just reserved for female managers who have left the organisation. They are prolific across many of the different change events shared with me. Individuals consistently reveal the impact unfair treatment has had on their feelings and emotions and in doing so echo the work of Fineman (1993), Harlos and Pinder (2000), and Pinder (1998). The depth and intensity of emotion, brought to life in the language, tone and voices of individuals as they remember and share their experiences, however, was unexpected. For a large number of individuals, the adverse impact has been significant, with stories that reveal the resultant effects on their health and relationships beyond the workplace, being disturbingly common. For one individual the experience remains dominant in her memory;

"Harry decided to leave, call it early retirement, call it whatever, but when the tape was switched off it he made it really clear what was going on. So we knew and that spilled over into Harry's last year with us... We didn't feel that the directors were supportive of Harry, because quite obviously they weren't, so by virtue of that, people like Jack and myself that reported into Harry were not being supported. Harry couldn't have given a toss, he was completely demob happy, and that became more apparent as time went by. No criticism of Harry you know, that's probably how you would feel if the business treated you like that. It was all exacerbated by the fact that it was decided there was nobody competent within the organisation to take on his role. Jack for example was told, "Don't bother applying because you're really not the material we want"... We were both kicked in the teeth... I felt, I felt I had to prove myself to everyone all over again, and even at home to my husband... It's caused a lot, it's not caused a lot of arguments at home, but it's caused a lot of ill feelings from my husband's point of view because amongst other things... I've developed a blood pressure problem, and in the year leading up to Harry's departure, from knowing he was leaving, and during that period, I suddenly got eczema as well. I have never had eczema in my life, and we did all the tests at the hospital, and at the end of the day they said, "It's stress related eczema!"" (Megan, Senior Manager)

Whilst Harlos and Pinder (2000) suggest that this type of "procedural and distributive" injustice did not reveal the same emotional richness that arises where there is mistreatment within workplace relationships, the individuals participating in my study, consistently highlight that the extremes of emotion transcends these demarcations.

Emotions and feelings - summary comments

In the section above, I explore the consideration that an individual's emotions and feelings can be considered a reasonable way of looking at and interpreting how they interact in their everyday lives, and their personal response to change. I reflect upon how emotions and feelings arise, the nature of these emotions and feelings, and the influence they have upon an individual's nature of being, their previous life experiences, and their learning and understanding. The key messages are; there is a personal impact; conscious and unconscious symbolism brings life to feelings and emotions; change has an impact that individuals realise, survive and empathise with, and it is not just about process driven change events, people, and their feelings and emotions, matter.

Throughout the experiences individuals share with me, it is clear that individuals' feelings and emotions are inextricably intertwined with their workplace expectations. Injustices are also unveiled and whilst there are hints of underlying gender issues, it is clear that the sense of unfair treatment and perceived injustice is much wider than this as individuals share their experiences across many different change events.

Identity

In the section that follows, I explore the consideration that an individual's personal response to change is shaped by their pride and by how much their identity and "self image" is defined by their job. I discuss pride first and then "self image", although in doing so, it is not my intention to suggest that there can be no overlap between them.

Pride

From the insight individuals have afforded me, it is clear that pride is an intensely personal part of an individual's nature of being, from which their behaviours, feelings and emotions are influenced, shaped and defined.

All the individuals participating in my study share experiences that highlight the pride they have in their work. For some individuals this is related to their role and their status inside and outside work; for others it is defined by their career development or particular activities they have managed, and is clearly illustrated in the way individuals share details of their development journeys, pace of career progression, doing a good job, their broadening experiences, the widening scope of their responsibilities, the sacrifices they have made and the successes they have achieved. For many individuals, their recollections hint at Gabriel's (2000) and Kaplan's (1987) nostalgia paradox as they share their most unrepeatable experiences to emphasise how proud they are of their achievements.

For many, there is clearly a close relationship between how good they feel about themselves, their self respect and self confidence, and how they feel about their work. Their outward facing expressions of emotion in this regard, provide an insight into how aligned an individual's self assessment of their work and their expectations are with those of the organisation. For the majority of individuals, their pride, self respect and self confidence, are indicators of the extent to which they perceive their abilities, contributions and aspirations have been recognised. For one individual, his pride in succeeding to get the job he has aspired to and worked towards for a number of years, is

clear. The strength of his feelings as he shares the significance of this appointment and what this means for him, is uncovered by the emotion in his voice and the emphasis he places on his words;

"Getting this job, the success in getting this job, has given me the most satisfaction. I achieved what I set out to do. Actually, I probably, I could say something else; when I came here you know, I knew that I wanted to be in this role one day. Then there was a few changes and I lost out on getting the position to someone else; I started thinking, you know, "How long am I going to be here?", and "Am I going to get there?", and I remember that, as well as getting the job, it wasn't just getting the job, it was getting that job, you know; because as I said, it was quite, for me anyway, quite an important step." (Henry, Senior Manager)

For another individual, the following statement taken from the career journey she shares with me, encapsulates and brings to life her pride in what she has achieved;

"I run the department now." (Polly, Senior Manager)

It is clear that most individuals come to work to do the best job they can. They are emotionally engaged in achieving this. They care about what they do. The way many individuals' express themselves and the emotion in their voices as they share their experiences emphasises how important this is to them. The pride that individuals have in their work helps define their identities.

Self image

Many individuals taking part in my study clearly define themselves, in part, by their experience, their job or their level of seniority in the organisation. Some individuals in particular, place significant emphasis on their seniority. They identify themselves as leaders having key roles in instigating, driving forward and enabling change. They point out the key man aspects of their roles and responsibilities and introduce metaphors into their stories that highlight, not just how important their own image is to them, but how important it is that the opinions of others reflect this image and give credence to it.

The hero image is one that consistently finds a place in the discourse of individuals participating in my study. Individuals liken themselves to courageous leaders, saviours, double agents, and people advocates. There is a sense of the dramatic in the way individuals recollect events and a sense that their feelings shape how they rationalise the changes. In the same way Gabriel (2000; 2004), suggests that it is epic stories of this nature that inspires individuals, defines images and influences feelings and emotions. For one individual, the analogy he uses sees him standing, supporting his people during the change after which he heroically disappears from the scene, his purpose ended. In his own words,

"I was like a heroic captain of a sinking ship." (Albert, Director)

For one individual the good overcoming evil metaphor is clear,

"I had two roles really; being nice and interested, and considering their point of view, but more importantly, bridging the gap between that and the reality, and helping them to see what really was going on, and then helping them come up with some more worldly wise tactics for getting the right outcome. I was an arm around the shoulder guy, but really, it was about shaking them up and saying, "right, this is the evil we are up against, and this how we need to handle it."" (Tom, Director)

"Look at me, I have been chosen to do this because of who I am!" Individuals define themselves by the parts they adopt and play. Whilst no one uses these actual words during my discussions with them, the same sentiments and sense of pride are reflected consistently throughout individuals' recollections. Individuals want to be seen as someone who makes a valued contribution to the organisation, and in this way, they reflect Schwartz who observes that, "being somebody is good, being a "has been" is bad" (1987, pp. 329). For one individual he is a double agent; he is a hero, keeping sales momentum going through his business as usual road show responsibilities; rallying the troops and keeping motivations high, whilst at the same time progressing secretly behind the scenes with a change programme. Even though he describes the need to juggle his activities as terrible, this individual, like others in my study, defines himself by his dual role.

"I was doing the worst part of all. I set up this regional road show where I had all these messages to give to all the people, which was "right, let's do it!" So I was giving these "let's do it" type messages one day and in a due diligence meeting for instance the next day, and it wasn't hypocritical because, far from it actually, because my reasoning was, "they're in for a fight, and let's get them as lean and mean and performing at their absolute best so that when it comes to a fight, they're at their best." You know, I didn't want them going into a fight not knowing they're in a fight and getting knocked out in the first round. So if you can try and get them doing as well as they possibly can and when it comes to assessing, "right are we going to have him or her?" you know, they're ready for it." (Albert, Director)

Some individuals define themselves as invisible people advocates. They maintain an ear and a voice for others behind the scenes, with those they are supporting often unaware of the efforts being made on their behalf. Whilst there is a sense of the self appointed hero, it is clear that for many individuals, what happens to people genuinely matters to them at an emotional level and they define themselves by how they feel and the actions they take to protect the interests of others, even though, their actions quite often remain unacknowledged and unrecognised. For many individuals, this is emphasised where they are required to manage change that they believe to be aggressive or where they perceive that real effort will be required from individuals on the receiving end of change to survive. For one individual, whilst he acknowledges he has acted in a way he believes was not in complete alignment with the expectations placed upon him by his managers, he rationalises and justifies his actions and behaviours as essential constructs of the circumstances he faced.

"It wasn't duplicitous. I argued for people all the way through (the restructure) as well as at the same time quite genuinely driving the business. All around me was carnage and horribleness and a ruthless approach; I could have left then, but actually, I stayed professionally managing the business, even though I hated the people running the business at that time, whilst at the same time actually, doing the one thing that you shouldn't normally do I suppose as a boss in that situation, which is more representing people against your boss than, than just genuinely managing the business. From that point of view, I had a split role slightly. I was genuinely trying to push the business but I was also looking, trying to look after the people." (Marcus, Senior Executive)

The ease by which individuals adopt a complicit role, such as this, arises, for many individuals from how successful they are in aligning their personal beliefs with the change agenda. As one individual observes,

"To be perfectly honest, because I'd reconciled the correctness of it, I didn't feel that I was not being true to myself. I mean, you've got to recognise that there's always certain things you have to do that are quiet, secret and confidential; putting that bit to one side, I didn't do anything that wasn't true to myself and therefore you know, I could carry it off." (Dod, Senior Executive)

This for some, however, means sacrificing or putting on hold their personal beliefs and aspirations, and for a time they become emotion constrained instruments of change delivery. Their self image by which they define themselves is compromised. For many, it is not until after the change event has taken place that they rationalise what it really means for them as they reflect on how they feel about their experiences. Whilst the hero image is clearly important, as individuals consistently identify themselves with the roles they play in the change journey of others, the personal character sacrifices this entails for some is evident. For one individual the emotional impact is significant,

"It was only when the changes had taken place that people were saying to me, "you idiot, what are you doing? You're not happy! What are you doing? You know, you've, you've looked after everyone else, they're all laughing now, they're all comfortable, they're all sorted out, and you're just sat there!"" (Marcus, Senior Executive)

For Frost and Robinson (1999), whilst individuals' actions and sacrifices, such as these, are generally invisible, they are essential to the emotional stability of organisations where individuals as "unsung corporate heroes", "voluntarily shoulders the sadness, frustration, bitterness, and anger that are endemic to organizational life" (1999, pp. 97 - 98). As Fineman, Sims and Gabriel observe, managers will often seek to protect the individuals they are responsible for, and will act, they suggest, "like sponges, soaking in and holding the damaging emotions, keeping the worst of the distress and pain away from others" (2006, pp. 196). What is clear, however, is that emotions in the workplace are often not honoured and as Fineman, Sims and Gabriel (2006), Frost and Robinson (1999), and Meyerson (2000), acknowledge any work to access, engage and absorb

137

emotions, especially for individuals in management positions is not valued by the vast majority of organisations with open acknowledgement of feelings and emotions being seen by some managers as career limiting.

The fragility of an individual's pride and self image when seen through the eyes of others, or how individuals believe they are seen by others, is revealed consistently in the discourse of the individuals taking part in my research. Just as the actions and opinions of others, and perceptions of individuals themselves can give life and credence to an individual's self image, they can just as easily destroy it, as a colleague of this same individual observes,

"He took it all very personally. He felt the changes were destroying something he had built up. It wasn't personal though, it was just business, it happens. He couldn't see that, couldn't rationalise it. He took it very personally inside. He felt betrayed I think, felt the loss quite a lot, felt demoted and no longer really in control. I also think he felt embarrassed over what he had built up with such pride and energy. Not that you would have known on the face of it if you didn't know him. He became less himself, less energised, equally hard working but something had died in him, you could tell. He defined himself by it, by his role, his importance and what he had achieved. To a large extent it was all pulled to bits when the restructure happened." (Kit, Senior Manager)

For another individual, the vulnerability of self image is clearly emphasised during the communication of a change in the senior management structure,

"It was difficult to see it as a good thing because the explanation given wasn't given in enough depth. I didn't quite get it. The glib, "we're just reducing the number of (directors') direct reports" just presents me with a load more questions. Yes, but, other organisations have high number of reports they just don't get bogged down in the detail. Yes, but, you've done it in one area but not in others. It's demoted at least three and possibly six or eight people...so everything you're about has just changed by (a diagram) just being dumped on a desk, and then, "What's this?" "Oh, it's the new structure" "Oh, okay", so that's unfolded, "Do we get another one? ...No? ...That's it? ...Okay... What was that?" "Oh, that was your life. Now you've got another one!"" (Norman, Senior Manager)

As one of the eight *"demoted"* individuals observes,

"I personally haven't come out of it that well, because I was a direct report and now I'm not. I have to be honest, it happened at exactly the same time as we won the awards. So I felt euphoric in one instance and kicked in the teeth in the other. I mean, I've actually been given some more responsibility, so that's fine, and the guy that I'm going to be reporting into, I get on with reasonably well, so that's fine as well. But, I know status and image isn't a thing you should really lose any sleep over, but it, it is a status issue sometimes, and I think that I've lost a bit a status here. I've been demoted really. I've not lost anything financially, physically or anything like that, but I just feel that I've gone down a peg in a way from where I was before. That's just a personal feeling... but one or two of my colleagues have said to me, "Oh, you've been kicked in the teeth as well have you?" (Fred, Senior Manager)

For some individuals, changes to the organisational structure have changed the way other individuals interact with them on a day to day basis, even though there may have been no obvious change to their role or responsibilities. The creation of a new reporting layer for many individuals means they are not longer seen as the main point of contact. Their expertise and contribution becomes hidden and, as such, unacknowledged. Individuals' perceived loss of status is given life by the status conscious behaviours of others. As one individual observes,

"I was seen as successful, now it's different. What I mean is, when you're in a job and there's no one above you, you are seen as the main person to talk to, to go to. As soon as you put someone in front of you, your peers, previously your peers, will go to them, a lot more than they would come to me now. But what happens is I only get that work anyway. I end up doing that. What ever has been asked for, it comes down to me. So I'm still doing exactly the same role, it just gets forgotten. But for some reason... there are some people, even my peers who will go to Jo now because he's in charge, whereas before, they would come to me, no problem." (Chris, Senior Manager)

For many individuals, their sense of unfair treatment, loss, perception of failure, or uncertainty following change events can strip them of their identity, purpose, and perceived status in the organisation. For Fineman (2005) and Stuart (1995), change

events often involve loss, and whilst some losses are welcomed, many are not, particularly those that erode an individual's identity. As Lasch (1984), Gabriel (2000), and Schwartz (1993) observe, the self image or identity of individuals is shaped not from what they achieve, their successes or their organisational conformity, but from the injustices, under appreciation and victim empathy, that they experience. For some individuals taking part in my research, the obvious, but unwritten and unarticulated strategy to bring new people into the organisation at director level rather than recruiting internally for these positions, for example, has clearly undermined their status and self image. Whilst on one level, there is consensus in rationalising that the recruitment reflects on the business and what individuals collectively within it have not done, or have not been prepared to do, to grow its own people, on another level, the implications, albeit perceived, are clearly a lack of confidence in the skill, abilities and development potential of existing employees. As one senior executive observes,

"After it had been announced that Bernard was retiring, his job was divided up and some of his responsibilities were given to one of the other Directors. Our chief exec said he was going to headhunt externally for a new director to look after the responsibilities still not allocated. He told me he didn't know what good really looks like for this part of Bernard's role, so he wanted to look externally to help him understand this better. That said it all really. Having divided up Bernard's responsibilities, the bits still left are what I'm responsible for anyway, even though I reported through to B. He said I could throw my hat into the ring if I wanted to. Of course I wanted to! I knew I hadn't got it two weeks before I was told officially though. The last interviews took place on the eighteenth. So you know if you haven't had the call within at least a couple of days, you're not the one. Apparently the guy that got it was more developed than me, more of the finished article they were looking for. It's like being compared with a flat packed piece of furniture, he's been built, but I don't know if I'm still in the box, nearly built with a couple of panels to go, or with a few bits missing so they know I'll never get there! I personally think I'm not the pedigree they want. I didn't go to the right schools. It's really awkward now though with my own team. I'm not sure how I feel, ashamed, embarrassed, unsure; definitely awkward. I did my best, but they'll know it wasn't good enough. It's going to be difficult when the new guy starts as well. He's not just going to want to have me reporting to him so he's bound to restructure the team, so I'll end up

with less responsibility and that'll undermine me even more. I'll just have to see how it goes I suppose." (Benson, Senior Executive)

The awkwardness, embarrassment, uncertainty, shame, and damage to his pride and self image that this individual shares is echoed by many individuals taking part in my study and also by Fineman (2005), and Stuart (1995) who reveal the struggle individuals have in these circumstances with their self image, beliefs, feelings, emotions and fears about their future.

Identity - summary comments

In the section above, I reflect upon my consideration that an individual's personal response to change is shaped by their pride and by how much their identity and self image is defined by their job.

Whilst the individuals participating in my study express themselves in many different ways, they provide insights that consistently echo Fineman (2005) and Stuart (1995) who suggest that an individual's self image can become one and the same with their job, and Gabriel, who suggests that it is not just an organisation's practices, visions, values, processes and controls that shape an individual's self image or identity, but the, "unmanaged spaces of the organisation...(that) allow individuals...through their stories...to affirm themselves as independent agents, heroes, survivors, victims, and objects of love" (2000, pp. 129). For Davis (1979), Gabriel (2000; 2004), Kaplan (1987), and McAuley, Duberley and Johnson (2007), our nostalgic recollections of the past are our way of attempting to come to terms with the present. We draw comfort and inspiration from our experiences and use them to shape our sense of self, and as such, to define our identities.

In touch

In the section that follows, I explore how in touch individuals are with their feelings and emotions during period of change.

"Usually I've been in the driving seat, but there have been times which have been a wake up call, when I've been on the receiving end of change, that has perhaps made me more sensitive to these matters." (Albert, Director)

Many individuals participating in my study, believe that their life experiences have helped them become more aware of the affect change has on them emotionally, and suggest that their own experiences, have helped them become more alive to individuals' feelings and emotions, and more considered to people directly affected by changes they instigate. They suggest that personal experience of emotions arising from change may facilitate an individual's development of empathy and their ability to anticipate and recognise emotions in others.

Personal experiences of change, however, differ considerably, and as times move on, it is unclear of the extent to which previous experience translates into genuine self awareness and awareness and respect for others' feelings in different circumstances. There are hints to suggest that personal experience of emotions during change, does not guarantee recognition, respect, and understanding of emotions in others, nor does it guarantee that tailored decisions and actions deriving from this experience will form part of any new change programme or event. There are also hints that suggest that influences arising from previous change experiences, are invariably crowded out or precluded from influencing new change events, despite the intentions of individuals involved in implementing new change, due to more dominant control factors. As one individual shares,

"I knew what to do, how to handle the sensitivities, how to try and make sensitive change like this happen without the trauma. He just took over. I told him that the repercussions in the team would be significant, not to mention the impact on the guy who had worked for us for over twenty five years. I had another solution; working with

a colleague we had found another job for him in the company, a job we knew he'd like as well. "Let me make myself clear, I do not want him still working here this time next week!" my boss said. This was a Friday evening, my colleague and I were due to meet to finalise the details on the Monday. It would've been fine. On the Monday morning I got a call from our personnel lady, "I've been asked to get a letter ready for you to give to him today. The dismissal meeting will be on Wednesday!" It was just taken completely out of my hands! I called my boss, "Make it happen" he said... The impact was devastating. Not just for the guy in question, but my team, my colleague, me! Inside I felt sick and very upset. I felt emotionally vulnerable. It was a real struggle to carry on as normal. It affected my sleep, everything! Our personnel Director stepped in to help. We'd already put the guy through emotional hell for a week, but he took up the job my colleague and I had engineered for him, but in a much more bruised, distrustful and bitter frame of mind. It was all so unnecessary. One member of my team said, "We've fallen to rock bottom, and we're digging!" Afterwards my boss said he didn't really appreciate the impact his intervention and decisions would have had on the team even though I'd told him! Relationships and trust were destroyed at all levels. I regret not going to see (the chief executive) myself. I will if there is ever a next time. I told my boss there will not be a next time though. Believe it or not, my boss is someone who tells me he has been made redundant, out of the blue I understand, twice before in other organisations he has worked for. In the past he has shared with me how these situations made him feel. It didn't make a difference though. He was prepared to strip through and ride roughshod over anyone's feelings, sensitivities or plans to get a result that clinically he felt, was best for the business. This is also someone who has told me he is considered by friends to be one of the most empathetic people they know!" (Sarah, Senior Executive)

Whilst this individual's experience is echoed in the stories of others taking part in my study, it is the regularity by which these experiences seem to occur, that I find disturbing. These are not just one off situations. Even though many individuals consider themselves in touch with their feelings and emotions and alive to the learning from their previous experiences, their decisions and actions, and those of others during new change situations seems to belie this. For many individuals, it seems they choose not to, or feel unable to translate their emotions, feelings, and learning from previous experiences into actions. Whilst this introduces considerations about power and control,

which I discuss in more detail later, it also raises considerations that take us beyond just questions of are we in touch with our feelings and emotions, and to what extent we are in touch with them, to considerations that explore why the answers to these questions matters. Fineman, Sims and Gabriel (2006), suggest that these considerations are important because feelings are central to decision making.

This relationship between feelings and thinking is central to the idea of emotional intelligence, which I discuss earlier in chapter one, and which suggests that an emotionally intelligent individual is more in touch with their feelings and emotions, better able to recognise and then use their feelings and emotions to make decisions, and take actions that bring about a positive result (Fineman, 2005; Fineman, Sims and Gabriel, 2006; Goleman, 1996; Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee, 2002; Mayer and Salovey, 1995; 1997). The extent, to which this happens, however, is unclear.

For the individuals taking part in my study, it appears that it is not necessarily feelings born out of their previous life experiences, or their empathy for others that drive new decisions, but it is feelings born out of the immediacy of new circumstances at a point in time, the personal implications arising from this, and an individual's present day personal motivations. In some circumstances, it is clear that an individual's personal historical reference has a part to play in shaping their feelings, but this is often time boxed, and, as such, serves to exacerbate feelings of frustration, powerlessness, and fear, or to reinforce egotistic sentiments. There is little to indicate or to suggest that individuals' historic and present day feelings are being consciously considered together to inform decisions and actions in any meaningful way. For Fineman (2005), Fineman, Sims and Gabriel (2006), the extent to which emotional intelligence can be developed is open to debate, with one school of thought suggesting that emotional intelligence is formed from early life experiences and, as such, is resistant to change or further development.

Whilst they are often instrumental in implementing strategic and organisational change, many individuals taking part in my research reveal, they are not always entrusted with the full change plan and are therefore often not cognisant of all the details. In these circumstances, there are hints that speculation finds a foothold as individuals seek to account for and to bridge perceived gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Their

144

assessment, perceptions and speculation of the unvoiced aspects of the change gives rise to feelings and emotions, which for some individuals become dominant during the change event, and which may or may not appear to be warranted after the change event has taken place. For some individuals, their suspicions that there would be individuals who would lose their jobs as part of the changes taking place, for example, reveal instincts and emotions that take over and leave them feeling physically empty and fearful.

Whilst the majority of individuals reveal they *would not* have described some of their feelings and emotions differently at the time of the change events to how they describe them now, even with the benefit of hindsight, there is a consensus that new, previously undefined aspects of feelings and emotions, and the shaky foundations of some previously defined feelings and emotions, are often only revealed on reflection after the event. For one individual, how he was feeling throughout the change event is only brought home to him after the change event has taken place,

"I hadn't thought about me too much. I'd been thinking about all these other tragic people, and I don't use the word loosely, there were one or two quite tragic circumstances, and then one day, I was talking to my wife, I was talking to her on the car phone, and I remember her saying to me, "What are you doing?", "What do you mean?" (I said), "You, going to London now. The light's gone out of your eyes. It went out a few months ago. It's stayed out. It's never on at the weekend. All the spark's gone. You're not happy. You've got a brilliant CV. You've got so much you can do. Just tell me why it is you're going to London now?" and when she said that, I was driving along and I just had tears rolling down my face and I thought, "god that's so right." I could cry now actually...It was just the recognition of the fact that I had been and was still very unhappy." (Tom, Director)

Likewise, for other individuals, the experiences they share with me reveal that they did not immediately appreciate what the changes would mean for them, and in doing so, they echo Gabriel (2000), who suggests that being in touch with and making sense of feelings, emotions, and experiences involves individuals interpreting events through conscious and unconscious associations, wishful rationalisations and self deceptions.

Summary comments

In the section above, I explore how in touch individuals are with their feelings and emotions during periods of change through the experiences and thoughts individuals share with me.

Managing the mask

In the section that follows, I explore how individuals attempt to manage their feelings and emotions, and how open or otherwise they are in demonstrating their emotions during period of change.

"I find change quite interesting because in every exam you do or professional qualification, you always come across change and it sort of teaches you a little bit so you know how to deal with people change and what to look out for, conflicts and things like that. When you start thinking about change and then about yourself, you think what should I be doing in this situation? But a lot of the time you still can't control your own emotions. It's only afterwards you think I shouldn't have reacted like that." (Henry, Senior Manager)

"There's an emotional side and a rationale side to change. Overall, if I ask myself what I think about change, I just think I actually quite enjoy it. Sometimes it can be a bit scary, but you just have to be able to look through things and see what long term benefits we will get out of it, rather than thinking, oh dear, or things like that – usually then you can see the positive side if you try, but initially I think, any human reacts and sometimes you can react before you have thought about it." (Alfie, Senior Manager)

"Everybody's got feelings. You just can't hide those. You have just got to control them." I always try and go back to the text book and ask myself, what should I have been doing? How should I really react to change? I also think about how other people have been instigating change or if they have been involved in change events, how they have reacted, if they have done it right - I judge them on this basis but I have to be honest and say I often find myself being rather critical." (Norman, Senior Manager)

All the individuals taking part in my research have to varying degrees studied for professional qualifications and alongside their own experiences consider that they have learnt a little about how to deal with the people aspects of change. Notwithstanding this, however, there is a common thread running throughout my study, which suggests that in practice, even with this knowledge, individuals do not find it easy or sometimes

appropriate to apply their learning to real life situations. For many individuals, the stories they share with me and their actions bring to life organisational and strategic change events in which individuals' behaviour is often different to the approach many procedural change focused text books advise. There is consensus amongst the individuals taking part in my study that an individual's nature of being, the eclectic nature of their feelings and emotions, and their self management of these, lies at the heart of this paradox, with many individuals revealing that they are more likely to find that they are only wise to this dichotomy, on reflection after the change event has taken place. There are hints to suggest that there are two distinct aspects to how individuals deal with change situations; an emotional aspect, which many individuals consistently suggest they are unable to control, but which they can recognise, and attempt to manage, and a pragmatic aspect, which individuals suggest they only become fully cognisant of following their recollections and reflections of the part they played, and how they played it, after change events have taken place.

From the insight individuals have afforded me, it is clear that there are often difficult emotions to deal with during periods of organisational change. For some individuals, text book derived summations about managing change finds a niche in their observations that individuals' feelings and emotions can be more easily managed if an individual has a positive attitude and approach to change, and that their emotions, if effectively managed, can be instrumental in helping to secure long term change benefits for themselves and others, and for the organisation as a whole. Not unexpectedly, however, many individuals point out that their feelings and emotions cannot be hidden or managed, or their attitude presupposed in such a dispassionate and disciplined way, although the majority agree that they try to carefully manage the visibility of their feelings and emotions. As, Fineman, Sims and Gabriel (2006) observe, whilst organisations typically characterise themselves as logical and unemotional entities, the individuals who work in them are not. Individuals have feelings and emotions; they have different temperaments, different things motivate them; they have their own aspirations and their own worries; they are affectionate, dispassionate or anxious about their relationships; they have good days, and they have bad days. Organisational life becomes therefore, an embodiment of individuals' feelings and emotions and the dramas that are played out because of them, with the, "different emotional cultures and sub cultures…(shaping) the way feelings may or may not be expressed" (Fineman, Sims

and Gabriel, 2006, pp. 186). For Erving Goffman, individuals in effect, "put on a show for the benefit of other people", with their self expressions dramatised by masks and scripts during the performance to set the scene and engender the desired impression of reality for others (1959/1990, pp. 28).

For many individuals, the stories they share with me and their behaviours reveal the regularity by which they attempt to mask the emotions they perceive leave them most vulnerable in the eyes of others. It is clear that individuals are anxious to fit in and be seen to be dealing with change in a way that is acceptable to others, and they are mindful of the fact that open demonstrations of emotions may be seen as a weakness. This is significant as there is clearly a perception that feelings and emotions are not welcome in the workplace environment, despite HGAA's articulated organisational values to the contrary. Gabriel (1995; 1999; 2000) also found this to be the case during his research with employees of multinational corporations, where individuals reveal that they consciously suppress their emotions in the workplace becoming less relaxed and easy going, and more image conscious. For Fineman, Sims and Gabriel, the way that individuals engage with each other and the extent to which they openly share their emotions, depends upon a mutual understanding of the "rules of engagement", their power differences, and the degree of trust that exists between them. Although, as they go on to suggest, "not showing or expressing all we feel is axiomatic to all communications, (and is therefore,) an essential form of hypocrisy that helps keep organizing on track without flooding the participants" (2006, pp. 187). In this way, Fineman suggests we become, "skilled at faking, masking, dissembling; not always showing what we feel, and not always feeling what we show" (2005, pp. 20). For Van Maanen (1991), this serves to emphasise a passive resistance to organisational expectations as individuals seek to preserve their individuality.

For Arlie Hochschild (1983/2003), this translates into "emotion work", and is the effort individuals put into masking their feelings and emotions, shaping the outward facing presentation of these, and attempting to reconcile personal feelings and emotions with organisational expectations. For many individuals, Hochschild's found that this can be extremely stressful, especially where individuals find themselves struggling to suppress deeply felt beliefs to achieve organisational conformity, and to present a facade at odds with their feelings and emotions. Whilst this is brought to life during my research, with

all the individuals taking part in my study sharing experiences of situations where their initial response to change announcements have been to try and reassure others that they remain confident and relaxed about the changes being planned even where these changes have significant personal implications for them, there are also examples that echo Wharton (1999), who suggests that individuals will often find ways of protecting themselves emotionally from organisational change. This is also echoed by Fineman (2005), and Fineman, Sims and Gabriel who suggest that individuals' behaviours, are formed from childhood, where expectations of self control "run deep in the education and training of most of us" and become, "powerful social values", which encourages us to carefully disguise, manage and control our feelings and emotions in the presence of others (Fineman, Sims and Gabriel, 2006, pp. 187).

It is clear from the individuals taking part in my study that the preservation of self image is important and, as such, is a key driver and dominant motivator for many individuals as they strive to present images of being in control of themselves and the situation facing them, even though many individuals reveal that they do not feel in control as they rationalise what the personal impact of the changes are for them. Significantly, the majority of individuals chose not to openly share their real feelings and emotions with their manager at the time the changes are announced. As one individual observes,

"The biggest single change for me, and one of those snapshots in your life that you'll always remember is when my boss at the time, just said, "have you got half an hour?", and sat me down and he said, "there are going to be some substantial changes..." It didn't fully, it didn't sink in at first, but then I could see that everything was going to change, not just my job, but my life, everything! Real changes; it was going to be a real period of upheaval...I had to regain control, keep in control...I found myself babbling to him; I wasn't worried, (cynical laughter) "I'm not worried" I said...I wasn't aware of what I was feeling at the time. All I was doing was babbling, babbling on about, "I'm not worried", and I, and I only got the chill in the stomach from him saying you know quite seriously, "don't, don't worry". When he told me not to worry, that's when I started worrying. I don't think I was very conscious that this was a big momentous moment because in the hurly burly of the day, there was an awful lot happening anyway. I immediately went from there into another meeting. Nobody would've known.

It was crazy really. Then I held onto that information for a number of months when nobody else knew." (Tom, Director)

A common thread running throughout the change stories individuals share with me is the sense that on the surface, individuals strive to keep everything relatively calm and professional, even though just below the surface, there is often emotional upheaval. For Fineman, Sims and Gabriel this is the significance of the "learned social codes" that I discuss earlier and above, where for the same change event, individuals have "learned" at work to heavily mask their emotions in the presence of authority, and be restrained and accepting with other colleagues, whereas at home, they may be much more open and expressive. Although some organisations celebrate their "emotional openness", within which there is little distinction to be found between an individual's expressions of emotions at work and at home, other organisations are significantly more restrained (2006, pp. 188). Whilst not specifically highlighted by Fineman, Sims and Gabriel as an example of an emotionally constrained organisation, many financial services organisations, such as, HGAA, can clearly be identified, as such, and it is a categorisation that is credited and reinforced consistently throughout my research. Notwithstanding this, however, for many individuals, whilst they choose to put on a brave face and choose not to openly share their feelings and emotions when faced with change situations in work, there are still clues in their demeanour, their language, and their tone of voice that can provide others with an insight into how they may be really feeling. As one individual observes,

"I was very conscious of managing my own feelings during the changes...I used the heroic, sort of selfless, look after other people, approach. In a way, it gave me a positive purpose through all of it. Thinking about it, that's probably how I manage my feelings normally, by channelling them in another direction. Other than that, I can't have really been managing my feelings, because, well, close friends actually said that the light had gone out in me, therefore, I must have been a victim to my feelings mustn't I really? But I would argue that the events that happened, anybody who wasn't flattened by them, you know, is a pretty unusual character. I think the natural reaction would have been to, to just get straight out, and that's how a lot of people would handle it, and I didn't. So I just sort of rubbed my nose in it fairly regularly I think." (Marcus, Senior Executive)

Whilst feelings and emotions are often recognised by both individuals on the receiving end of change and by those instigating or communicating change, they are not as a matter of course openly articulated or explored by either at the time. Even with clues to help reveal an individual's feelings and emotions during periods of change, the awareness, knowledge and any subsequent action arising from this, often remains incidental to the change event. For many individuals, their emotions, whilst not quite hidden are denied existence, often consciously by themselves but also by the absence of intrinsic recognition within the change process.

Even when their feelings and emotions are in turmoil, many individuals have clearly developed the ability to create an illusion of professionalism and to manage the outward face of their emotions in the public domain. Examples of the emotion free face of professionalism run consistently throughout the change stories individuals share with me with many individuals revealing situations where they have been concerned to be seen to be acting in a professional way, and defining this by being self controlled, suppressing emotions and acting in a cool, calm, and collected manner. For Fineman, Sims and Gabriel, an individual's position in the organisation makes a difference here, with expectations placed upon senior managers to demonstrate they are, "clear, decisive thinkers, (and) not simply victims of their feelings" (2006, pp. 188). The inner struggle many individuals face to try and achieve this is highlighted by the recollections of this individual participating in my study,

"The department, it always needed to change, I always wanted it to change. We were going nowhere. It was just a static department, just turning over. We weren't developing; there was no vision to it. It was all very short term stuff, so it absolutely had to (change). So it was one of those situations where you think, you know, you want, you'd rather be part of it, not, not part of it. So when you find you're a part of it, and you can play a role in it, help the development of it, and see it going forward, I mean, it's exciting, it's good. It's just that, you can't hide that emotion you've got in between. I don't think you can. You'd have to be very, very thick skinned to do that, whoever you are...I'm not sure how aware I was of my feelings at the time. You do sort of take a look at yourself afterwards. I think you do, and ask, "How would you react to that?" and, "Did I do the right things?" stuff like that. I wish I'd listened more in the meeting, but, I keep thinking, thinking to myself, "How, how could you do that when you go in with that

pressure?" I'd like to ask somebody how I looked in that situation. "How did they feel I reacted", or, "Did I look scared to death when I came in?", or, "Did I look calm?" Because you do try and go in as a professional." (Alfie, Senior Manager)

Whilst many individuals feel they need to mask their emotions in the workplace, it is clear from the experiences individuals share with me, that the personal implications of doing this, reach beyond the work environment into individuals' personal lives. The emotional and personal sacrifices individuals make to suppress their feelings and emotions are brought to life in the stories they share with me. For many individuals it is a lonely journey. Notwithstanding the fact that many individuals are happy to seek help with managing change at a practical level, it is clear that these same individuals rely only on themselves in dealing with the aspects of change they find to be most difficult, such as, overcoming feelings of distress, uncertainty and fear, so they can engage more positively with the change process. As these four individuals observe,

"It's just down to me, heeding myself. I'm quite good at talking to myself. I actually say to myself, "Snap, snap out of this. You can't let yourself go down that road, that's the wrong road. There are examples, even very recently, where I could almost slap myself across the face, "That's the wrong way to go". I think, it is just getting control of yourself getting, getting back on track as quickly as possible...The hardest bit is turning around from feeling depressed and frightened. It's getting, getting a grip of yourself and changing it, being able to do that yourself, because ultimately, you have to do that yourself." (Henry, Senior Manager)

"I just deal with it myself. I don't for example go home and talk about problems at work. Very rarely do that. I might have a moan now and again but I, I don't look to my wife for support in those areas. I never do that. I go home and try and switch off from here." (Chris, Senior Manager)

"I bottle up my feelings. Sometimes I get to a stage, absolutely to a stage where I've got to talk to myself and say, " you've got to get yourself out of this". I don't talk to anyone else. I don't go and depress my wife or my friends with it." (Alfred, Senior Manager)

"I tend to bottle up my feelings anyway. I'm not one for crying on shoulders and I don't wear my heart on my sleeve. I may walk around very often with a glum expression on my face; people think I'm miserable, sometimes I am miserable, but by and large, I will bottle things up. I tend to have a fairly optimistic view that things will work out okay anyway, and you know, touch wood, that's tended to be the case by and large down the years. That's more by luck than anything else. But I don't really articulate my feelings terribly well, or very often. I don't subscribe to the view that to talk about things necessarily helps, because it's still there. The issue doesn't go away just by telling somebody about it or by talking about it...you just get on with it...I'm of the view that whatever life does to you, you've just got to get on with it." (Peter, Senior Manager)

For some individuals, their work life balance is clearly sacrificed. In masking their emotions and feelings, such as, those of dissatisfaction and anger, individuals become almost robotic as they attempt to continue with day to day business as usual activities and deliver business results, with many individuals needing to work significantly longer hours to achieve this. A large number of individuals reveal the extent to which organisational change events have undermined and stripped them of their self confidence and feelings of self worth. The impact is clearly profound with many individuals working even longer hours to regain their sense of self, driven by feelings that they have to prove their self worth all over again, not just to work colleagues and managers, but to family and friends as well.

A few individuals share disturbing experiences of the impact on their health and relationships at home. The price paid by some seems to be too high. For one individual, the extent of change and attempts to mask her emotions continually over a four year period has resulted in a serious illness. Her feelings are brought vividly to life through the emotion in her voice, her obvious distress, and open display of tears as she shares her experience with me,

"The majority of my support came from my strength of character. It had to because my husband is very, he's very old fashioned, he's very old school and his feeling is, why don't you jack the b* job in, type of scenario, because he works in the legal profession, he's a lawyer, and everything is black and white to him, without any shades of grey...I've (been very ill)...It's been a very stressful time. There have been so many

changes to manage, changes relative to the business, the management team, Regulation and the changes required leading up to that, and it hasn't stopped. It just goes on and on...I think (my husband) blames the business for (my illness)." (Polly, Senior Manager)

Even after change events have taken place, however, individuals suggest that they are reluctant to share their reflections and details of their feelings and emotions at the time of the change events, openly with their managers. For a few individuals, there is a sense that to reveal these would raise questions about their integrity and would somehow imply they have held their roles under false pretences. As one individual remembers,

"I was offered an opportunity to play a part in what was happening, but it was just all smoke and mirrors really. My cynicism kicked in very quickly ...this sounds awful, thankfully they'll never know how I felt, but I thought, "So why me? There must be some particular job you just want me to do" It suited them to involve me because of what I could do. I felt manipulated, and I distrusted everything, but I played the game. They trust me, although I'm not sure they would still trust me, if they knew how I really felt about what was happening back then." (Marcus, Senior Executive)

Not all individuals, however, consign their feelings and emotions to reside forever behind a thinly veiled mask of professionalism. For some individuals taking part in my study, emotional support is sought from trusted sources; assumptions are made about like minded individuals, alongside expectations of a sympathetic ear, friendship, confidentiality and trust; within the safety of these parameters, masks are removed and confidences are shared. Here, for Fineman (1999; 2005), and for Fineman, Sims and Gabriel, "different emotional rules and expectations apply...the public courtesies of emotional control can be relaxed...the professional mask (can be) dropped for a while and private feelings can be (shared)" (2006, pp. 193).

For a small number of individuals, all of which are female, their open expressions of emotions during the change events they share with me, clearly emphasises the risks associated with doing this on a more formal basis. It is clear that physical demonstrations of emotion, such as, tears arising from work matters are not welcome in

155

the workplace, and are perceived as indicating an inability to remain in control. On the rare occasions it happens, it is consistently believed to have been received with shock and surprise, and despite some individuals receiving an empathetic ear, there is a clear sense that cultural expectations are not being upheld, with individuals left feeling they have lost control, and have somehow failed to live up to expectations. It is of course possible that many individuals may not be aware of the depth of others' feelings, and that open displays of emotions may come as a genuine surprise to them, or result in genuine discomfort for them if they lack the skills to deal with this type of situation. Notwithstanding this, however, it is clear that no attempts have been made subsequently in the eyes of these individuals, to make them feel that their demonstration of emotions was acceptable. All are left with the perception that, even a single demonstration of tearful emotion can be so detrimental as to affect the future career of an individual, and in this way, serves to indicate the regard that individuals believe emotions are held in the organisation. For one individual, her story reveals the career limiting consequences she believes her openness exposed,

"I was very open with Glyn (about the restructure). I was a bit emotional actually, and I think that came as a real shock to him. It probably didn't do my career any good either. I think it came as a bit of a shock to him because at that time I was very tearful as well. I was feeling quite emotional, and I'm not one usually for tears and emotions, call a spade a shovel and that's what they get...Afterwards I thought, "Oh god, that's not done my prospects any good"...I was made a plan holder following my meeting with Glyn as a sort of, as a knee jerk response, sort of give this to the stupid cow and she will shut up for a bit!...It only means I'll have the information I need to do my job properly." (Megan, Senior Manager)

For Fineman, Sims and Gabriel, this is not surprising, and they suggest that whilst there is some acceptance that women are likely to be more emotionally expressive than men, there is clearly still an expectation within most organisations for "unreliable feelings" and emotions to be kept firmly under control, "in the interests of logic, rationality and decorum". Failure to do so they suggest, could mean that women are considered "unsuitable for many top management positions" (2006, pp. 188 - 189). Sachs and Blackmore also found examples of this in their study into women in leadership roles in

156

1998, where female managers considered that their survival in senior positions relied upon their self control, and their ability to hide their emotions and vulnerabilities.

Summary comments

In the section above, I explore how individuals attempt to manage their feelings and emotions, and how open or otherwise they are in demonstrating their emotions during periods of change. It is clear from the experiences and thoughts that individuals share with me, that individuals learn the rules of emotion display according to their culture, gender and work organisations.

Self motivation

In chapter 1, I introduce the consideration that individuals must understand and be in touch with their own feelings and emotions and be self motivated sufficiently to respond to these in order to be able to manage change effectively (Fineman, 2005; George, 2000; George and Jones, 2001; Goleman, 1998; Kiefer, 2002; Sosik and Megerian, 1999).

Self motivation and how individuals attempt to motivate themselves during period of change is a key consideration for my research and in the section that follows, I explore this theme in more detail. In the context of individuals' stories and experiences of change and their reflections on these, I have grouped like thoughts together under the headings I have drawn directly from the discourse; these are ambition, fear and empathy, although it is not my intention to suggest there can be no overlap between them. The discourse within each heading clearly lends itself open to this opportunity.

A map of this part of the exploration is as follows,
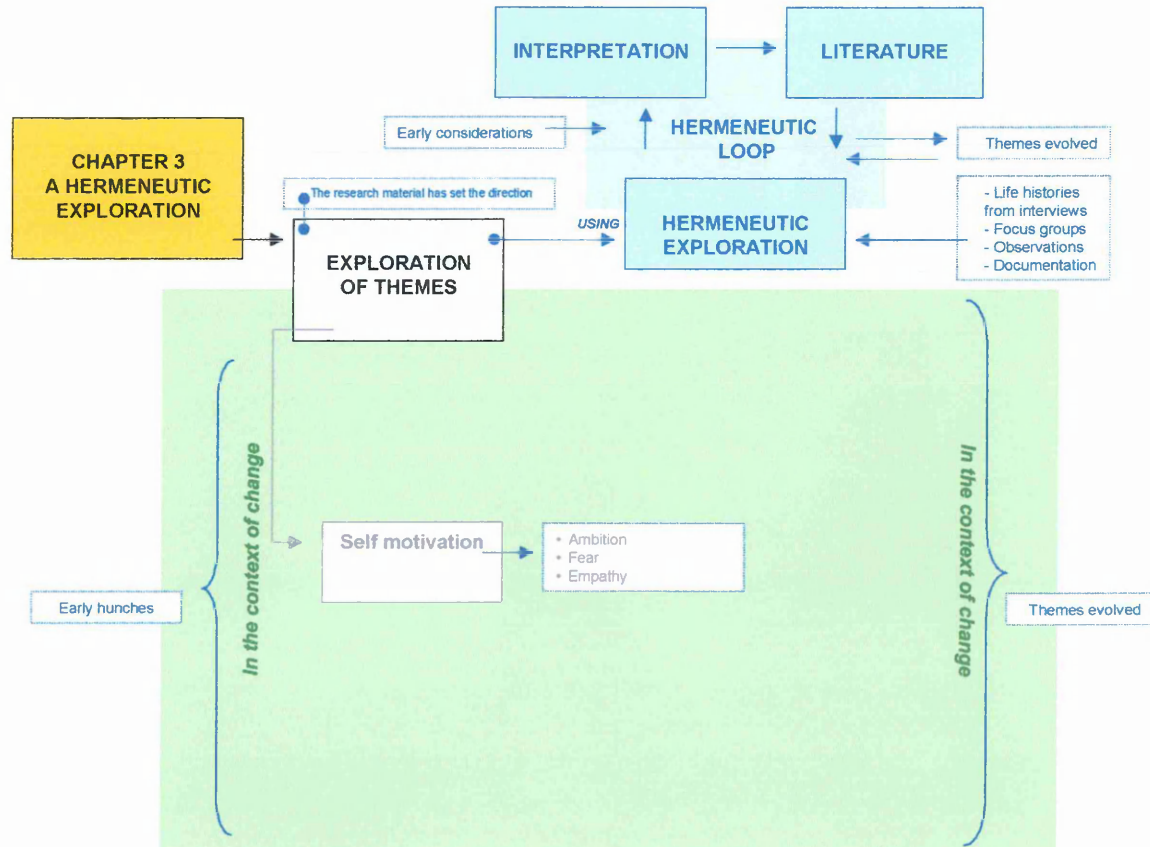
Ambition

"I am very self motivated. If the boss was here, I'd say money motivates me! Although, I think, being successful, and being perceived to be successful are also very important to me. It's really, really hard to say which is the most important, because there is a part of me that says more money, and there's no doubt that if you put a very exciting bonus scheme together, I would achieve an awful lot more. You know, I could achieve anything if you give me a big financial perk to get it. That would make me run through water, and I would break through any barrier, so money it quite important. But at the same time, you have to think, "what is it really that gives me a buzz? At what times do I go home and genuinely feel content?" It doesn't happen that often, but it's when I've been genuinely successful in something and it's also perceived that way." (Albert, Director)

"I just want to get on. I want to make sure that I've got a good life for myself and my family as well. That's really important. If someone said to me, "What's the best way of, how have you motivated yourself, helped yourself?" Well, I've studied since I was seventeen, and I'm thirty four next, and I've studied every year. But people say, "What the, why the hell do you do that?", and I say, "I wouldn't be in this job without it". I still want to achieve things, although I think at some point, I know I'm going to reach my limit. I know that for certain, I'm not daft. I know that I can probably achieve, it might only be one more stage, or one and half stages. I'm not going to get a Director's job. I don't think so. I may change my view in ten years time, I don't know, but at this moment, I know what my limits are. I still want to make sure that within those limits, I can get as far as I can, doing things like exams. I don't do exams just to get the exam. In those exams are important things. We talk about change, so I think I know a bit about change, and I think that helps you. I'm now doing Financial Services because I want to know more about financial services...I want to know about the rest of the business and how it ticks. I don't know what it is, but there is something inside me that says to keep going." (Alfie, Senior Manager)

"I don't have a family (children), I have a career, and I'm not the most ambitious person in the world, but I am ambitious. I don't want to be Chief Executive or

particular a Senior Executive, but I do want to do a good job and be recognised for the job that I do, and rewarded accordingly." (Polly, Senior Manager)

Ambition, the drive to succeed, recognition, and reward are powerful motivators for many of the individuals taking part in my study, especially during periods of change. Some individuals in particular place significant emphasis on their motivation to do everything they can to demonstrate to others what they are capable of achieving, and they provide an insight into what they believe the organisation expects of someone moving up the corporate ladder, and what this therefore, means for them; conformity, constructive challenge, effective communication, courage, the right pedigree, and high standards of deportment and self presentation run consistently throughout their stories. It is clear that self motivation is not in itself sufficient to guarantee success, as individuals emphasise the importance of conformity, and share their beliefs that individuality and personal differences are not often embraced. Many individuals acknowledge that they work hard to present an image of someone they are not, in order to conform to perceived organisational expectations; the majority of individuals taking part in my study have been prepared to do this, and to make personal sacrifices to ensure they are considered suitable for opportunities to progress their careers further. As one individual observes,

"I was particularly conscious during the changes that, whilst I had to apply for this job, <u>I really wanted to do this job</u>. I'd recently started to get involved, and I'd really had an opportunity to get into some senior conversations, make an impression and show what I was capable of. I was really conscious of that. So when I was going into a Directors' meeting, in fact, <u>I wanted to go into the Directors' meetings</u>, I wanted to give, to show them I could go in there and I could stand up and I could talk to them, and I could explain things, and I could be challenged on things. So actually, I was looking, I was looking for opportunities to show them that I could be you know, grown up. It's difficult for me because everybody has told me to be myself, and myself is a bit giddy and a bit playful. I still work at it, but that's me. At the same time also, at the back of my head, I want people to know that I have got, that I can be serious. I can work you know, I do work hard, play hard, work hard, you know what I'm saying but, I wanted people to think that I am here because I want to be here. My career is very important to me. I took every opportunity to do things." (Alfie, Senior Manager)

160

Consistently throughout the stories individuals share with me, it is clear that they are extremely proud of their knowledge, skills and experience and want to use these to benefit themselves and the organisation. As Kotter (1995) found, individuals often want to support change, and help make it happen, because they believe in the organisation's vision and the benefits it will bring. There is a hint of arrogance, however, in the absolute confidence some individuals taking part in my study have in their abilities, although the emotion in how they express themselves and the language they use provides a clear insight into how deeply individuals' care about their careers and the passion and pride they have in doing a good job. Maybe individuals need to have this egotism, passion and single mindedness to succeed; there are certainly enough hints in the stories individual's share with me to support this point of view. Where there are challenges to this, however, individuals' ambitions and frustrations are clearly brought to life, especially where individuals believe their aspirations are threatened in situations that are outside of their control. This mirrors Kotter (1995) who suggests that when individuals are faced with situations that they are not comfortable with, or that clearly reflect different ambitions to their own, their anxiety levels often increase and the seeds of resistance can be sown. For a few individuals taking part in my study, there is a sense of the dramatic, as they share their experiences of trying to fit culturally, whilst shouting inside, wanting to shake everything up, break out and be given the opportunity to show what they are capable of. Although, for Fineman, Sims and Gabriel (2006), it is experiences, such as these, that are important in helping to influence and shape an individual's emotions, their level of confidence and their motivation, by preparing them for the worst, especially if individuals recognise their strengths and their limitations, and learn from the things that go well for them, and from their frustrations. In this way, Fineman, Sims and Gabriel suggest that, "motivation is not necessarily a mysterious, absolute, inner-force, but a subtle social process of accepted justifications for present, future or past acts" (2006, pp. 47).

For many individuals, their sense of professionalism and their belief in the importance of their roles are dominant motivators. Individuals consistently reveal they do more than they believe should be expected of them; they work longer hours, and they make many personal sacrifices, even where the work environment itself is not perceived to be motivational or particularly supportive. In the background there is a real sense of strong determination to "prove them wrong" and achieve in the face of adversity.

Fear

Where their ambition and goals go unrecognised, or unfulfilled, an individual's self motivation can be destroyed and replaced by feelings of disillusion, dissatisfaction, fear, uncertainty, and in some extreme situations feelings of anxiety, panic and loss of control. For some individuals they feel unfairly treated and despite assurances to the contrary are left with the view that there is a lack of confidence in their ability to do their jobs. They translate failure to move to the next step on the corporate ladder as a message they are not doing a good job in their current role, and they begin to question in their own mind if they are even doing the job the Directors want doing. For many individuals, recognition is clearly very important. Individuals care about what other people think of them. Lack of recognition reinforces the message that the job being done is not good enough, and whilst individuals start to feel insecure, they also begin to feel embarrassed, as they extend their perception of what their managers must think about them, and attribute the same concerns to how their colleagues and team members must also perceive them. Notwithstanding this, the majority of individuals taking part in my study, share experiences that reveal their motivation, drive and conscientiousness to still try and do the best job that they can, and in doing so, they echo Gabriel, who suggests that, "fear of public ridicule, embarrassment, and exclusion act as powerful instrument of conformity and self-policing" (2000, pp. 114), and also Fineman (2005), who suggests that embarrassment, fear and insecurity does not mean that individuals will not put in more effort. As he observes, the "motivational paradox" often means they will in fact work harder to protect themselves. From the insight individuals have afforded me in sharing their experiences, there is a strong indication that fear is often a dominant motivator. As this individual observes,

"Do I have a choice? Do I just not rock the boat, carry on, deliver, ignore what's happened, work with Alfred and bring him up to speed with everything that's going on? That was obviously the choice that Jack was faced with, and Jack chose a different path (and left). The path I chose; well I can't, I can't afford to rock the boat like Jack did. I need, I need the job. I like the job I do most of the time. I prefer to stay here. There is really no choice. So I embrace the change process...and by virtue of the knock backs I have had, well I think that shows I'm a dedicated and self motivated person to still be where I am. A lot of people would have said, " sod it, if that's the way you're going to

treat me, then what I'm going to do is deliver the minimum to retain what I've got".
Maybe that's what I should have said or done, but that's not really me... So I've got to
suck it and see what happens. Do my best and hope that they keep me in a job."
(Megan, Senior Manager)

For many individuals, it is clear that to varying degrees they seek to try and understand themselves in order to more effectively motivate themselves in work. For some individuals, fear of failure, not coping or being seen to be not coping or not doing a good job are powerful motivators, to the extent that, for a few individuals, these motivators threaten their work life balance and generate strong feelings of frustration. This is especially noticeable where individuals perceive that others are less conscientious or somewhat less dedicated than they are themselves. For some individuals, their feelings border almost on obsession, as they share confidences that emphasise their depth of frustration with others, particularly when they perceive, less than acceptable job performances, appear to have been overlooked with no obvious repercussions to the individuals concerned. They contrast the worries they have about getting things wrong with the things other individuals appear to be "getting away with". Conversely, this appears to strengthen their motivation to do better, even where they perceive their worries to be about less important matters compared to other more important matters that others are just "getting away with" not doing, or not doing well. There is a clear sense that they believe their conscientiousness defines them and somehow makes them better people. As one individual observes,

"Fear motivates me. I have thought about this a lot over the years, but it is fear that
really motivates me. However, however secure I am, I always have got this fear that,
you know, that someone doesn't, (long pause) there's just this inner drive to want to
make sure that, I have to be right... it is one thing that keeps me going. I've got a real
fear of being told off, even at this age. I don't like that at all. I just, I want to be good all
the time. I look, I look back and I think to myself, "god, there's people getting away
with all sorts, it's appalling, and I'm worried that I've done something wrong or really
bad". But I think that does separate people, that conscientiousness." (Henry, Senior
Manager)

Where fear and uncertainty begins to cause anxiety and undermine individuals' confidence in their abilities, self motivation is sometimes not enough to support them on these occasions. This mirrors Dutton, Frost, Worline, Lilius and Kanov (2002), who observe that, in the absence of work environments that respect emotions and facilitate connectivity with others, individuals who have been personally affected by change events can end up just going through the motions in work, their contribution adding little or no value, with their loyalty to the organisation disappearing. Whilst Dutton et al. were drawing on highly traumatic incidents, with emotions magnified, it is clear from the stories that the individuals participating in my study share with me, that this learning can be applied to less traumatic situations.

It is clear that the experiences of some of the individuals participating in my study who are unhappy following a change in work mirror Dutton et al. (2002), who suggest that individuals can be preoccupied with their feelings, which can impact adversely on their work. Equally, there are examples of individuals whose fear dominates their feelings to the extent that their work life balance is significantly disrupted and loyalty to the organisation is eroded. Whilst some of the individuals taking part in my research, reveal the struggles of a lonely journey, relying on their depleted emotional resources, others seek to boost their energy with an injection of confidence from a trusted source. For some this is a work colleague, or professional coach or mentor, for others it is a personal friend or family member. As this individual remembers,

"I needed help. It was just the recognition of the fact that I was very unhappy, and I think I needed pep talks at that time. I'd find myself, my confidence was draining away, and you know, because this is confidential, I'll tell you, I mean, I can remember, I can remember ringing my mum up and saying, "Mum, do you mind, would you tell me how clever you think I am?", and things like that...I just wanted a reassurance that I was capable and clever and I could do something else if I wanted to, and that I wasn't trapped. I know it sounds pathetic, but that's what I did. That's what happens with me. It doesn't have to be as melodramatic as that situation was, it can just be if I've got something difficult to do, and I can't see it at all, but I know, just like anyone else, if I can keep my brain working on, things are happening, and then the switch goes on, and I see so clearly what the answer is, and I just go for it. Just like during this upheaval (restructure). I was a complete mess...I couldn't see a solution to it...I just sort of felt

164

quite hemmed in... Everyone saying, "You're fine, you'll be fine." But no, you don't feel fine... The specific issue I was tackling was confidence. All right I'd speak to my wife about it, speak to my mum. The difficulty with both your wife and your mum is you don't believe what they say; you know they're going to say that. So I could've done with someone more objective who'd say the same thing, but you can't ask anyone because they might give you an answer you don't want to hear. I didn't go to anyone else for support or advice. It was all down to myself to be honest." (Albert, Director)

Empathy

It is clear from the individuals taking part in my study, that many individuals motivate themselves to carry on doing their jobs effectively during periods of change by compartmentalising their own feelings and emotions, and by concentrating their attention and energy on other individuals impacted by the changes taking place. This individual provides an insight,

"My motivation was looking after those other people. This probably sounds very much like, what a selfless guy, but I genuinely was focusing only on all these other people who were actually in a worse position than me. I was actually sorted, you know, this lot had nailed me on, it was everyone else that was completely adrift. I genuinely was just focusing on them." (Tom, Director)

Some individuals clearly identify themselves with a hero image in these circumstances, and whilst others chose to portray themselves in a much more humble role, the actions they take to support more junior employees are by the same token, clearly genuine and focused upon making sure that the change impact is cushioned. As one individual observes,

"I was conscious that, you've got, at the end of the day, all the staff are remaining, they're still going to be there. They could be working for me or anybody. They might be scared about their jobs, things like that. I think I switched into that mode quite quickly... so straight away I said, "Look, you know it's going to be all right for you lot. You'll be fine. There's just going to be a change of role and stuff." I think I switched

into that mode quite quickly. Thinking, "I'm still going to be here, so I have to make sure they are all right." It was still difficult though because their bosses were all being made redundant" (Henry, Senior Manager)

There is a real sense that individuals are motivated to act, not just because they feel it is a part of their job, but because they genuinely care about ensuring others feel more comfortable about the changes taking place. In this way, they mirror Dutton et al. (2002), who suggest that small acts, however small, that are intended to ease the pain of others, can also inspire positive actions in people as well. It is clear that the interactions taking place are self motivated and driven from an individual's sense of responsibility and feelings for others and not because of any predefined plan of activity supporting the changes. In the background, there is a sense that individuals understand their own need to do this to maintain their own focus, but equally that they understand the need others may have to interact with someone to help them retain a sense of safety and continuity. This echoes Frost (1999), Frost, Dutton, Worline and Wilson (2000), and Kahn (1998) who all suggest that actions driven by consideration and feelings for others are a natural part of the human psyche, and, as such, are an integral part of organisational life. It is often this type of interaction between individuals that helps to keep the organisational treadmill running. Frost et al. (2000), also suggests that these interactions are often immediate and guided instinctively by feelings. One person will not know the facts about another person's life and so in a given set of circumstances predicting how an individual will react can be difficult. Although, as Miller and Stiver (1997), observe, each time an individual initiates this type of interaction, they develop skills and responses, which equip them to deal with different emotional situations. Recognising this need in themselves, however, albeit unspoken, and working to do what they believe to be right for others to help them deal with organisational and strategic changes, is a strong motivator for many individuals taking part in my study, even if this sometimes means adopting, as discussed earlier, an invisible people advocate role not necessarily aligned with organisational expectations. In doing this, individuals echo Fineman, Sims and Gabriel (2006), who suggest that the more individuals feel constrained and not free to act in a manner they believe to be appropriate, the more likely it is that they will adopt a philanthropic emotional role, and find a way to do what they believe to be right, often regardless of organisational expectations. For Huy (2002), this is about balancing emotions and the actions arising from them, and is essential, he suggests if both change

166

as well as organisational business as usual activities, after the change, are to be achieved. As one individual participating in my study observes,

"There was this person who I'd had many a run in with, who was a big strong six foot three big bloke, who's older than me, who intimidated me a little bit when I first met him, who ultimately reported to me, and actually became a fantastic ally to me. I always had a lot of respect for him...he was the business. You might disagree with a lot of things he said but you knew that it had all come from, "What's right for the business." To see him, his bottom lip going and then tears in his eyes, talking to me regularly, a broken man isn't far off the truth. Things like that. That's the sort of thing that makes you think you'll do anything to put this right if you can. You almost begin to understand how people could get into, go to war, or like the terrorist, you know, like a counter terrorist or resistance fighters. I felt that strongly at times, it was that intense because this was, this was real stuff." (Tom, Director)

Self motivation - summary comments

In the section above, I explore the consideration that individuals must understand and be in touch with their own feelings and emotions and be self motivated sufficiently to respond to these in order to be able to manage change effectively. I reflect upon how individuals motivate themselves during periods of change and the influence this has on their feelings and emotions. The key messages are; that ambition, the drive to succeed, recognition and reward are powerful motivators, as is the motivating paradox arising from individuals' fear and insecurity; empathy for others can equally be a key driving force when individuals compartmentalise their own feelings and emotions and concentrate their attentions on other individuals impacted by the changes taking place.

From the experiences individuals share with me, there is consensus that the working environment as a matter of course does not encourage them to access, respect or act on their emotions, which have been ignored in the drive to achieve organisational change. Whilst the individuals participating in my study express themselves in many different ways, they provide insights that consistently echo Fineman (2000) and Dutton et al. (2002) who suggest that management theory and actions are largely negligent about individuals' feelings and emotions, and as such, individuals need to find meaning and confidence for the future following change events for themselves.
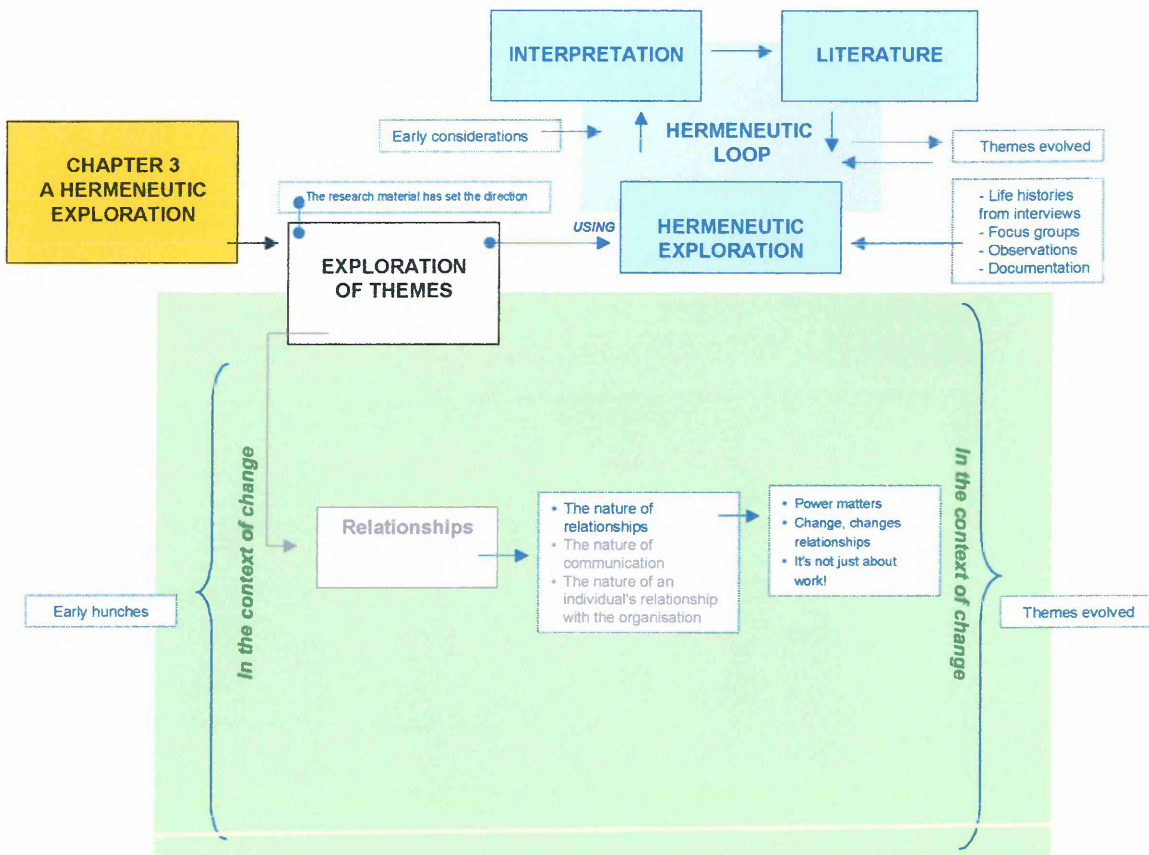
Relationships

In chapter 1, I introduce the consideration that individuals and their nature of being, their feelings, emotions, and their self motivations are at the heart of their relationships with others, and that, whilst an individual's feelings and emotions helps them to understand the context and shape the decisions they make, they also define the nature of their relationships, which, during periods of change, can be regarded as an integral part of the change context (Ekman and Friesen, 1975; Fineman, 2005; Goleman, 1996; James, 1993).

I introduce the consideration that there are interdependencies, which are different for everyone, between an individual's nature of being, their feelings and emotions, their view of the social context, the decisions they make, how they choose to communicate and their resulting relationships (Feldman, 2000; Fineman, 2005; Schein, 1992; Waldron, 1994; Waldron and Krone, 1991), and I also introduce the view that, just as people relationships are often tested and redefined during periods of change, an individual's relationship with the organisation or their psychological contract of work is often tested and redefined in the same way (Feldman, 2000; Fineman, 2005; Grint, 1997; Peters, 1989; Rousseau, 1995; Thomas and Dunkerley, 1999).

These are key considerations for my research, and in the section that follows I explore these themes in more detail. In the context of individuals' stories and experiences of change, I have, once again, grouped like thoughts and observations together under headings I have drawn directly from the discourse; these are, the nature of individuals' relationships with others, including considerations that, power matters; change, changes relationships, and it's not just about work; the nature of communications, and the nature of individuals' relationships with the organisation, although in doing so, it is not my intention to suggest there can be no overlap between them. The discourse within each heading clearly lends itself open to this opportunity.

A map of this part of the exploration is as follows,

INTERPRETATION → LITERATURE

HERMENEUTIC
LOOP

Early considerations →

Themes evolved

CHAPTER 3
A HERMENEUTIC
EXPLORATION

The research material has set the direction

EXPLORATION
OF THEMES

USING

HERMENEUTIC
EXPLORATION

- Life histories
from interviews
- Focus groups
- Observations
- Documentation

Early hunches

In the context of change

Relationships

- The nature of
relationships
- The nature of
communication
- The nature of an
individual's relationship
with the organisation

- Power matters
- Change, changes
relationships
- It's not just about
work!

In the context of change

Themes evolved

The nature of relationships

At the heart of many individuals' work lives is the nature and importance of their relationships. From the experiences individuals share with me, many relationships are anticipated, formed and defined by how they interact with others on a day to day basis, where common goals, mutual support, learning and development, and the balance or imbalance of power or status are key considerations. Feelings and emotions are triggered by these interactions, by the dominant actions of others, and by how information is shared. As a result, individuals, join and leave organisations; learn and develop, and define themselves by what they know; achieve a sense value from gauging the reactions of others; and define their position and their importance in the organisational official and unofficial pecking order. For Clark (1990), Fineman (2000; 2005), Kahn (1993), Meyerson (1998), and Miller and Stiver (1997), it is interactions, such as these, along with individuals' mutual understanding, and shared feelings of empathy, and appreciation, which reinforces social bonds and sustains relationships; and for Waldron (2000), and Waldron and Krone (1991), it is these workplace relationships that are consistently found to be the source of intense emotions and feelings for many individuals. For Waldron (2000), in particular, it is only through understanding individuals' feelings and emotions, that work relationships can be clearly defined.

In discussing the nature of their relationships during periods of change, the mask of professionalism, and emotion constrained statements find a voice consistently throughout the stories individuals share with me, and although individuals are clearly more open when sharing stories that involve individuals who no longer work for the organisation, there is still a sense in the background of individuals not wishing to talk badly of those who have passed on or be seen to be being too judgemental or disrespectful of existing colleagues. The language individuals' use, the clues they purposely provide and the abrupt way that some bring to a close their recollections, with statements designed to emphasise this, provides an insight into these unspoken feelings.

Not unexpectedly, for many of the individuals taking part in my study, what others think of them is important, and whilst some seek to forge relationships so there is mutual liking and respect, and others clearly sacrifice sentimentality and empathy in

171

order to maintain the power balance in their favour, a few retreat to a neutral middle ground often to maintain humility and to protect their sense of self worth in the face of adversity.

Power matters

Whilst, most of the experiences individuals share with me reveal the ups and downs of business life during periods of change, there are numerous examples that it would not be unreasonable to attach the label bullying and harassment to; at the very least individuals feel they have been in situations where their previous knowledge, experience and individuality is not respected by others or they have struggled to find a voice in a clearly more dominant control focused environment, which is a theme I discuss in more detail later. For Fineman (2005), power, such as this, defines many workplace relationships, which can result in extreme emotional injuries for those who are less dominant.

Given a choice, it is clear, that individuals prefer to be in control and to choose who they work with. For a few individuals, the outcome of change events clearly results in this situation, although a cynical interpretation reveals a conscious engineering and orchestration of this situation by some, with others cast as unwitting pawns in the proceedings; This individual provides an insight,

"I sort of missed the point of the message at the time, because actually the message was good, but at the time, I didn't feel it was good. What (the Director) actually said to me was, and I remember him saying, "Now, we expect you, to apply for one of these roles. This is one in particular we know you will be very interested in." Having thought about that afterwards, well I thought, "That's quite a good endorsement", sort of, "We hope you'll still be part of the team". I missed that message at that point though, I was just thinking, "My job doesn't exist anymore!" (Chris, Senior Manager)

Others, however, did not receive this favoured treatment, as one individual managing a change event remembers,

"I was responsible after the announcements (of the restructure) for the recruitment of a number of new roles that had been created. There had been a small number of displacements, potential redundancies and all these people had been given the opportunity to apply for the new roles if they wanted to. This was an interesting time. These roles were different in a lot of respects, but in saying that they were also similar in a lot of respects as well...It seemed to me that if you really wanted someone to stay you would just offer them the jobs. I didn't know these individuals at all. I remember one individual though asking me to be honest and tell him was it worth him making an application or was it just a process we were paying lip service to and he really had no chance of getting one of the jobs. I remember saying all the right things, because I believed them. "Yes of course, if you are genuinely interested in this job, put in an application. Please be reassured that I will select the successful candidates on their merits to do the job. I have no hidden agenda." I didn't have a hidden agenda and I would have offered him a role if he had been the best candidate for the job. Had this been the case though, I do believe I would have had a challenge on my hands with my boss and maybe a question over my judgement? I don't know. As it was he applied, then withdrew his application because he had got another job outside the organisation. I remember being uncomfortable though answering his questions. I didn't have any hidden agenda at all, but I, it just seemed to me that had the organisation really wanted him to stay they'd have just offered him one of the new jobs. In the end all the people displaced, left the organisation, except for one." (Sarah, Senior Executive)

Another individual is more direct;

"Gloria's demise was brought about really because she didn't get on with Josh. There was a clash of personalities." (Ilana, Senior Manager)

Whilst conscious engineering and orchestration of these situations may possibly be too much of a cynical interpretation, it does reflect the thoughts of a number of leading industrialists today, who are on record advocating the view, "sack those people in your team who you don't get on with; success can only be built on relationships that work!" Those not conferred with this power, or inclined to use it in such a brutal way, however, have to find other ways to achieve the organisation's goals. In doing this, decisions about organisational changes are often made that recognise what individuals can bring

173

to the table, albeit without too many organisational compromises. In these circumstances, relationships, are defined by many individuals by the missing pieces; trust; how honest individuals believe others have been with them; do they feel they are, "a winner or a loser?" and what freedom do they believe they still have to grow? In many instances, for the individuals taking part in my research, these situations translate into less than positive learning and working relationships than individuals would normally aspire to have. In some of the stories individuals share with me, a school yard mentality starkly reveals itself as individuals seek to justify their negative feelings about some individuals by aligning their own feelings with the views of others, ensuring the consensus view constructs and justifies the reality. As one individual observes,

"If you get a new manager as a result of a change like I did here, it's very difficult, because that manager comes to you, rather than you going to work for them, and you don't know if they are going to like you. If you can choose to go and work for them, well that's different. You can see the relationship, you can see if you are likely to get on. When it's forced on you, I think that's always a difficult change. I make no excuses that I couldn't stand the guy either. It turns out that no one else could anyway, so I wasn't alone... that was a difficult situation." (Alfie, Senior Manager)

In defining their relationships, many individuals look to find things they have in common with others; to be the same is good, however, to be different can often be perceived as, not fitting in. Where there are differences, in for example, an individual's approach to management or self presentation in group forums, these often become a focus for negative review, regardless of how significant or otherwise these differences are perceived to be. As one individual shares,

"I received my feedback from the development programme... and I am so balanced it's scary! The only development point that the consultant had highlighted was that I am perceived to be a bit quiet in meetings. In my follow up meeting with (the Director), he said I needed to work on this because there was no way I would be seen to be suitable for more senior positions if I didn't. So my choice is, to get on do I develop the ability to talk over people constantly in meetings, ignore most of the group, and say things for the sake of saying things, as most of the Directors and some of my colleagues do, or do I stick to what I believe and what I am comfortable doing, and make a contribution when

I believe I have something meaningful to say? We're not all good at everything, but for me, it seems I have to be, because some of the other things I am good at don't appear to warrant the same recognition. The focus is always on what you don't do well!" (Hindy, Senior Executive)

Change, changes relationships

Where individuals perceive there is a change in relationships, they previously thought they understood, or where someone is seen to "acting out of character", especially during periods of change, strong emotions and feelings can be triggered, and can contribute to an individual's feelings of uncertainty and nervousness. The insight individuals share with me emphasises how common this is in organisational life, and how it is often used as a barometer for individuals seeking to access their organisation's covert change agenda. As one individual remembers,

"What made me very nervous was that usually Brian would be quite open on things. To be fair, he might have told me things he shouldn't have, but that's part of the trust we had. If I'd have started spouting off to the rest of the staff, I would never have been told anything again. There were certain things he would tell me, and would warn me about, but with this one, he wouldn't. He'd obviously been told not to, and I could see there was something a lot more serious behind this one. That gave it away. There was something a bit more to it that met the eye. It was unusual. I remember thinking, "Why aren't you telling me anything?" So it was very unusual...I remember feeling very unnerved by it all. (Alfred, Senior Manager)

Change events can bring individuals into contact with others they may not have worked with in the past, or set a different scene for individuals where previously understood behaviours and characteristics of both the individuals themselves and those of others, can often become reinforced, distorted, threatened, or destroyed in the glare or obscurity of new lighting. During periods of organisational change the nature of our relationships both inside and outside of the work environment can be severely tested.

For some individuals taking part in my research, change events serve to positively reinforce some of their relationships with colleagues as they seek mutual support from each other. For Gabriel (2000), individuals, who share experiences, especially during change, can feel closer, and more secure, reinforcing their sense of togetherness and sometimes survival in the face of adversity. In this way, the majority of individuals in my study are happy to draw on their existing relationships and seek support on a practical basis, for example, to confirm their understanding of the changes taking place or to provide practical advice during a job application process. Many individuals reveal that they measure how well they are liked and respected in the organisation by how comfortable others are coming to them for help or advice in these situations. As one individual observes,

"Your network especially during change events is so important... they were my first port of call...for support and... advice, and knowledge about what was going on... people are going to give it to me, because I've done stuff for them in the past... you know, certainly internally, you start to know whether you've got friends or not. You know whether you are liked or you're disliked. You don't get that assistance if you're not. It's quite comforting if you can get that support. I think what you have always got to do is, sort of like, get some brownie points in advance. If someone comes to you, I always think you should, I always look to help them because you never know when you'll need the help back." (Alfred, Senior Manager)

Where change events require individuals to compete for jobs, however, relationships can often become victims of the change process as individuals seek to achieve a narcissistic outcome.

"Once Dean found out (that I was applying for the same job), then there was real conflict. He felt, <u>I didn't feel threatened by him ever</u>, but he certainly felt threatened by me. And he had no reason to you know; we were just applying for the same role. But he definitely felt threatened. So our relationship deteriorated quite a bit as we went towards the end (of the application process)." (Thomas, Senior Manager)

For some individuals, changes to the organisational structure can significantly alter the nature of their relationships, in the way individuals interact with them on a daily basis,

as I discuss earlier. Where an individual's status, for example, is perceived to have been diluted following change events, the behaviours of individuals often reinforce and give life to these perceptions and bring reality to them. The result can be self fulfilling prophesies, for both the individual concerned, and the rest of the organisation, even if the organisation's official announcements position changes to the contrary. Many individuals reveal their disappointments, frustrations and sense of betrayal as they share experiences where individuals, they previously considered good friends and colleagues, and who would previously have come to them for advice or to engage their support, belie this relationship by preferring to develop the relationship with the more senior individual, even if they are not the subject matter expert. There is a sense that individuals' expertise and previous contribution is sacrificed as it becomes lost in the mélange of change, with recognition for their previous achievements being denied. Conversely, for others their newly attributed or perceived status attracts the attention of "status snobs" keen to make the acquaintance of the rising stars. The choice of who to build relationships with is determined by organisational hierarchy and not knowledge and expertise; status in the organisation confers expertise. This individual shares her frustration,

"We were completely floored by the lack of confidence that the Directors appeared to have in us. This is no reflection on Darren, because I do admire the man and I do get on really well with him as a boss. I've no problems with him, but, let's see, Darren is appointed, and he comes from (an overseas organisation), and knows nothing about how we work here; he knows nothing about our regulation, our governance requirements, our culture, and so on and so on. But he is the first point of contact for everyone in the senior team. I'm lucky if they talk to me at all. What makes it worse is Darren relies heavily on me and my team, he has to. It's not motivational at all. I have to provide lots of support for him, even after being in effect demoted during the restructure." (Ilana, Senior Manager)

For many of the individuals participating in my research, it is clear that their feelings and emotions during periods of change are shaped by the changing nature of their relationships, with many individuals experiencing an unstable dichotomy of negative and positive feelings and emotions at these times. As this change survivor remembers,

"At first all I could think was, "Thank god, I'm not sacked!" Then I was quite embarrassed actually. I didn't like Simon, I didn't, but I would never wish anybody to lose their job for whatever the reason. That's, that's not right. I particularly felt sorry for people like Jacob. I think he was in the mix, wrong time, you know, wrong time, wrong place sort of thing. But then everybody thought, "Oh H, I'm really sorry to hear about you!" But bottom line was I hadn't (lost my job). It was quite awkward... Then I got the looks, the looks like, quite right really in some ways, the looks that said it all really, "Hold on mate, why haven't you been (made redundant)?" It was quite embarrassing. Is it embarrassing? I don't know, maybe embarrassing, certainly very uncomfortable anyway." (Henry, Senior Manager)

It's not just about work!

Whilst the majority of individuals only open the door a little on their personal in or outside of work relationships, there are sufficient clues, throughout the stories they share with me, to form an understanding of the nature and influence these different relationships can have. A few individuals acknowledge that whilst they meet organisational expectations, especially in terms of singing from the corporate hymn sheet during periods of change, there are limits to which they are prepared to do this. In situations, for example, where individuals are asked to share their views on "a personal level, off the record", it is clear that they are prepared to do this with individuals they like and trust, even if it is not supportive of the organisational position. For Schwartz (1987), and Gabriel, the nature of relationships, such as these, are shaped through opposition to the, "organisational malignant" where individuals place themselves morally and intellectually above the organisation's intent (2000, pp. 187). There is a sense that, for the individuals taking part in my study, their desire to be true their own feelings and emotions and be honest with individuals they trust defines the nature of their relationships and drives the decisions they make in these situations. This echoes Waldron (2000), who suggests, as discussed earlier, that it is often an individual's feelings and emotions, language choices and approach that defines, sustains, and sometimes abuses their relationships. In this way, some of the individuals taking part in my research, reveal how the infiltration of their personal feelings and emotions can influence and sometimes distort organisational change communications, and are almost

akin to Chinese Whispers, with individuals' interpretations, nuances and slant on the situations demonstrating the power that they have to significantly change the essence and intent of the original corporate messages. As these two individuals quietly *and confidentially* acknowledge,

"I always try to be honest with people that I manage or with the people that have been colleagues. We're only a small team but we've all grown up together; we work very much side by side as colleagues. So whilst I'm now their manager, I'm still their friend, and I just try to be as open and honest and as positive as I can, and if they seek my views on a personal level, then I will tell them personally what I think. I will pull the party line, and I'll give the party speak, but at the end of the day if one of my staff comes to me and says, "Honestly, what do you think?" then I feel I'm obliged to be honest with them...I don't think it's fair to be anything other than (honest)." (Ginger Flash (not her real pseudonym), an important person)

"For four months (the change plan) was secret and nobody knew. I've got to say that actually, I told a couple of my close people who I'd recruited... and to say, "If you want to get out, then I'll help you". That was a bit naughty, but I did. I'd signed a confidentiality agreement, but these people were more important to me. People matter; I didn't give a toss about the change plan!" (Smokey (not his real pseudonym), an extremely important person!)

Trust, lies at the heart of many relationships, and is especially important during periods of change, as individuals assess their altruistic motivations and the credibility of their interactions with others on this basis. Whilst it is clear that an individual's previous experience helps to shape their willingness to trust, many individuals still often bestowed trust on all their relationships until events happen to belie their confidence. From the insight many individuals afford me, during my research, it is clear that it is either emotional ties to people or self actualising emotions that motivates and drives individuals' actions, especially during periods of change, and not loyalty to the organisation or its goals. In this way, the organisation becomes a consumer of these emotional threads and, albeit unrecognised as such, becomes a loser or an unintended beneficiary.

For Meyerson (2000), the extent to which individuals build relationships, in which they share their feelings and emotions, is defined by an individual's social conditioning. Many of the managers she interviewed acknowledge that they operate behind self constructed emotional barriers both at home and at work, and whilst they are more open in sharing their feelings with their families at home, they are less open in sharing those feelings that arise from work related matters. In the same way, many of the individuals taking part in my study, reveal they do not share work derived feelings and emotions with their family and friends. As one individual explains,

"It's very difficult. My, my wife doesn't work in an office, in an office or anything like that, she's a carer, and I think it is very difficult for people who don't work in an environment like this to appreciate what actual pressure you are under. I don't think Cindy, she wouldn't really understand you know. She still thinks of it when she was seventeen, when she worked in an office with all her mates and things, but it isn't like that anymore...I keep trying to remind her that I am in a role here, that our lives here are in senior positions. That there's a lot of responsibility, with people expecting things from you, but I don't think she would really ever understand so it's difficult. I just try and deal with it myself." (Alfred, Senior Manager)

Whilst some feel it to be inappropriate, like this individual, to share work derived feelings and emotions with their family and friends, because they believe it is difficult for individuals outside the work environment to understand and empathise with the context, others imply that doing this in some way would be seen as a failure to cope.

The nature of communication

Communication lies at the heart of individuals' relationships, and can be a strong emotional catalyst for many individuals. For many individuals taking part in my research, it is clear that their sense of fear, inevitability, panic, and desperation about what some changes mean for them, and their relationships with others are influenced by the nature of the discourse taking place at the time. As this individual observes,

"I knew him well. I believed we had a good relationship... on that day though, the day everyone was being told about the changes, when it was my turn to go and see him, I felt like I was walking into the lion's den...I was scared to death." (Thomas, Senior Manager)

Many of the stories individuals share with me reflect a similar message and in doing so, echo Waldron (1994) who suggests as discussed earlier, that it is the nature of communication that defines individuals' relationships. It is clear from the insight individuals share with me that the nature of many of their workplace relationships arise as constructs of the change context and the discourse supporting and creating the context, at particular points in time. As Fineman observes, the labels and discourses used by individuals will "change over time because change is generated by human actors who experiment with discourses" (2000, pp. 7).

For many individuals, official organisational discourses define the change context and, as such, have an influential part to play in shaping relationships. For example, in the minutes of a number of meetings held to plan significant organisational change events, and to consider the options for restructuring different departments within the business, there are actions noted that focus on the communication and involvement of the individuals who will ultimately be directly affected by the changes. It is clear that consideration has been given to ensure the stages of the change processes are carefully planned and executed in order to deliver the pre-designed structures, and it is also clear that consideration has been given to ensure careful planning and delivery of the supporting communication. Whilst there is consistently a clear acknowledgement that these are sensitive and confidential situations, the minutes, do not suggest that there has been any consideration given to the feelings and emotions that may be evoked by the

planned actions, and how these might be dealt with, or how they might be meaningfully used to help shape and influence the change events being taken forward. Three individuals involved in managing these change events provide an insight;

"It was an exciting time for me personally. I was involved in the planning of a major change event for the organisation. I felt important to be doing this and was actually really proud to be involved. To a very large extent I was detached from any emotions in this situation. I had detached myself. There was no place for emotions, the pressure was on to get the job done and I was mindful to do the best job I could. We definitely put the hours in! Our Director had put together a high level view of what he wanted to achieve and why. It all made a lot of sense. Basically it was looking at the activities carried out in one department and dividing them up into activities that had synergy with others in the business. In effect we were dividing up one big department and moving the work and the people into other teams...It was all very logical." (Sarah, Senior Executive)

"I remember one planning meeting. Brian, the head of the department that was being restructured was retiring, I think this was a catalyst for the restructure in the first place, but he had built this structure and the team in it over a number of years. It seemed to me we were just unwinding all his work. I remember being very conscious about that. He didn't look happy. He never said anything to me, but I got the impression he didn't agree with what was happening. I think it was Brian who was keen to ensure his senior team was involved in the planning process. This made sense to me, but to be honest, we paid lip service to this process. The end result was already on the table. Brian's senior team as I remember were not given details of the end goal, so anything they were going to come up with, unless they were just really lucky was never going to be as radical, or even take into consideration the end goal as set out. It would have been like the proverbial turkeys voting for Christmas. Still you never know do you, with hindsight, they might have surprised us." (Margaret, Senior Executive)

"This change was all very process driven. We were very careful to consider everything that needed to be done, but it was all very mechanical really thinking about it. We had a duty to be considerate and I believe we were. We were very mindful that the message we were going to be giving was going to be difficult for some individuals and unexpected. There was a view that we were working in an organisation, which didn't do things like

we were planning, i.e. restructures, which affect people. In reality it did, it was no different to other organisations I've worked in. People just seemed to think it was different, maybe because it was on a smaller scale. To be honest, I'd say to a large extent, people just seemed to forget about past changes because they weren't directly involved. For the vast majority of the people, this change was just a move to a different part of the building, a different seat, a different manager. I remember someone saying to me afterwards that they felt it had been like breaking up a family unit. It was interesting that they felt like that. Some people really don't like change at all." (Hindy, Senior Executive)

The sanitised observations of individuals consistently reveal the dominance of an official top down process driven delivery focus, which mirrors the bland and emotionless pictures of organisations described by Fineman (2005), Gabriel (2000), and Waldron (2000). Whilst there are hints that the people sensitive nature of these situations are recognised, the consideration of feelings, emotions and relationships of individuals affected and how these might be handled to help facilitate the change processes and the desired outcome are absent from the defined actions lists and official records. There is a sense that individuals, tasked with managing the changes, are left to their own cognisance in these matters. Whilst it is clear that some individuals try to compartmentalise their own feelings and emotions and a few find ways to give a voice to their individuality, they all hint at the emotional impact their change experiences have had on their relationships with others. For the majority of individuals taking part in my study, whilst they adopt a mask of professionalism and sanitise how they express themselves when sharing their experiences, many of the stories they share with me, reveal the actions they have taken behind the scenes to try to support others or, to try to disturb mindsets and influence future change events.

For Gabriel, whilst, "impersonality is a key ingredient of our experience of organizations (it is also) a fundamental affront to our narcissism" (2000, pp. 185). In the same way, whilst many individuals taking part in my research acknowledge that they have had opportunities to participate and input into the planning of organisational changes, many also reveal that they have still been shocked when the full extent of changes and the personal implications for themselves have been unveiled. As this individual remembers,

"We, sort of knew that there was going to be a review and that we were going to be told on a one to one basis what the reviews meant. We were also told we would have an opportunity to have a say, have an input as well, and we did...the extent of (the restructure) was never put to us though. We were told there were going to be some changes, but we never really knew it was going to be as drastic as it went...Having thought about it later, I'm not sure if there was a right or a wrong way to (communicate) it. I spoke to (the Director) about it afterwards...and he said they had had quite a dilemma on (how to communicate the changes)...the dilemma was the order in which individuals were to be told, not what we were being told! ...I'm not sure why we were asked to be involved. We didn't make a difference. They paid lip service to us being involved... By way of explanation, when I challenged him, (The Director) told me we are not very good in this organisation with open and honest conversations, especially if there are difficult conversations to be had...I suppose you get wiser as you see more...I want to trust people. I think you have to otherwise we might as well all pack up and go home...I'm less likely to take things at face value now though... I don't trust them in quite the same way as I did before." (Thomas, Senior Manager)

In this way, many of the individuals taking part in my study echo Waldron (2000), and also Fineman, who suggests that, "History matters – individuals...have memories, emotional backcloths which shape the "what" and "how" of present feelings and emotional expression" (2000, pp. 13). For some individuals, where extreme emotions, such as fear, define their relationships, these feelings are often tempered over time as the context settles and becomes just another phase of business as usual. For some, however, these experiences leave a legacy that shapes their ongoing and future discourses and relationships. It is clear that relationships are redefined in these situations as individuals seek clarity or reassurance to assuage their own fears and uncertainties. Whilst some relationships are strengthened as individuals find mutual support, sponsorship, and reassurance, many other individuals share experiences in which, their discourse with others sharpens their sense of bitterness, distrust, isolation and uncertainty.

The nature of an individual's relationship with the organisation

"I expect people who have the intellectual capability to work out the ramifications of what they're about to do or to put themselves into somebody else's place or to empathise. People who don't think, or who are cynical, who couldn't give a monkeys about other people's feelings, who don't use their intellect, are uncaring emotionally and who ride rough shod over people - that makes me angry. The intellectual thing is a frustration I might have with people that I'm responsible for, but the cynical thing affects me more when it comes from people, who are either in my peer group or more senior to me" (Norman, Senior Executive)

Many of the individuals taking part in my study have workplace expectations that often extend beyond those bounded by their own roles and responsibilities, and for many individuals, it is their nature of being, their feelings and emotions, their personal aspirations and motivations, and their judgment of the workplace environment that collectively shapes their expectations. Notwithstanding this, however, from the experiences individuals share with me, they often find that their expectations are at odds with organisational expectations that have been designed not to meet individuals' personal expectations but to achieve organisational goals. Whilst their personal experiences differ, individuals consistently reveal the intensity of feelings and emotions that have been brought to life by these disappointments, and which I discuss earlier.

It is clear from the insight individuals share with me that there has *not* been any meaningful shift in the nature of their relationships with the organisation in terms of their personal expectations in recent years. Individuals still have expectations that they are treated with openness, honesty, and respect, even though in the past they acknowledge that their expectations may not have been realised. There is clearly an acknowledgment that traditional career structures are a thing of the past, although this does not seem to extinguish individuals' expectations, but merely seems to introduce dissatisfaction, frustration or acceptance of a future elsewhere, and excites emotional discourse on the subject. Even though Fineman, Sims and Gabriel (2006) suggest that loyalty to the organisation has been replaced by loyalty to oneself, it is clear that, for all the individuals taking part in my study, loyalty to oneself has been their key motivator for many years, albeit they acknowledge, veiled by carefully chosen masks. Likewise

for the organisation, whilst there are more changes taking place, organisational expectations of adaptability and flexibility remains, there is just a greater degree of adaptability and flexibility required.

What has changed, it seems is the way individuals view the world around them, and respond to it. There is clearly more uncertainty, but equally less tolerance, more challenge, and more openness about individuals' and organisational expectations of communication, fair treatment, trust, empathy, financial security, and stimulation. This individual provides an insight,

"There was this absolute rottweiller, nasty psychopathic sod... who would treat people with disrespect, and I feel very satisfied about a conversation I had with him behind closed doors when he was talking about, "We'll deal him away", and I said, and I remember, and I felt tremendous, I said, "Look, when you're speaking about this person, even if they're not there and you're speaking to me about them, I want you to show complete respect. You're not fit to walk in their shadow otherwise. So I don't want you to talk like that, just because on this occasion you've got your foot on their neck... when you're talking about them, you treat them with reverence and respect because they've put many years into this company." It's not just about the physical terms; it's how you deal with people as well. When he said, "We'll deal him away", and then I'd say, "You can't decide what's right for him unless you can spell out what it is that is on the table...this is a major life decision for this bloke, you can't talk like that." But he was a nutter, he was really horrible. But I felt satisfied that I'd had the nerve, because it was slightly scary because he is a nutter... he totally cowed on that... he changed. He never ever talked like that in front of me again." (Tom, Director)

Whilst many of the individuals participating in my study describe themselves as advocates of change, it is clear that for some this is dependent on how well they perceive change events to be communicated and managed. There are difficulties with this, however, as individuals' expectations are personal and subjective, and what is seen to be acceptable by some individuals, does not always meet the expectations of others. Whilst some individuals, for example, find the message they are looking for within the change itself, others rely on the way the message is managed. What is clear, however, is that where individuals believe communication to be failing or lacking in some way, they

186

often find it difficult to fully embrace the organisational changes taking place, and for some, this heightens their feelings of fear, and uncertainty.

Notwithstanding this, however, from the language they use and their choice of words, many individuals clearly believe that there is an organisational expectation for them to embrace change. The statements, "I embrace change", "I welcome change" or "*Obviously* I embrace change" find a niche in the discourse of the majority of individuals taking part in my study, although for some the emphasis they place on the words can clearly be interpreted as being somewhat defiant. On the face of many stories, the majority of individuals are clearly concerned to be seen to be toeing the party line, buying into the organisation's goals, being a good cultural fit. As one individual observes,

"If we don't change then we become old dinosaurs" (Polly, Senior Manager)

The language used, however, indicates the possibility of a different position, and as individuals share more of their experiences, it becomes more apparent from their stories that they often tailor their outward demeanour to how they believe they are expected to behave. They are often seen to be embracing change, whereas the "real" person can find themselves in some turmoil as they sacrifice their own ambitions or expectations and suppress those emotions and feelings they perceive to be unwelcome.

For many individuals taking part in my study this is brought to life by the long hours they work in the belief that by doing so they are part of a collective, making an extra effort and going that extra mile to get the job done. There is a sense that they believe it is an expected part of being a senior manager and that the organisation and others respects and rewards people who do this. For those individuals who do this, many acknowledge that they get angry and frustrated by other individuals whom they consider are not working as hard as they believe they should be. Although a cynical interpretation reveals that individuals do not question the effectiveness or appropriateness of working long hours on a regular basis. Significantly, however, some individuals suggest that the organisation is treating people differently and is being unfair to individuals who are working long hours on a regular basis, not because of the

long hours being worked by some and not others, but because they do not believe the organisation is dealing with the inconsistency. As one individual observes,

"I get so angry about it. I get frustrated by other people that I think are taking the mick. I don't expect everybody to work seven, seven... I don't agree with that, but I also don't expect people to just come in at 9.00 and go at 4.00 or 5.00 everyday. I think there's an imbalance somewhere across (the organisation)... it's the same people... you could walk around as much as I could and you could point out people who put that extra amount of effort in and I don't know what, what drives people to do that. But I bet you could pick out the same people as I could. And you could also pick the people out that frustrate you as well. I just find that a little bit annoying and I think, I think we should do more to address the balance. I'm not saying they have to work from seven to seven, but there are times when you do have to put that extra effort in. It's give and take. And there are times when, particularly when planning, you're sat about half seven at night and you think, "How come there's only me, Sarah, and Miss Tibbs here? Everybody else must have a lot of work on, so why is it so imbalanced?" It's that kind of frustration."
(Henry, Senior Manager)

From the insight many individuals afford me, it is clear that organisational messages over recent years and the organisation's stated vision and values have set expectations of an environment where feedback is welcomed, expected, and acted upon, and whilst these messages were received initially by suspicion and some nervousness by many individuals, it has become an environment that individuals want to believe in, even though for some individuals there is no evidence that these expectations in practice are being generally realised. For many of the individuals participating in my study, it is clear, that where these or other expectations are not fulfilled, their levels of emotions are heightened as they seek to manage their feelings of frustration and disappointment. Notwithstanding this, however, there is a sense, in the background of individuals' stories, that they have seen, heard, and want to still believe in this new vista, and they therefore cling to their expectations regardless of organisational practice belying the original messages. As one individual remembers,

"I didn't see it in the same way as he did... I accept he needed to get my team involved to help him, these things happen, but there are ways of doing things, and the way he did

188

it completely undermined me...I told him that afterwards, and his reaction was incredible. He clenched his fists at his side, and went red in the face...I was upset, verging on tears, but I wasn't prepared to be spoken to like that. I'd been through a very difficult time before... and I wasn't putting up with it again, especially not with someone who had acted so unprofessionally and so out of order...I was upset, but I tried to be quiet and calm as I asked him, what was wrong in putting his head around the door and quietly asking to speak to me. I then could have managed the interruption with my team in a way that demonstrated that I supported what he needed to do, rather than the bull in a china shop scenario we'd had...You can't ever really trust someone who acts like that. He blames everyone for not listening carefully enough to him, but at the end of the day, communication is a joint responsibility. He made it quite clear that my feedback wasn't welcome though, even though it was well intended." (Margaret, Senior Executive)

For some individuals, their experiences in day to day business as usual situations, like this, leads to their perceptions of unfair treatment, and reveals the substantial impact unfulfilled expectations can have on their feelings and emotions. The emotion evident in the voices of many individuals as they share their experiences with me provides an insight into the emotional legacy of these events.

Relationships - summary comments

In the section above, I reflect upon my consideration that individuals and their nature of being, their feelings, emotions, and their self motivations are at the heart of their relationships with others, and that, whilst an individual's feelings and emotions helps them to understand the context and shape the decisions they make, they also define the nature of their relationships, which, during periods of change, can be regarded as an integral part of the change context. I also explore the consideration that there are interdependencies between an individual's nature of being, their feelings and emotions, their view of the social context, the decisions they make, how they choose to communicate and their relationships, which are different for everyone. I reflect upon my view that, just as people relationships are often tested and redefined during periods of change, an individual's relations with the organisation is often tested and redefined in the same way.

Control

In chapter 1, I introduce the consideration that managing change is a form of control, where individuals both seek to control and are themselves controlled, and where painful emotions appear to be accepted bi products of what are essentially coercive change journeys (Fineman, 2005; Grint, 1997; Jermier, 1998; Kanter, 1994; 1997; Peters and Waterman, 1982; Schein, 1988; Smircich and Morgan, 1982).

These are key considerations for my research, and in the section that follows I explore these themes in more detail. In the context of individuals' stories and experiences of change, I have, once again, grouped like thoughts and observations together under headings I have drawn directly from the discourse; these are, in control - myth or reality?; faceless control; control and emotions, although in doing so, it is not my intention to suggest there can be no overlap between them. The discourse within each heading clearly lends itself open to this opportunity.

A map of this part of the exploration is as follows,
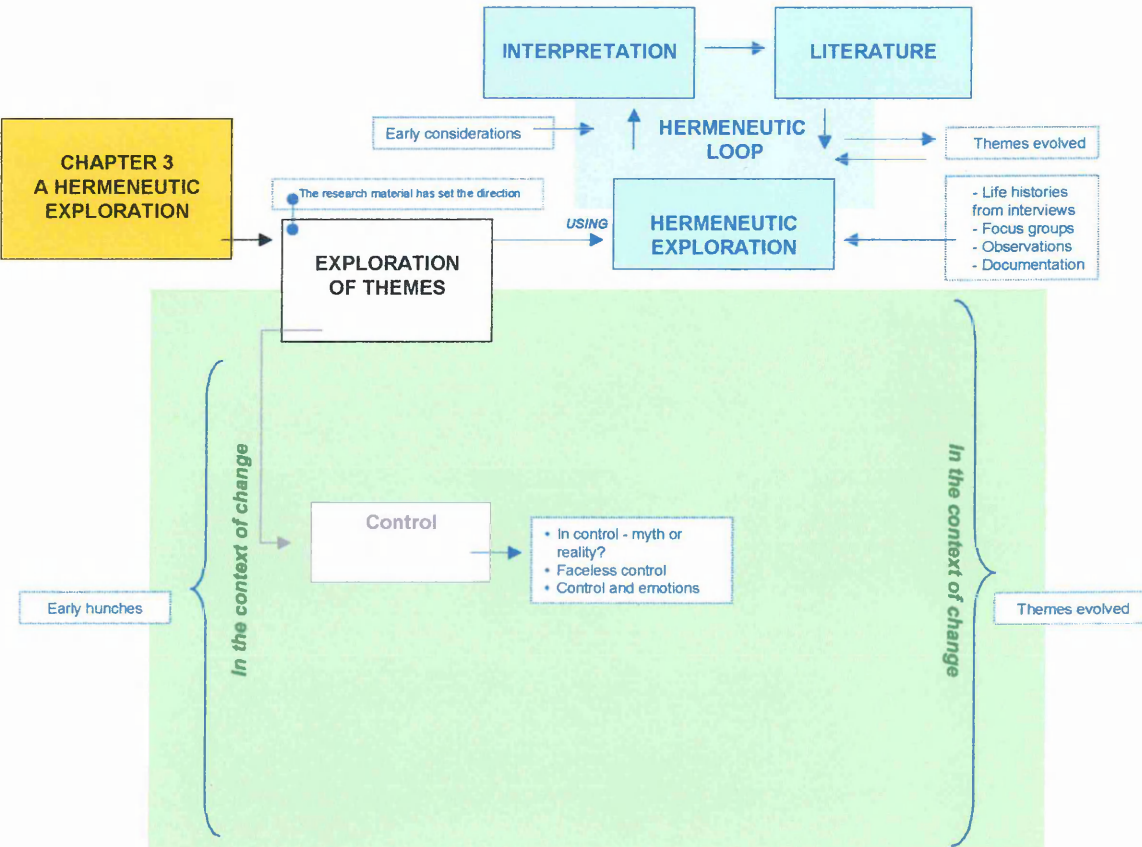
In control - myth or reality?

"I'm a human being. I'm a real advocate of change, when I'm in control of it and when I'm driving it." (Albert, Director)

All the individuals taking part in my study have at different times been in charge of change, and have welcomed change, or have been anxious about change, and from the stories they share with me, it is clear that many of them are more likely to welcome change when they are in charge of it, but feel less sure of themselves when they are not in overall control, either of the change process or their personal response to it. When they are in control, there is clearly an underlying sense of arrogance in their observations that individuals on the receiving end of change decisions need to understand that ultimately all change is for their benefit. Although, the same individuals, when not in overall control, are prepared to acknowledge that, whilst organisational changes may benefit some individuals, this will not always be the case for everyone.

The majority of individuals acknowledge that all changes have the potential to become threats to the individual as a person, and when individuals are threatened, they respond in different ways to protect themselves, either by open hostility, measured response, or submissive acceptance. As Fineman observes, however, "Issues of power imbalance may play an important role in people's reluctance to reveal their pain. Fear of unwanted repercussions on the job prevents some from opening up... (and where) internalised voices... reinforce the sense that revelation could hurt a career" (2000, pp. 34). Although the dichotomy is clear, as one individual observes,

"You can't control your own emotions... Everybody's got feelings. You just can't hide those." (Thomas, Senior Manager)

As individuals share their stories with me, however, organisational expectations are brought to life in the conditioning of their discourses. Many individuals use a common language and rational and dispassionate expressions to make their observations that the threat can be removed from the individual as a person if the change process is effectively managed and controlled to ensure unwelcome feelings and emotions do not

arise. In this way, the individuals taking part in my study echo Fineman (2005), who suggests that the goal, that has become the driving force for individuals managing change, is one of ensuring that resistance to change is controlled to prevent it from impeding the change process. There is a sense that individuals are controlling their own resistance to change through conditioning their own responses, whilst at the same time seeking to influence the responses of others. In this way, they mirror Hochschild (1983/2003), and Fineman, Sims and Gabriel, who suggest that, "employees have to sustain the right emotions if they are to survive in the job... (and that), the rules about what to express, and how to express it, have been decided in advance by executives in a board room, and have to be learnt by heart" (2006, pp. 192). As this individual illustrates, managing resistance to change can mean filtering the change message before it is delivered,

"I think we sometimes think confidentiality protects people. Almost, if we tell them too soon, we won't have all the answers and we won't be in control any more. They'll worry too much about it, maybe over a longer period of time. It's interesting that we think we need to protect people in this way. We never really know how people are going to react to this type of situation. Of course we know there will generally be a range of different reactions but on an individual level you never really know. So you could argue we don't know what we are protecting if we are indeed intending to protect at all. It could be we are just sanitising the process. It could just be the perception it would be more difficult to manage and take longer if we don't." (Margaret, Senior Executive)

Many individuals admit to initial cynicism during early change communications as they share experiences of feeling controlled and manipulated both as givers and receivers of the change agendas. They are suspicious that there are hidden agendas or that the information being shared is sanitised. They distrust the confidences being shared with them, and many believe if they are being involved to help manage a change event, it is only so they can be influenced to ensure the jobs they are needed for, get done. As this individual observe,

"I'll try and express this. I feel like I can't blame them for doing this or acting in this way, because it is the sort of thing I might do. It's when you want to stay in control, you want to be the boss, but you want everyone to be so totally motivated and delivering,

and you sort of perceive that the only way they're going to be really motivated and really have ownership of what they are doing is if you make them feel that they are in charge. When really you know that you don't want them to be in charge, because you still want to be in charge. You're kind of manipulating them. I feel quite manipulated with this change. That's how it is. I feel there's no question really about who is in charge." (Dod, Senior Executive)

For many individuals, a dominant control environment drives change plans and the change discourse. At the extreme, some individuals paint a picture of change as a silent war, a blood letting, and defeat of a weaker force facing a strong adversary, for some, change is seen as an intellectual cost reduction exercise, for others change is about getting individuals to do more with the same or less. In this way, Gabriel, drawing on the work of Selznick in 1943, suggests that, "organizations seek to control human behaviour in a unique way, through a multiplicity of highly specific and impersonal bureaucratic rules and regulations" (2000, pp. 95).

For the majority of individuals taking part in my research, there is a sense from the stories they share with me that they are victims of successful manipulation as they spread themselves very thinly, doing more and more work to support increasing amounts of change. In this way, they mirror Fineman, Sims and Gabriel (2006), and Hochschild (1983/2003), who suggest that individuals end up cynical and mentally exhausted as they strive to keep up appearances of engagement that they know to be false, in support of organisational goals. The control environment is brought to life here as they reveal their feelings of powerless and inability to manage or stop the ballooning requirement for them to do more. As these individuals explain,

"I think over the last couple of years, the amount of change and cross functional work has quadrupled, not doubled, quadrupled! We seem to have a part to play in everything, whether it's a new sales process, a new e-commerce development, or any other new change or experience - because you are the ambassador for your area, you get called on. Once you've been involved in one change, your face is known and you get dragged into all the others. Whatever your title is or your role you end up doing so many diverse things. You are the expert for your area, so you just have to contribute everywhere."
(Alfie, Senior Manager)

194

"You have to keep abreast of all the changes and also other people's plans for the future and the strategic view as a whole. Keeping abreast of everything, a little bit in each corner, is difficult, because at the same time you have to be an expert in your own area as well. The role in that respect is underestimated but people probably don't appreciate it - not unless you are doing it and you are close to it. I can't believe I'm alone in that because when you go to these other meetings there are the same people at the same things, everything you go to, it's just one moving feast of people." (Henry, Senior Manager)

Faceless control

The environment is consistently described as one where there is a day to day challenge associated with lots of change happening at the same time and with little collective recognition and understanding of the impact of this challenge because it remains hidden in the mêlée of daily activity. Many individuals reveal they just get on and do more without overt fuss or question; there is a sense that it is just expected of them. For many individuals, the controlling influence is faceless, yet it generates a momentum of its own and a common purpose and nervousness that drives their behaviours, unsettles their mindsets, and manipulates their conscious thoughts, and the decisions they make. As one individual explains,

"We could probably all have the same job title really. It's as if we are all doing a huge trouble shooting job – as though we are all focused on delivering change by troubleshooting different areas of the business together unconsciously as a team. It's like an unrecognised sub team where the successes and the injuries are largely hidden. It's quite interesting really, and a bit unnerving in a way, to see it going on." (Alfred, Senior Manager)

From the stories individuals share with me, it is clear that a dominant control environment exists within HGAA, but for many individuals it is "control with a modern image" reflecting an environment of unseen psychological control in which changes are engineered for the sole benefit of the organisation with often no intrinsic recognition of individuals' feelings or emotions or support for these within the change programmes

that are being instigated or managed. In this way, they mirror Martin (1990), and Gabriel, who suggest that experiences and stories of this nature, are highly efficient methods of control that, "indoctrinate without the subject being aware of being indoctrinated" (2000, pp. 113). As these two individuals remember,

"I was terrified. I went cold, really cold. It didn't get any better. Alex came down first and I just said, "How did you get on?" as he walked past my desk, and he just said, "I've been made redundant," and I said, "No, no you haven't?" and he said, "Yes, I've been made redundant!"... and then Paul was next... and I said, "You haven't been made redundant have you?" and he said he had... I saw Keith going into the lift. I just knew by his face that he'd been made redundant. Then it was my turn... my god! My turn, just for them to tell me my role was remaining the same!" (Chris, Senior Manager)

"The (restructure) is one example of where a change has really inflicted on me very substantially... with absolutely no consideration of the impact on me; it was irrelevant, the impact on me." (Albert, Director)

There is consensus between the individuals taking part in my study that individuals' conscientiousness is a tool for control that the organisation relies heavily upon. Significantly for many individuals, change announcements focus on what is happening and not often on why changes are taking place, with resultant activity focused on getting things done. Speculation in many situations fuels individuals' feelings of uncertainty and distrust whilst at the same time acting as an additional catalyst for action. As this individual observes,

"When I heard the announcement, I just sat back and thought, "Why are we doing some of these things?"... It's as if they picked a few people and just said, "Let's move them!" I've got to admit I can't see the logic of it... Most of the changes just completely bamboozled me...The knock on effect for me is I've now got more work. It's as simple as that." (Thomas, Senior Manager)

Significantly for many individuals, the material impact for them in many of the situations they share with me is the increase in their workloads. Whilst a few acknowledge that over time, this may translate into more opportunities for them, most

are concerned that they are going to be unable to cope given they are already struggling with their existing workloads. There is a sense in the background that there is no choice but to try and manage. There is consensus amongst all the individuals taking part in my study that they do not share their feelings or concerns with their managers on these occasions, as to do so they suggest indicates that they are unable to manage and would be seen therefore to be falling short of expectations. As these two individuals explain,

"No I don't share my feelings on this...I cope. It would have to get pretty bad...he'd have to spot it before I said something...I don't want to be seen to fail, so I just work longer hours to get everything done. Everybody does it!" (Alfred, Senior Manager)

"I'm conscientious. I know what is demanded of me and I try to meet these demands. I just do it!" (Ilana, Senior Manager)

Control and emotions

Many of the experiences individuals share with me echo Fineman and Sturdy (1999), and Fineman (2000), who suggest that emotions as a consequence and a driver of organisational change can be understood through examining the link between emotions and control, and they position feelings and emotions, not as control targets, but central to the whole process of control. Essentially, they suggest that organisational change programmes are control processes reflecting the organisational focus and ideals that modify organisational ways of life. In this context therefore, they suggest that an understanding of emotions can be developed through examining emotion as an intrinsic element of control and also as a product of the social psychological work contract.

Whilst many individuals participating in my research acknowledge that it is too simplistic to categorise an individual as either someone who adapts to change or someone who does not, many suggest that a mechanistic distinction can be made between an individual "in work" and an individual's "real" self. Whilst many individuals reveal they regularly adopt a "robotic" approach to their work and to their work relationships, there are hints that reveal the legacy of this when it is used as a regular "fix". There are hints that suggest that it is more difficult to sustain high

standards of performance in some emotional situations; and there are hints that reveal individuals feel they need to work harder and longer hours to sustain their performance when they feel dissatisfied, angry, unsupported, or manipulated as apposed to, for example, confident, empowered or satisfied. For a few individuals, there has been a detrimental impact on their personal health and home lives as they strive to maintain an illusion for others of being "in control" in the work environment.

Many of the experiences individuals share with me echo Ashforth and Humphrey (1995), Fineman (2000), and Greenspan (1997), who suggest that control is embedded in organisations in individuals' relationships and in the way individuals attempt to influence and work with each other. For the individuals taking part in my study, feelings of admiration, empathy, and trust, anger, confusion, dissatisfaction, frustration, and distrust have emerged, which have either been the catalysts that influences the change outcome for them or have been the emotional legacy of the relationship. For Ashforth and Humphrey (1995), Fineman (2000), and Greenspan (1997), situations, in which, individuals experience feelings and emotions from being controlled or from controlling others, have arisen from the organisation's unwritten rules of how people engage with each other. These rules, they suggest, have often been derived from how these engagements have been enacted in the past and their outcomes. For some individuals, it is clear that they have sacrificed their home life, work life balance, as they dedicate increasing amounts of their time to work matters so they can continue to meet the organisation's work and cultural expectations. There are hints to suggest that, for some, the price they have paid has been too high.

There is clearly a situation, as discussed earlier, where individuals who do not meet organisational expectations or fit culturally, leave the organisation. Situations, such as this, send silent messages, which are interpreted by individuals, who form their own impressions and paint their own pictures of what they believe is really going on and what is expected of them. There are hints that suggest an underlying fear culture dominates. The words and strong language that many individuals use provides an insight into their level of bitterness and feelings of unfair treatment.

It is clear from the many experiences individuals share with me that they have expectations of an empowered and collaborative working environment. The

organisation's stated values strongly reinforce these expectations, although, there is a sense in the background that this is a deception that everyone knows about, but where an illusion of not knowing is maintained. As this individual explains,

"It is a dictatorial regime. On the surface, it is collaborative, but underneath the surface, when (the Directors) sit around the table, they have a mind of what they want to happen, and it is going to happen regardless." (Ilana, Senior Manager)

There is a sense of cynical amusement as some individuals suggest they consciously "play the game" and allow their managers to think the deception has succeeded, when in reality everyone knows it has failed. There is a sense of, "Do they think we are that stupid to think they can fool us like that?" Notwithstanding this, however, individuals' expectations of collaboration remains, and there are clear hints to suggest that individuals' expectations of collaboration or even hope of collaboration, in not being realised, intensifies their feelings of frustration and disappointment. From my observations, the stories individuals share with me, and from the stated organisational values, the expectation of collaboration is clearly widespread and well defined, and, as such, starkly reveals the extent to which everyone has played their part in maintaining the deception. There is a sense of subterfuge, and a make believe collaborative environment that is control driven in reality. There is no suggestion, however, that this has been purposely created through a conscious approach, although, many individuals are left with the perceptions that the organisation does not care about people beyond the limits of what is organisationally expected of them. The emotion evident in individuals' voices as they share their experiences with me emphasises the strength of feeling and emotion in this context.

There is a sense from the stories individuals share with me, that the majority of individuals support the view that involving people, who are affected by changes, helping them to understand why change is happening, and allowing them a voice to help shape the change events, can make the change process easier for everyone. It is clear that feelings and emotions arise, and are emphasised where there is an imbalance with individual aspirations and expectations and those of the organisation. Whilst individuals indicate there is a need for the organisation to recognise this and act upon this, there is an underlying cynicism that questions if this will ever happen. There are many

suggestions to support the perception that there is something hard and ruthless about the way the organisational collective operates and a clear sense that any views and expertise that seeks to reshape this are disrespected. Whilst a few individuals suggest that, to silence challenge and voices of concern, the organisation is prepared to make token gestures, they also reveal these are often made without measured thought, or respect for the emotional impact they might have.

Control - summary comments

In the section above, I reflect upon my consideration that managing change is a form of control, where individuals both seek to control and are themselves controlled, and where painful emotions appear to be accepted bi products of what are essentially coercive change journeys. The key messages are; being in control is a personal state of being and can be considered a myth and a reality; control is often the manifestation of a faceless and unseen collective energy; and that emotions can be considered an intrinsic element of control.

A hermeneutic exploration - summary comments

In this chapter, I have endeavoured to bring to life my hermeneutic exploration of the emotional experiences of individuals during periods of strategic and organisational change, and the understanding emerging from this.

Throughout the exploration, I endeavour to bring to life what change means for the individuals taking part in my study, and whilst the extent of conditioning in how individuals express themselves is stark, there are also hints along with explicit observations that introduces a more personal perspective.
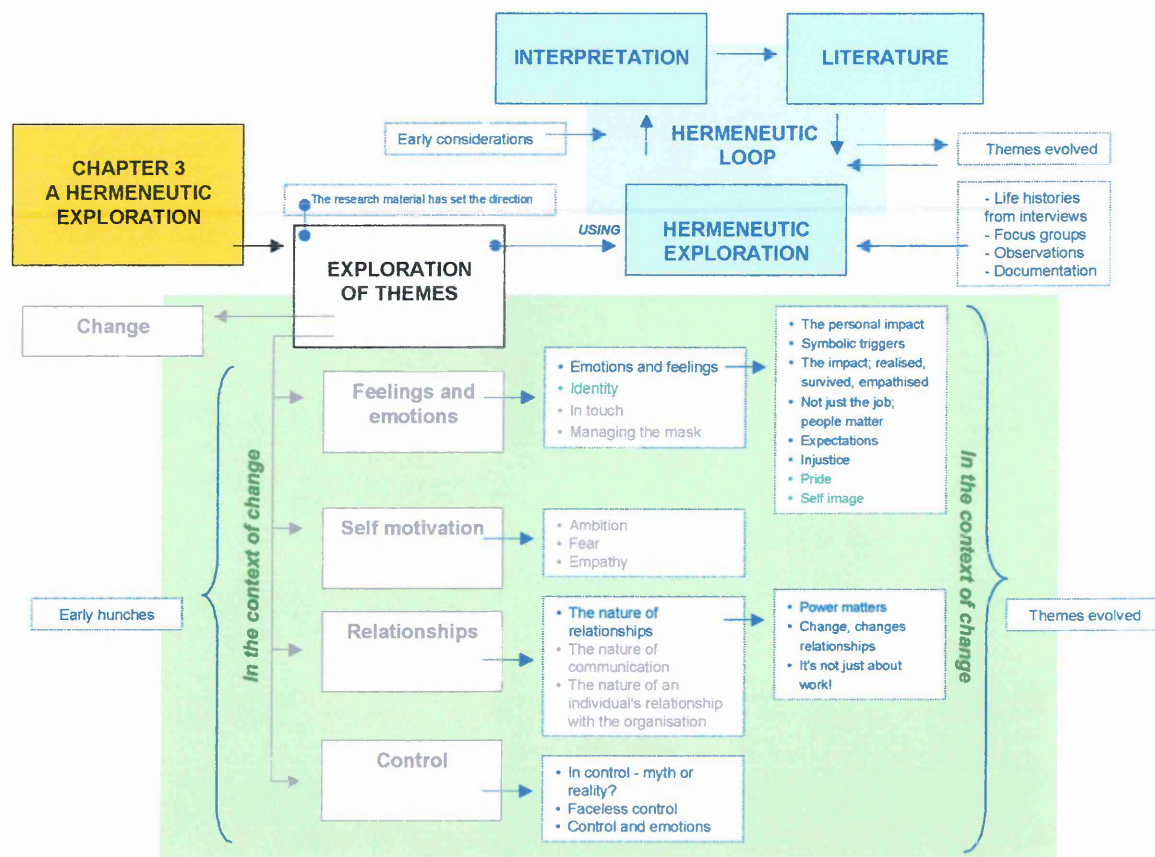
4   Conclusions and personal reflections

In the chapter that follows, I review the aim, purpose and objectives of my study, my theoretical perspective, my conclusions and observations, my contribution to knowledge and the considerations this has for management praxis. I share my personal reflections of the journey, the implications this has for my own professional praxis, and the implications and considerations this has for management praxis as a whole. I bring together my thoughts on the strengths and limitations of my study, and my recommendations for future research.

The aim, purpose and objectives of the study reviewed

In this section I review the aim, purpose and objectives of my study before embarking on a detailed review of my contribution to knowledge and management praxis.

The overall aim of my study has been to explore the emotional experiences of individuals during periods of strategic and organisational change.

My purpose has been to develop professional understanding and to make a contribution to knowledge, understanding and management praxis in this area through the unique combination of the subject matter, the context, and the approach I have taken to collect and interpret the qualitative research material.

This has been successfully achieved. My exploration informs the humanist discourse by providing insight into, the emotional complexity of organisational life during periods of change within the traditionally positivist financial services sector. I also introduce a new concept that runs throughout my research that I have given the title, the *organisational collective.*

The key objectives of my study have been achieved; I have carried out an exploration of individuals' emotions and individuals' variations from organisations' cultural expectations and cultural fit, and I have considered individuals' emotions collectively,

and the psychology of emotions as a basis on which organisational change could be managed. The research environment is in the financial services sector that prides itself on its positivist attitude, and is one in which there has been and continues to be constant strategic and organisational change driven by traditionally hard, measurable results focused, business management, where the taken for granted assumptions of members are that emotions are left at the office door.

Within this context, my research considerations, that an individual's feelings and emotions, their nature of being, their self motivation, their relationships, and the nature of control, can be considered a reasonable way of looking at and interpreting how individuals interact in everyday life and their personal response to change, have been brought vividly to life and evolved. In the sections that follow, I reflect upon the theoretical perspective of my research journey and share the contribution I have made to knowledge and management praxis in this area.

Theoretical perspective reviewed

In the section that follows, I reflect upon the theoretical perspective of my research journey.

My approach to this study has drawn upon a humanistic theoretical perspective, which places individuals and not processes or organisational structures at the centre of the research focus, and explicitly recognises the free will of individuals and their ability to learn, to develop and to change. This theoretical perspective positions reality as a construct of society as a whole and subjective; it emphasises the alienating modes of thought that characterise organisational life, and it explicitly acknowledges that by studying individuals as we actually know them to be, we can begin to understand their unspoken perspectives.

Drawing on the work of Burrell and Morgan (1979), Hassard (1991), and Johnson and Duberley (2000), McAuley, Johnson and Duberley (2007), review Burrell and Morgan's matrix of four sociological paradigms; Radical humanism, Radical structuralism, Interpretive, and Functionalism, each of which, are based upon different

assumptions about the nature of social science and the nature of society, and apply Kuhn's notion of paradigms in a broad sense. Burrell and Morgan (1997) suggest that all social theory can be located within the context of these sociological paradigms, and although they suggest that the paradigms can exist simultaneously, they also stress that meaningful communication across each theoretical perspective is not possible as the paradigms are contradictory and mutually exclusive.

Whilst the contradictory nature of these perspectives has been subject to an ongoing academic debate, which has yet to be resolved, I have found these perspectives to be a useful framework within which to locate the theoretical perspective of my study in accordance with my ontological and epistemological position, my values and beliefs, and my hermeneutic methodological preference. In locating my theoretical perspective within the humanist perspective, I have, however, denied the theoretical perspectives of the other sociological positions, which in practical terms, means that the learning not consciously sought from these perspectives is inaccessible and, as such, is a legacy of my research journey.

In reflecting on the theoretical perspective of my research journey, the humanistic perspective is a late entry. Whilst it is a position I find I have drawn upon throughout my study it is only on reflecting back on the road I have taken, that I have become aware of where I am now and where I have been. The writings of Fineman (1983; 1987; 1993; 1999; 2000; 2005), Fineman, Sims and Gabriel (2006), Fineman and Sturdy (1999), and Gabriel (1995; 1999; 2000; 2004), that I draw upon and which have been of most interest and help to me throughout my study, whilst not clearly articulated, as such, sit firmly within the humanist perspective. My understanding of this body of literature represents "if you will", the "Bath School", and characterises the psychoanalytical theories of change, conflict, emotions, labour, leadership, learned social codes, motivation, narratives and stories, organisational behaviour, organisational culture, social control, symbolism, and poetic modes.

In the sections that follow, I reflect on these theoretical perspectives and share the contribution that I have made to Radical humanist knowledge.

Conclusions and observations – my contribution to knowledge

Introduction

My own experience of change in organisational life, my perspectives and personal considerations, my review of the literature, my philosophical and methodological considerations have had a key part to play in helping to shape and inform my overall approach to my exploration and the research methods I adopted.

The essence of the debate, how this relates to the ideas and theories of others, and my contribution to knowledge, I now bring together in the following conclusions and observations. These have been drawn directly from my exploration and interpretation of the research material, and my reflections on the theories of others, and they inform the discourse by providing insight into the emotional experiences of individuals during periods of strategic and organisational change in the financial services sector.

I find that management conditioning arising from the emotionally devoid reality of the workplace environment and manipulation of individuals through organisational expectations, job roles and responsibilities, and mechanistically driven change programmes is stark, although I find it has only been *partially* successful in shaping how change is expressed. Individuals have, it appears, in accord with general change management theory, at least at a superficial level, become collaborators in using a common language to discuss change that is beset with rational and dispassionate expressions about the inevitability of change and the opportunities it provides. During my study, cloned language and behaviours are repeatedly articulated and performed, and in doing so, bring to life and emphasise the engineered support for change that has been anchored and partially internalised within organisational life. I find that this is the legacy of traditional organisational change management ideas, psychology and theories, which, over many years, have sought to influence and shape organisational behaviour, management practice and social identity without regard for the emotional complexity and richness of individuals and their organisational lives.

This conditioning and individual conformity is, at best I suggest, only superficial. There are, however, difficulties I find in going beyond this insight to gain a deeper

understanding of the extent to which there can be a genuine alignment of personal goals with organisational expectations, which has been one of my objectives, without an appreciation, and understanding of the influence previous change experiences may have had for individuals. Without this understanding, I find we are only scratching the surface. Whilst change programmes and organisational change management theories scratch the emotional mask of individuals, they do not seek, I find, to care for the underlying emotional layers that may have been exposed. Left untended, I find that the emotional state of an individual is at risk, their nature of being is in effect under attack, and conscious and unconscious defence mechanisms trigger the call to action.

Fineman (2005), and Gabriel (2000), in particular, are strong advocates of this psychoanalytic theory of emotions and the theory has also been well supported by others, for example, George (2000), George and Jones (2001), Goleman (1998), Kiefer (2002), Sosik and Megerian (1999), and Stuart (1995), all of whom emphasise the importance of recognising feelings and emotions in the workplace environment but none of whom have specifically focused on developing this insight in a traditionally positivist workplace as I have.

Research of this nature, from a Radical humanist perspective in a traditional hard, measurable results driven, business context, is rare and it is here that my research informs the debate and makes a key contribution to knowledge through my insight that belies the emotionally arid legacy of process driven change solutions and the emotionally devoid, taken for granted assumptions of members and senior managers in the financial services sector.

I also introduce a new concept that emerges from my research that I have given the title, the *organisational collective.*

The organisational collective

Running throughout my research is a controlling influence that is faceless. It generates a momentum of its own and a common purpose, and a nervousness and fear that drives individuals' behaviours, unsettles their mindsets, and manipulates their conscious

thoughts, their feeling and emotions, and the decisions they make. This concept runs throughout my research and I have given it the title of the *organisational collective*. There is an opportunity to develop this notion further as I have found no other reference to the term in the writings and theories of others. Gustavsson and Harung (1994), have introduced a theory of organisational learning based upon transforming the collective consciousness, but for them, the collective consciousness is a state where *all* members of an organisation come together; with *all* their individual consciousnesses contributing to the collective conscience. It is the net result, they suggest, of the personal development of *all* individuals in the organisation. Whilst I find I have some interest and affinity with the sense of their perspective, it seems to have the hallmarks of culture with another name. My notion of the *organisational collective* has a more divisive essence at this juncture. It is, I suggest, "control with a modern image", reflecting an environment of unseen psychological control in which, changes are engineered for the sole benefit of the organisation with often no intrinsic recognition of individuals' feelings or emotions or support for these within the change programmes that are being instigated or managed, which is in accord with the psychoanalytic theories of social control of Gabriel (2000), and Martin (1990).

At this juncture, I boldly suggest that the *organisational collective* does not care about individuals beyond the limits of what is organisationally expected of them. Although there is still much to do to develop this concept further, it is worthy, I modestly suggest of further attention.

At a superficial level, I find that organisational life collectively reflects a pseudo world, beneath which, a microcosm of real life motivations exist *if we look*. How confident an individual is in providing an insight into their "real world", however, is I find determined by how confident they are in their role, how much they trust others, the organisation, and the *organisational collective*, and the perceived safety of the context within which they expose their vulnerability. Where these aspects are positively aligned, individuals share opinions and thoughts about change that are not all mechanistic, positive or certain.

Here my findings take us beyond the realms of mainstream text book cognitive behavioural learning and theories and adds weight to the growing voice of humanist

theories of organisational behaviour and change that seek to usurp the emotionally sanitised picture of organisational life. I find that if we take the opportunity to listen to, and seek to understand these personal lived examples of change, we have an opportunity to genuinely extend our interest, understanding and consideration beyond the pseudo surface world of organisational life.

In the sections that follow, I discuss the essence of my research and how this relates to the theoretical perspectives of others.

Linking my research to the theoretical perspectives of others

Organisational change, I find, does not pamper to nostalgia or wishful thinking as influences drive forward change events on a theoretical emotion free basis. I find, however, that there is ambiguity about the "right way" to manage change and a question about how justified the majority of change really is. It seems we have learnt little from the proliferation of text book process driven change theories and solutions on offer. The picture remains arbitrary and uncertain, and I find that we do not really know what needs to happen until we have embarked on a change journey and tested it out, and that we may still not really know even then. Here, my findings inform the debate that seeks to influence the transformation of managerial objectivism, change practise and behaviours so that emotions are recognised, welcomed, respected, supported and embraced, and are in accord with the "Bath School", and Wright's (1998), theoretical perspectives of organisational behaviour and downsizing during periods of change.

Individuals are, I suggest, much clearer about how *not* to instigate change, rather than how to instigate change, and I find that we fail to strive to translate this learning into practice for new change, which means we can be seen as collaborators implicitly accepting and authorising the continuation of the destructive emotional consequences witnessed across many clinically deployed change programmes. In doing so, I suggest that we can be seen to be giving life to, and to be reinforcing theoretical, emotion free managerial objectivism and traditional change practice behaviours. Here I find that there is an opportunity to unsettle managerial objectivism, by reflecting upon the traditional starting point for managing change and to consider how individuals' stories of how *not*

208

to manage change may be used to inform how we could manage new change events in the future.

In accord with traditional organisational change management theories, I find that new change can be, at the same time, an opportunity and a threat for individuals. In developing this further, however, from a theoretical humanist perspective, I find that individuals transfer their baton of expression between these two states depending on their previous experiences of change, their position in delivering or being on the receiving end of change, and their early and through life forming experiences of change. The message, is now, I find, get change wrong, and the loyalty of individuals' changes, which is in accord with Gabriel's (2000), psychoanalytic theory of nostalgia. Individuals are unique, and change will always be personal, so, a simpler message I suggest, is to involve people directly and put individuals at the centre of change considerations.

There is an opportunity to do this, I suggest, through openness, visibility, and a clear understanding, and agreement of the psychological contract of work between the organisation, the *organisational collective* and each individual, which, I find, is rare. Without this, such contracts I suggest remain in the realms of academic theory and discourse, with the unspoken expectations that go beyond the signed formal contracts of work left to guesswork, assumptions, and interpretation for those who seek to understand this; most, I find, do not. The resulting emotional minefield can be, I suggest, a hidden and silent enemy of change for the organisation and the *organisational collective* and a test of emotional survival for individuals if destructive emotions housed within it are triggered.

I find that feelings and emotions influence an individual's self motivation, from which their relationships can be defined in environments where control can permeate all aspects of change. This is well supported by the "Bath School", however, my contribution to knowledge builds upon these psychoanalytic theories and further informs the humanist debate through my insight that reveals an emotional richness and energy that challenges the taken for granted assumptions of senior managers in the financial services sector of an emotionally free, mechanistic work environment, and contradicts the emotion free theory and legacy of process driven change solutions.

All change, I suggest, has an individual and personal impact, and individuals' assessment of change situations, and the context in which they make their conscious and unconscious symbolic associations, contributes to the intensity of their physical and emotional experiences. The impact, I find, agrees with theoretical perspectives, (Gabriel, 2000; Jones, 1938), that suggest change processes can be overwhelming, especially where individuals survive change, empathise with change happening to others, or where their personal change fears are realised. I also find that where change events upset personal ambitions or destroy aspects of organisational life that individuals have built up, emotionally invested in, or embodied as symbols of their success, the emotional impact can be devastating.

Individuals' feelings and emotions, I find, are inextricably and often unconsciously intertwined with their workplace expectations, at the heart of which, I suggest, lies trust, respect and assumptions of fair, open and honest treatment. Building on the theoretical perspectives (Hochschild, 1983/2003) of labour and emotions, I find that where individuals' experience of organisational practice belies their expectations and excites negative emotions, they still cling to their expectations, and a *faith* they have in the organisation and the *organisational collective* that their expectations will eventually be realised, even though these may never have been realised in the past. In reaffirming their expectations, individuals' self justification and rationalisation I find plays a key role. Repeated disappointments, however, have two outcomes; individuals either leave the organisation or resign themselves to the dominant *organisational collective*. For those who stay, I find that their motivations become more focused on the achievement of narcissistic goals. Here, there is *no change* in individuals' relationships with the organisation or the *organisational collective* in terms of personal expectations; individuals' expectations I suggest have been rarely aligned with organisational expectations. Individuals' loyalty, I find, is to their own personal expectations, and these have been, I suggest, the key motivators for individuals for many years.

Individuals' personal response to change, their feelings and emotions, and their behaviours, I find, are shaped by their identity, which is defined in part by their pride, and their self image. Pride is an intensely personal part of an individual's nature of being; individuals are emotionally engaged in doing the best job they can, and I suggest, there is a close relationship between how an individual feels about themselves, their self

210

respect and their self confidence and how they feel about their work, and the extent to which they perceive their work has been recognised, which agrees with the theoretical perspectives (Gabriel, 2000; Kaplan, 1987), of organisational nostalgia, identity, and the nostalgia paradox, as individuals share their most unrepeatable experiences to emphasise how proud they are of their achievements.

Self image, I find, is also an intensely personal part of an individual's nature of being, which, I suggest, they define in part by their experience, their level of seniority in the organisation, their jobs, and the parts they adopt and play. As heroes, courageous leaders, saviours, double agents, and visible or invisible people advocates, individuals, I find, want to be seen to be making a valued contribution, which is in accord with Gabriel's psychoanalytic theory of organisational culture, stories and poetic modes, and also with Schwartz's (1987), existential psychoanalytic perspective of emotions, organisational nostalgia and identity, and his notion of the "ontological function" (pp. 329). Notwithstanding this, however, I also find that it is important to individuals that the opinions of others reflect their image and give credence to it, both inside and outside of the workplace environment.

Whilst I find that individuals will compromise their self image to conform to organisational expectations, I also find that there are limits to the extent to which they will do this. Individuals often, I find, act in ways that are not in complete alignment with organisational expectations during periods of change that they perceive to be aggressive or where they perceive that real effort will be required from individuals on the receiving end of change to survive. They will share their personal views with individuals they like and trust, even if these are not supportive of the organisation's position. Their interpretations, nuances and slant given to change situations have the power to significantly change the essence and intent of corporate change communications. Seen as essential constructs of the circumstances, the ease by which individuals adopt these complicit roles depends on how successful they are in aligning their personal beliefs with the change agenda. Any imbalance can compromise their self image as, for a time they become emotion constrained instruments of change delivery.

I find that an individual's identity, pride, self image and status are immensely vulnerable and fragile, especially when seen through the eyes of others. The actions,

211

opinions, or perceived opinions of others, I suggest, can give life and credence to an individual's self image, or they can destroy it, with individuals left to struggle in these circumstances with the damage to their pride and self image, their feelings, emotions, and fears about their future. Here, my findings agree with the theoretical perspectives (Lasch, 1984; Gabriel, 2000; Schwarz, 1993) of emotions, organisational nostalgia and identity that suggest that self image or identity of individuals is shaped, not from what they achieve, their successes or their organisational conformity, but from the injustices, appreciation and victim empathy, that they experience, especially the struggle individuals have with their self image, beliefs, feelings, emotions and fears about their future during periods of organisational change.

Individuals' personal experiences of change, I find, differ considerably, and as time moves on, there is little to suggest that individuals' experiences translate into genuine self awareness, and awareness and respect for others' feelings in different change circumstances. Even though individuals consider themselves in touch with their feelings and emotions and alive to the learning from their previous experiences, I find that their decisions and actions during new change situations belies this. I suggest that individuals either choose not to, or feel unable to translate their emotions, feelings and learning from previous experiences into actions, or to consciously consider these together with present day feelings to inform decisions and actions in any meaningful way. The relationship between feelings and thinking is central to the theoretical perspectives of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996; Goleman, Boyatzis and Mckee, 2002; Mayer and Salovey, 1995; 1997), which suggest that an emotionally intelligent individual is more in touch with their feelings and emotions, better able to recognise and then use their feelings and emotions to make decisions, and to take actions that bring about a positive result. The extent to which this happens, however, I suggest is unclear. I find it is the personal implications, emotions and feelings born out of the immediacy of new change circumstances, and an individual's personal motivations that shapes their decisions and not necessarily feelings born out of previous life experiences or their empathy for others. Whilst I find that an individual's personal historical reference plays a part in shaping their feelings in these circumstances, I find that this is often time boxed and, as such, only serves to exacerbates their frustration, powerlessness, and fear, or reinforces their egotistic sentiments. I find that there is little to indicate or to suggest that individuals' historic and present day feelings are being consciously considered

together to inform decisions and actions in any meaningful way, which agrees with the "Bath School" perspectives that question the extent to which, emotional intelligence can be developed, with one school of thought suggesting that emotional intelligence is formed from early life experiences and, as such, is resistant to change or further development.

I find that unvoiced aspects of change, be they consciously hidden or not stated as a result of incompetence or insensitive planning, sow the seeds of suspicion and uncertainty, and give rise to speculation and to destructive feelings and emotions, which can, I suggest, become dominant during the change event. These feelings and emotions, I find, may or may not be identified or revealed after the change event has taken place, when the process of deconstruction seeks to define individuals' experiences and emotions and give a name and life to them. My findings here are in accord with the theoretical perspectives of organisational stories, symbolism and culture (Gabriel, 2000), that suggests individuals make sense of feelings and emotions and experiences by interpreting events through conscious and unconscious associations, wishful rationalisations and self deceptions.

Individuals' behaviour, I find, is often different in practice to the approach many procedural change management focused theories advise. It is, I suggest, an individual's nature of being, the eclectic nature of their feelings and emotions, their self management, awareness and reflection of these, that lies at the heart of this paradox. I find that there are two distinct aspects to how individuals deal with change situations; an emotional aspect, which individuals are unable to control, but can recognise, and attempt to manage, and a pragmatic aspect, which I suggest, individuals only become fully cognisant of on reflection of the part they played, and how they played it, after change events have taken place.

Individuals sometimes have to deal with difficult emotions during periods of organisational change, and I find they carefully manage their outward face of emotion with colleagues and in the presence of authority as they attempt to mask the emotions they perceive leave them most vulnerable; they seek to protect themselves and their self image, and to reassure others that they remain confident and relaxed about the changes being planned. This, I find, is in accord with; the sociological perspective of Erving

213

Goffman (1959/1990), and his analysis of the structure of social encounters from the perspective of the dramatic performance. I find that the emotion free face of professionalism predominates in the workplace, and whilst there are clues in individuals' demeanour, and in how they express themselves that can offer others an insight into their true feelings, most emotions are, I suggest, still denied existence, consciously and unconsciously, and by the absence of intrinsic recognition within the change process. Even after change events have taken place, I find that individuals continue to suppress their feelings and emotions as they seek to protect themselves, to retain their integrity and to reaffirm their sense of self. Here, my contribution to knowledge adds weight to the debate that seeks to influence the celebration of emotions and emotional openness in the workplace. Where individuals choose to be self sufficient in managing their emotions, especially those aspects of change they find to be most difficult, such as, overcoming feelings of distress, uncertainty and fear, I find personal sacrifices are made, which can, I suggest, impact an individual's work life balance, their home lives, and can have a significant long term impact on their personal relationships, their health, and their well being.

For informal and unofficial emotional support, I find individuals' rely upon trusted sources, although female managers, I suggest, are more likely to take a risk and openly express their emotions on a formal basis. Open demonstration of emotion, such as, tears arising from work matters, however is, I find, seen as a weakness and an inability to remain in control, and is, I suggest, not welcome in the workplace environment despite articulated organisational values to the contrary. In accord with the "Bath School", and the humanist leadership and gender perspectives of Sachs and Blackmore (1998), I find that even a single demonstration of tearful emotion can be career limiting.

Individuality, I find, is not readily embraced in the workplace, and I find that individuals make personal sacrifices and work harder and longer hours to present an image that conforms to perceived organisational expectations, even where the work environment is not perceived to be motivational or supportive. Ambition, recognition and reward, I suggest, are powerful motivators in these circumstances, and are often, I find, partnered with conformity, constructive challenge, effective communication, courage, the right pedigree, and high standards of deportment and self presentation if an individual is to succeed. Those individuals that do succeed, I find are conscientious,

214

egotistic, passionate, and single minded in their quest. They care about their careers and take immense pride in doing a good job. If these ambitions are threatened, I find that an individual's self motivation can be destroyed, and can be replaced by feelings of disillusion, dissatisfaction, fear, and uncertainty; anxiety levels often increase along with their feelings of frustration, desperation and exasperation, especially in situations, which are outside of their control. Here, my findings again inform the debate that seeks to usurp the emotionally sanitised picture of organisational life, although in building on this from a theoretical humanist perspective, I find that perceived unfair or unequal treatment adds to individuals' frustrations, which, I suggest, significantly influences their feelings and emotions, and impacts their general well being, their health, and their relationships beyond the workplace.

Recognition, I suggest, is important for individuals and unfulfilled expectations here, I find, lead to perceptions that all is not well, and a dismantling of an individual's self confidence begins. For a time, I find that this increases individuals' motivations as they seek to protect their self image, and their ambitions, to understand themselves, and to manage feelings of embarrassment, fear of failure and insecurity, not coping or being seen to be not coping or not doing a good job, which is in accord with the theoretical perspectives of social control, in particular Fineman's (2005) notion of the "motivational paradox" (pp. 189). The motivating paradox arising from individual's fear and insecurity, however is, I find, not sufficient to support individuals' self confidence on a sustained longer term basis. Whilst I find that some individuals struggle on a lonely journey, relying only on themselves and their depleting emotional resources, others, as I discuss earlier, seek to boost their emotional energy with an injection of confidence from a trusted source.

Many individuals, I find, motivate themselves by compartmentalising their own feelings and emotions and by concentrating their attention and energy on cushioning the change impact for others, which is in accord with the humanist theories of emotions of Dutton et al. (2002), Frost (1999), Frost et al. (2000), Gabriel (2000), Huy (2002), Kahn (1998), and Miller and Stiver (1997). These interactions, I suggest, are driven from individuals' sense of responsibility, empathy and feelings for others, and recognition of the need others may have to interact with someone to retain a sense of safety and continuity, and not because of any predefined plan of activity supporting the changes.

215

I find there are interdependencies, which are different for everyone, between an individual's nature of being, their feelings and emotions, their view of the social context, the decisions they make, how they choose to communicate, and their resulting relationships. Individuals care about what others think of them, and relationships, I find, are forged so there is either mutual liking and respect, or where sentimentality and empathy has been sacrificed to maintain the power balance in their favour, or following a retreat to a neutral middle ground to maintain humility and to protect their sense of self worth in the face of adversity.

I find that power relationships arising out of the authority gradient defines many workplace relationships. Given a choice, I find that all individuals prefer to be in control and choose who they work with, and where an individual has this power, or this opportunity, regardless of where they sit on the authority gradient, I suggest, decisions are taken that consciously engineer this. For those without this opportunity, or this power, or the inclination to use it, change decisions, I suggest, are made recognising individuals' competence, although the resulting relationships can have inherent communication difficulties. Here, I find, that relationships are defined by many individuals by the missing pieces; trust, honesty, status, opportunity. This can often translate into less than positive learning and working relationships, which can become divisive as individuals, I suggest, seek to justify their own feelings about some individuals by aligning their own feelings to the views articulated by others, thereby ensuring the consensus view constructs and justifies the reality.

Change events can, I find, reinforce, distort, threaten or destroy relationships with the nature of communication, at these times, being a strong emotional catalyst. Relationships, I find, are redefined in these situations as individuals, I suggest, seek to assuage their own fears and uncertainties; some relationships, I find, are strengthened as individuals find mutual support, sponsorship and reassurance, whilst other relationships sharpen their sense of bitterness, distrust, isolation and uncertainty. I find that there is little organisational consideration given to emotions and the relationships of individuals that may be affected by change plans, with individuals tasked with managing the changes being, I suggest, left to their own cognisance in these matters.

I find that the changing nature of relationships triggers powerful feelings and emotions, with *unexpected* changes in the nature of *established* relationships, being, I find, a barometer for individuals seeking to access their organisation's change agenda. Building upon Schwartz's (1987), and Waldron's (2000), theoretical perspectives of emotions and workplace relationships, and upon Gabriel's (2000), psychoanalytic theory of organisational nostalgia, in particular Gabriel's perspective on nostalgia, injured narcissism, and the organisational malignant, I find that relationships embody individuals' emotions and feelings. During change events, I suggest that it is these inherent emotional ties to others and self actualising emotions that are powerful motivators for individuals, and not loyalty to the organisation or its goals. The organisation, I find, is a consumer of these emotional threads, and albeit unrecognised as such, is a loser or an unintended beneficiary.

I find that just as people relationships are often tested and redefined during periods of change, an individual's relationship with the organisation or their psychological contract of work is often tested and redefined in the same way. In accord with the theorectical perspectives of social control, (Ashford and Humprey, 1995; Fineman, 2005; Gabriel, 2000; Greenspan, 1997; Selznick, 1943), I find that a dominant control environment drives change plans and the change discourse. Building on this, I find that control is also embedded in individual relationships and in the way that individuals attempt to influence and work with each other. I find that feelings of admiration, empathy, and trust, anger, confusion, dissatisfaction, frustration, and distrust have emerged, which have, I suggest, been either the catalysts that influence the change outcome for them or have been the legacy of their relationships.

Collaborative environments, I suggest, are make believe, and whilst I find, that these environments have not been purposely created through a conscious organisational approach, I find that their legacy has embedded the view that the organisation does not care about people beyond the limits of what is organisationally expected of them. Individuals, I find, are the victims of successful manipulation as they spread themselves very thinly, doing more and more work to support increasing amounts of change. Their conscientiousness, I suggest, is abused and they are powerless to stop the ballooning requirement for them to keep doing more. Here, I find that the controlling influence is what I have termed the *organisational collective*. It is, as I discuss earlier, faceless, yet,

it generates a momentum of its own and a common purpose, and a nervousness and fear that drives individuals' behaviours, unsettles their mindsets, and manipulates their conscious thoughts, their feeling and emotions, and the decisions they make.

In the section that follows, I now review the unique contribution I have made to knowledge.

My contribution to knowledge reviewed

In the section above, I have endeavoured to bring to life my conclusions and observations, how these relate to the ideas and theories of others, and my contribution to knowledge emerging from these.

In bringing these together, my research contributes to knowledge in three key areas; a Radical humanist perspective; a traditionally positivist financial service sector research environment; and the concept of the *organisational collective*. In the section that follows, I review my contribution in these three areas;

- A Radical humanist perspective.

 – I have explored the emotional experiences of individuals during periods of strategic and organisational change from a Radical humanist perspective.

 – I have made a contribution to this field through the unique way I have combined the subject matter, the context, and the approach I have taken to collect and interpret the qualitative research material, drawing upon a humanistic theoretical perspective.

 – My research contributes to Radical humanistic knowledge in the following areas;

   ° The emotional complexity of organisational life during periods of change within the traditionally positivist financial services sector.
   ° The work derived feelings and emotions individuals struggle with on a daily basis.
   ° The feelings and emotions that influence and shape, and can in turn be influenced and shaped, by change events.
   ° The stark management conditioning arising from the emotionally devoid reality and manipulation of organisational expectations, and mechanistically driven change programmes.
   ° It provides an emotional insight that belies the emotionally arid legacy of process driven change solutions and usurps the emotionally sanitised picture of organisational life.

219

- It informs the debate that seeks to legitimise emotions within the workplace.
- It informs the debate that seeks to influence the transformation of managerial objectivism, change practice, and behaviour, so that emotions are recognised, welcomed, respected, supported and embraced.

- A Radical humanist perspective drawn from a traditionally positivist financial service sector research environment.

- The research environment is in the financial services sector that prides itself on its positivist attitude, and is one in which there has been and continues to be constant strategic and organisational change driven by traditionally hard, measurable results focused, business management.

- Research from a Radical humanist perspective in a traditional positivist workplace environment is rare.

- The concept of the *organisational collective.*

- This is a concept that I modestly introduce and which runs throughout my research.

- I have not sought to specifically develop this concept in this thesis, but consider that it is worthy of further research. At this juncture, it has a divisive essence. I have suggested it is "control with a modern image", reflecting an environment of unseen psychological control in which, changes are engineered for the sole benefit of the organisation with often no intrinsic recognition of individuals' feelings or emotions or support for these within the change programmes that are being instigated or managed. I have boldly suggested that the *organisational collective* does not care about individuals beyond the limits of what is organisationally expected of them.

Considerations for management praxis

In the sections that follow, I discuss my contribution to management praxis.

Introduction

I find that strategic and organisational change events in a financial services sector organisation have left an emotionally arid process focused legacy, which continues, I suggest, to be endorsed during new change events as those in charge of realising change seem beholden to a mission that seeks to recreate these emotional deserts. Their endeavours, however, I suggest, are always compromised as the imbalance between individuals' expectations and those of the organisation gives rise to a dichotomy of positive and negative feelings and emotions that survive beneath the surface view, with the potential to become the silent enemy of change.

If this situation was different and emotions, feelings and peoples' individuality were better understood, nurtured, and respected more in the work place as the norm and not the exception, I suggest, the practice of delivering change in organisations may also be different. I find that there is an opportunity to welcome, respect, support and embrace individuals' emotions in the workplace; a better understanding of individuals' feelings and emotions could be the basis on which change is introduced and delivered more effectively.

Here, there is an opportunity to involve individuals who are affected by change; an opportunity to help them to understand why change is happening and, an opportunity to allow them a voice with which to help shape change events. This could, I suggest, make change events easier for everyone and more effective.

The purpose of my research has been to develop professional understanding and to make a contribution to knowledge, understanding and management praxis in this area through the unique combination of the subject matter, the context and the approach I have taken to collect, explore and interpret the research information.

My contribution to management praxis is brought together in the following sections, and is drawn directly from my exploration and interpretation of the qualitative research material, my personal reflections, and, as a senior manager, the implications for my own professional praxis.

Implications and considerations - my contribution to management praxis

In the three sections that follow, I discuss my contribution to management praxis, which I draw from my exploration and interpretation of the research material, my personal reflections on this, and from the implications for my own professional praxis, which provides a personal insight into the implications and considerations for management praxis as a whole.

I find that there is an opportunity to genuinely align individuals' personal goals and organisations' expectations, and to appreciate, and better understand the influence previous change events have had on individuals.

Here, I suggest there are a number of opportunities and challenges for individuals, the organisation and the *organisational collective;* there is an opportunity to explore ways of seeking to better recognise and understand individuals' individuality; and there is an opportunity to consider how this knowledge can be used as an intrinsic part of the development, and deployment of new change events regardless of their size or impact; there is a challenge in deciding how to best achieve this; and there is a challenge in dealing with the suspicion of individuals born out of the legacy of their experience of previous change events, that will, I suggest, inevitably arise. The implications here for senior managers are not insignificant. This is a different way of considering change, but for those pioneers and visionaries whose interest this excites, the opportunities are there to shape a change environment that seeks to develop the mindset of the organisation and the *organisational collective* in a different way.

Whilst I find that at an individual level individuals genuinely care about the emotional wellbeing of others, I find that the organisation and the *organisational collective* are more likely to be impostors in this space. Here, the opportunity, and the challenge for

individuals, is not to unmask the organisation or the *organisational collective* as impostors, but to create an opportunity for the organisation and the *organisational collective* to move into a space where there is no need for masks, and where there is the opportunity to consider the energy of positive emotions and the benefit this could bring to both individuals and the change process.

I find that there is an opportunity for individuals to review the pseudo surface world of organisational life and an opportunity to explore beyond this to develop understanding of individuals' "real life motivations". The learning from this, I suggest, may reveal new opportunities from which, I suggest, the necessity for individuals to expend energy on building emotional defence mechanisms can be reconsidered, creating opportunities for this energy to be more positively deployed.

I find there are opportunities for those who seek to build workplace environments where there is genuine trust, and emotional safety, and recognition that there will always be vulnerabilities, with respect shown for these. Here, there are opportunities to listen to individuals' personal lived experiences of change at a mechanistic level, and to explore ways of engaging individuals so the emotional insight that exists beyond the mechanistic level can be better recognised and understood; there are opportunities to learn how to translate this into organisational practice; and there are opportunities to exercise the minds of individuals to genuinely understand the existing gaps in the psychological contract of work, and to engage individuals in partnership to find ways of harnessing the latent potential that, I suggest, inevitably exists.

This, however, requires a different skill and mind set to that which invariably forms part of management development programmes in the workplace. Individuals are different and an approach to developing individuals that helps individuals take forward the opportunities and the challenges I have identified, often requires an investment in development programmes that can be personally tailored at some point to meet individuals' needs. Individuals wishing to take this forward will inevitably, I suggest, face challenge from others, who may question the practical benefits, may perceive that this takes development of individuals beyond what is "good enough", and who may also consider the investment financially difficult to justify.

A *brave* step, I consider, but one that has potential, I suggest, to transform the workplace for many organisations, is for senior managers to take the opportunity to involve people directly and completely in change events. Here, I suggest there are a number of opportunities and challenges for senior managers; there is an opportunity to put individuals at the centre of change considerations; there is a challenge in deciding how best to do this so that individuals feel genuinely motivated and engaged; and there is a challenge in dealing with individuals' suspicion that this is a superficial exercise born out of the legacy of their experience of previous change events; there is an opportunity to develop a better understanding of the psychological contract of work and the expectations of individuals and the organisation; there is a challenge in deciding how best to do this; and there is a challenge in dealing with individuals' suspicions and concerns about loss of power and the impact on their status in the organisation, that will, I suggest, inevitably arise. Here, the implications for senior managers are significant.

There is an opportunity for individuals to transform what is currently only assumption, guesswork, and interpretation, into a force that reveals the emotional oasis; there is a challenge for senior managers in deciding how to best achieve this. There is, I find, latent potential that resides within individuals' feelings and emotions, their drive and self motivation, and their relationships. There is an opportunity to harness the power of this collective energy and voice of individuals; the challenge is how best to recognise, and embrace this collective energy, and take it forward.

There will always be individuals, I suggest, whose personal ambitions grow beyond those of the organisation they work for. Change events will always, I suggest, have an impact here, although there are opportunities for individuals and the organisation to find ways of translating the emotional impact from what is often felt as frustration and loss to that of a celebration of what has gone before with positive anticipation of the changes still to come, so the energy derived from this can be applied constructively to the journey ahead.

Individuals, I find, have workplace expectations of fair, open and honest treatment, and there is an opportunity to honour these expectations consistently, and to transform "make believe" collaborative environments into reality, to challenge the nature of communication, and to give controlling influences a face and voice. Here, the challenge

for senior managers is to decide how to identify the gaps and the best way to take these forward. There is an opportunity to draw upon the same passion and energy that, I suggest, they usually only reserve for business recovery activity. In doing this, the opportunity can be taken to engineer change for the benefit of the organisation in a way that ensures individuals also benefit from being part of the same change journey. In this way, the lone battles that, I find, many individuals struggle with to repair the emotional damage to their pride, self image, feelings and emotions, and uncertainty about their future can become a feature of past change events as the inherent motivation is redeployed in more conducive ways.

There remains an opportunity to explicitly acknowledge the existence of emotions, to respect the open demonstration of emotions, to legitimise difference and individuality, and to encourage individuals to translate the learning from their previous change experiences to new change situations to inform decisions and actions in a meaningful way. By proactively encouraging and developing individuals in this way, there is an opportunity, I suggest, to stop the imperceptive emotional abuse of individuals' goodwill and conscientiousness, to help individuals avoid sacrifices that have a detrimental impact on their work life balance, and to equip individuals with the courage to act upon the emotional clues that provide an insight into the true feelings and emotions of others.

Contribution to management praxis – my personal reflections

In the section that follows, I share my personal reflections on my contribution to management praxis.

I find that there are many emotional masks we wear; we attempt to condition emotions in the workplace; we try to be in control of our feelings and emotions during organisational change. I have asked the questions; what if we didn't do this? What if we did not try and control our emotions and those of others? What would be the situation if we paid due regard to our feelings and emotions? What would be the situation if we respected emotions and then considered the value they may add?

I have taken the opportunity in this study to consider these questions and how instrumental our free emotions can be in organisational change situations, and if they can make a positive difference on a sustained basis. Whilst, these insights have been rarely sought in practice, I believe the quality of organisational life for individuals, centres on these considerations. Some individuals have taken small steps down this road, and have tested the emotional receptiveness of other individuals, the organisation, and the *organisational collective*, and have found this to be lacking. These are the pioneers, and there will need to be more individuals prepared to follow in their footsteps if the path is to become more permanent. To genuinely want to repeat the experience, or encourage others to follow, we have to individually and collectively believe our actions can make a difference, and that there will be tangible benefits. The voice of individuals, whilst still small provides confidence that this is possible, although, the risk of commoditising emotions cannot be underestimated if an emotional focus finds favour, nor can the risk that the perception of increased complexity, time, and costs in managing change in this way, will prevent a permanent change in mindset, and perpetuate ongoing emotional neglect.

Whilst I have shown that feelings and emotions are an important basis on which change can be introduced and managed, this is only the start of the journey. The emotional censor is still to be lifted, and whilst I have been given a privileged insight, into the opportunities that exist, there is much more to do if the emotional lens is to find a permanent place in the organisational change management discourse. There are no certainties or easy answers.

Contribution to management praxis – my personal reflections; considerations for my own professional praxis and management praxis as a whole

Finally, in drawing my journey to an end, I reflect upon the implications for my own professional praxis, which also provides a personal insight into the implications and considerations for management praxis as a whole.

In chapter 1, I provide an insight into what is important to me, my work ethics, my motivations, and my values and beliefs. These have not changed. I continue to enjoy my work, but it is why and how I go about what I do and my family that remain the most important things to me. I work to fulfil my own individual motivation; my pride in a job done well and the standards that I grew up with, both in how I engage with others and in how I expect to be treated myself. Treating all individuals fairly and honestly, with open and honest communication, with respect for individuals' differences, innovation and creativity, and with full recognition for a job well done; these remain important considerations for me.

My research journey has given me a privileged insight into individuals' emotions that are not often articulated and recognised in business, and whilst this has enabled me to develop my study in a way which would not have been possible had individuals not felt able to share their feelings and experiences with me, it has also given me a unique opportunity to reflect upon what this means for me personally.

During the course of this study, changes have continued to take place as usual in my working environment, and I have continued to be on both the receiving end of change and involved in designing and managing the implementation of change initiatives. The memory of the emotions and the insights shared with me during my study, however, remain with me and I remain passionate about how change is managed and the consideration afforded to individuals affected by change. These, alongside my own experiences continue to provide the confidence and the motivation to seek a different way of dealing with change. I have developed a greater degree of belief and confidence in my own workplace expectations, and I am more open in sharing these with others.

The role I adopted during my study was one of trying to create an environment for open discourse and exploration. The success in achieving this has given me added confidence that there are significant opportunities to gain a greater understanding of individuals' previous experiences of change and their workplace expectations as part of business as usual activities, and to use this knowledge to help shape future change events. Outside the protection of anonymity, however, individuals are restrained in the information they will share. Their concerns of hidden agendas or fear of being seen to be failing or not coping in some way remain key considerations for them. The size of this challenge

cannot be underestimated. Without the energy of the *organisational collective*, or support of individuals uppermost on the authority gradient, small steps are all I have found attainable, although even these remain vulnerable. The implications for management praxis that I have discussed earlier are significant.

It is no small undertaking to influence the mindset of individuals, the organisation, and the *organisational collective*. I equate this to a paradigm shift reliant on individuals changing long held beliefs and behaviours conditioned by years of process driven management practice. It goes beyond this though, as individuals will have to place trust in those that they have not necessarily trusted at an emotional level in the past. This, from the insight individuals have shared with me, is where there are some of the biggest challenges.

I continue to be a voice championing the alternatives and the opportunities that I have discussed earlier. Mine is not a lone voice here, it joins others to make the collective whisper just that little bit louder. These voices have still, however, to resonate at a level that can emotionally charge and engage the *organisational collective*. At an individual level, I find there are willing advocates. The insight individuals have been prepared to share with me during my study support this and have provided the encouragement for me to seek out these willing advocates and ambassadors of change. For now, the *organisational collective* remains dominant, in what is still a relatively hierarchical, top down controlled organisation. The majority of change continues to be process driven and orchestrated at speed to minimise the risk of individuals' early resistance. The legacy of "speedy, tell them nothing, just get on with it," change approach, however, continues to be brought vividly to life as trust, as far as it can be, has to be rebuilt over many months. The setbacks and frustrations to my own ambitions here are a personal legacy of these events and emphasise the ambiguity that my pre-understanding, evolved through this study, and my epistemological position creates for me as a manager in this environment.

Whilst some of my suggestions, drawn from my learning during this study have been welcomed, others have faced significant resistance, with some being labelled "naïve" or "academic". Although during collaborative discussions, some initiatives have been empathetically received, the voice of resistance is always able to find a sympathetic ear.

I have keenly felt the "bruises" where I have gone (metaphorically speaking) "into battle" to advocate a different way. I perceive the legacy on these occasions to be that my own leadership credibility is in question. This is the challenge that lies ahead for me, but equally for like minded individuals. The tension will inevitably remain, and will undoubtedly be stretched again, as new "battles" are engaged. For me, establishing different ways of balancing the ambition and maintaining self confidence is an imperative. There are only opportunities here. There are no easy answers.

I have suggested that a different skill and mind set to that which invariably forms part of management development programmes in the workplace should be encouraged. Here, I have been encouraged, by the "in principle" support I have received for a number of initiatives; the flickering light of hope has become stronger, as an initiative I have championed to help individuals reflect on change, and how they might do things differently, using action learning sets, (a new concept in the organisation), has found favour with a small group of senior management colleagues. It is early days, but the seeds are being sown.

For many, the underlying fear that there is a hidden agenda "out there", remains a legacy of past change initiatives, and has been brought vividly to life by one of my initiatives to personally tailor development opportunities for individuals. In creating an opportunity for a number of senior team members to work with a coach or mentor as part of a focus on looking at change differently and for their development, half have declined.

The challenge is huge; how can I exercise the minds of individuals, the organisation and the *organisational collective* to genuinely understand the gaps in the psychological contracts of work? How can I engage individuals in a partnership that seeks to harness the latent potential? How can I influence others so that individuals, the organisation, and the organisational collective work together to build an environment where there can be genuine trust, emotional safety, recognition of vulnerabilities and respect for these? How can I encourage individuals, the organisation, and the *organisational collective* to take the *brave* step and put individuals at the centre of change considerations? How can I shift mind sets so emotions are legitimised in the workplace? The considerations here for management praxis as a whole are significant.

I have suggested that there will always be individuals whose ambitions grow beyond the organisations they work for. My personal challenge is to divert the frustrations I face in seeking to influence this shift in mindset, into celebrations for the small inroads I am making, so my energy can be applied constructively to the journey ahead. The implications for my professional praxis, however, are significant. The considerations sit with those I have outlined here and earlier for management praxis as a whole, but on a personal level they remain focused on championing the ambition to influence behaviours, and a different way of thinking about how we think about change, and playing a part in taking my recommendations for future work forward.

There is, as I have suggested earlier, still much to do. The debate that seeks to legitimise emotions within the workplace needs to energise a groundswell of support to achieve this. In this, I continue to be a willing and enthusiastic participant.

Strengths and limitations of the research

There are strengths and limitations to my study, which I have shared in the preceding chapters. In the section that follows, I bring these observations and thoughts together.

The role I have undertaken during the research has been a key strength of the study. I have created an environment where there has been open discourse and exploration. The significant experience I have of this subject from living and breathing and caring about change in the organisations I have worked for over many years has enabled me to be a key a part of my study and not removed independently from it. My own experiences, alongside my training and development, my perspectives and personal considerations, my review of the literature, my philosophical and methodological considerations are directly linked to organisational life and the world we live in and, as such, I have brought not just an understanding of myself and my basic assumptions, values and beliefs, but of individuals in organisations and Society as a whole. This has enhanced the study and has helped to shape and inform my overall approach to my exploration of the early research considerations, the research methods I adopted, my reflections, considerations and interpretations of my research information and the emerging understanding.

My business position had the potential to be a limiting factor for the research and I was mindful that this may have made some individuals feels obliged to participate in the study and then to not be as open as they may otherwise have been. This did not obviously manifest itself during the course of the study, but it remained a consideration and has been reflected in my interpretation of the research material.

In the same way as my own experiences bring an understanding of Society as a whole, the individuals taking part in my study have experiences directly linked to changing organisational life, which represent a microcosm of individuals' lives in general. My journey has given me a privileged opportunity to study people in senior management positions in a business context, who have allowed me to explore with them areas that would generally be considered beyond that of normal business protocol. Their openness and candour has revealed individuals' emotions that are not often articulated and recognised in business. They have each given me insights not often shared in a business

context, which has enabled me to develop my study in a way which would not have been possible had they not felt able to share their feelings and experiences with me.

The hermeneutic research methodology I adopted is a key strength of my study. It explicitly recognises the participation of my role as the researcher in the process, with the iterative and triangular approach I used being at the core of this methodology. I collected qualitative material over a two year period, using four different methods to bring credibility to my study and to help strengthen my exploration and interpretation. I also believe that looking at things in different ways has brought richness to the resultant interpretation that may otherwise have been absent.

My research study has been focused on individuals employed within one large financial services organisation, which has undergone fairly consistent strategic and organisational change over many years. The potential limitations of concentrating the study in this way have been balanced pragmatically by the methodology and methods I have adopted, the dynamic change environment, and the experiences of individuals reflecting the understanding, basic assumptions, values and beliefs of individuals in organisations and Society as a whole.

The research journey has not been without its challenges and its conflicts, not least because of the time taken to carry out research using the hermeneutic methodology, and the huge volume of qualitative research material that I collected; there have undoubtedly been missed research opportunities because of this. This situation was not unexpected, however, and I designed the practical approach to my study with this in mind to manage these challenges and potential limitations. Whilst my line by line interpretative approach took a great deal of time, I wanted to take this approach instead of considering the research material as a whole and exploring and interpreting it as such, as I believed that each comment had something important to add. I found this to be the case and I believe I gained a richer insight into the text than would otherwise have been the case.

As I discussed earlier, there are difficulties in collecting qualitative material, as the information can often be more a result of the process by which it has been collected instead of it being the information an individual meant to share. Individuals also often find it difficult to recreate and articulate their experiences in a way that provides clarity

and understanding for the listener, and there are always elements of the stories that are not shared as understanding is a taken for granted part of the dialogue. This of course presupposes that the listener shares the same understanding, which will not always be the case. With this in mind, I used life histories, focus group discussions, observations and company documentation as research methods that provided the opportunity to reflect and revisit the research material often so the underlying meanings in the material could be explored.

During my field research, I found myself openly empathising with individuals and sharing a little of my own feelings and experiences to facilitate an environment of trust and mutual understanding. Whilst, the information I shared was factually accurate and genuine in context, I have with hindsight found myself reflecting more critically on how others may interpret my purpose in my sharing information on these occasions. For my part, there was a genuine desire to facilitate an environment conducive to open and honest discussion. I, however, recognise that a more critical interpretation could be that of a political act on my part to manipulate individuals participating in the events. Whichever position one adopts, however, I consider both raise the same ethical considerations as ultimately the result does not change and remains that of the information shared by the participants.

All the individuals participated freely in the discussions and in the knowledge that their contribution was completely confidential and would remain anonymous. This in itself introduces a moral dimension, the extent to which the participants have been honest in the information they have shared; individually they have no involvement in how their information ultimately would be used; they are removed from it and, as such, have trusted that the use of their information will have no affect on them. Does this mean they would be less than completely honest in their accounts? I find, however, that such what if scenario interpretation and speculation lacks value given the design and structure of the study. The methodology and the different methods used have been selected to ensure there can be confidence in the research material, exploration and resulting interpretation.

A key strength of my study has been the openness of individuals and the depth of feelings and emotions they shared with me when gathering my qualitative research

material. With hindsight, I feel extremely privileged that individuals felt able to trust me and share their thoughts about very personal matters as openly as they did. This has not been a clinical, academic exercise, but one enriched with emotions, both my own and those of the individuals involved.

The unique combination of the subject matter, the context, and the approach I have adopted to collect and interpret the research information is a major strength of this study, with the resulting interpretation and emerging understanding informing the discourse by providing insight into the experiences of individuals during periods of strategic and organisational change and by informing the discourse that seeks to find a voice for emotions in the workplace through the transformation of managerial objectivism, change practice and behaviours.

Future work

The emotionally arid legacy of process driven change solutions is strong; it continues and survives; understanding how this can be transformed into an emotional oasis with benefits for the organisational collective and individuals alike is a rich field for future work. This is an evolutionary process; our traditions are steeped in process and rationality from our infancy and work is needed to understand how we can give the emotionally visionary risk takers and the emotionally masked diehards a common voice in unifying the call for action.

We have created a myriad of process interdependencies and operating structures in our organisations that ascribe power, assuage interaction, and assign responsibilities legitimised by our objectives to meet commercial and cost saving goals. We have only just begun, however, to scratch the surface to explore the emotional interdependencies and further work is required to examine and refine our understanding of these and of what can be gained by legitimising these in the workplace without seeking to commodify emotions or trivialise the emotional complexity.

The emotional complexity and rapid change of organisational life demands further attention; the influence of previous change experiences and emotional learning, individuality, narcissistic goals, gender discrimination and injustice, relationships, feelings and emotions, my concept of the *organisational collective,* and the nature of control, all warrant much further consideration. I have suggested that there must be complete transparency of the psychological contract of work, and collaboration in shaping the work environment, but what are our emotional responsibilities here? What are the boundaries? How do we achieve this so it is sustainable and safe? I have suggested that a shift in the emotional mindset of individuals, the organisation, and the *organisational collective* is desired, but how can the emotional legacy of social conditioning, and deeply held beliefs be used to support this? How is the history of emotional neglect to be treated? What are the ethical and cross cultural considerations? What is the power of the latent potential, and how can we harness this for practical benefit?

I find that there is a controlling influence in organisations. I have suggested that it is faceless; that it generates a momentum of its own and a common purpose, and a nervousness and fear that drives individuals' behaviours, unsettles their mindsets, and manipulates their conscious thoughts, their feeling and emotions, and the decisions they make. This concept runs throughout my research and I have given it the title of the *organisational collective*. At this juncture, my notion of the *organisational collective* has a divisive essence. I have suggested that it can be considered as "control with a modern image", reflecting an environment of unseen psychological control in which, changes are engineered for the sole benefit of the organisation with often no intrinsic recognition of individuals' feelings or emotions or support for these within the change programmes that are being instigated or managed. I have boldly suggested that the *organisational collective* does not care about individuals beyond the limits of what is organisationally expected of them. Whilst there is still much to do to develop this concept further, it is worthy, I modestly suggest of further attention.

Whilst my study adds to previous knowledge and informs management praxis as discussed earlier, the debates that seek to legitimise emotions within the workplace, and to influence the transformation of managerial objectivism, change practice, and behaviour, so that emotions are recognised, welcomed, respected, supported and embraced, need more supporting voices to energise a groundswell of opinion that provides momentum not just for further research, but to bring these to life in the workplace. There is still much to do.

References

Alvesson, M. (1995) The Meaning and Meaninglessness of Postmodernism: Some Ironic Remarks. *Organization Studies.* Vol. 16. No. 6. pp. 1047-1075.

Alvesson, M. and Deetz, S. (1996) "Critical Theory and Postmodernism Approaches to Organization Studies" in S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy and W. R. Nord (eds.), *Handbook of Organization Studies.* London: Sage.

Alvesson, M. and Deetz, S. (2000) *Doing Critical Management Research.* London: Sage.

Alvesson, M. and Sköldberg, K. (2001) *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research.* London: Sage.

Argyris, C., Putman, R. and Smith, D. M. (1985) *Action Science.* San Franscisco: Jossey Bass.

Ashforth, B. E. and Humphrey, R. H. (1995) Emotion in the Workplace: A Reappraisal. *Human Relations.* Vol. 48, No. 2. pp. 97-125.

Ashmore, M. (1989) *The Reflexive Thesis: Wrighting the Sociology of Scientific Knowledge.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Atkinson, P. (1990) *The Ethnographic Imagination: Textual Constructions of Reality.* London: Routledge.

Barnard, C. (1948) "The Nature of Leadership" in Grint, K. (eds.), (1997) *Leadership: Classical, Contemporary and Critical Approaches.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 89-111.

Barry, D. and Elmes, M. (1997) Strategy retold: towards a narrative view of strategy discourse. *Academy of Management Review.* Vol. 22. No. 2. pp. 428-452.

Bennis, W. (1998) *Managing People is like Herding Cats.* London: Kogan Page.

Berkeley, G. (1710) "Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge" in Gribbin, J. (2002) *Schrödinger's Kittens and the search for reality.* London: Phoenix. pp. prologue.

Bertaux, D. (1981) *Biography and Society.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Best, S. and Kellner, D. (1991) *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations.* London: Macmillan.

Bettleheim, B. (1983) *Freud and Man's Soul.* London: Chatto and Windus / The Hogarth Press.

Blaikie, N. (1995) *Approaches to Social Enquiry.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bleicher, J. (1982) *The Hermeneutic Imagination: Outline of a Positive Critique of Scientism and Sociology.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Bryant, A. (2002) Regrounding grounded theory. *The Journal of Information Technology Theory and Application.* Vol. 4. pp. 25-42.

Casey, K. (1993) *I Answer with My Life: Life Histories of Women Teachers Working for Social Change.* London: Routledge.

Cassell, C. and Symon, G. (eds.), (1994) *Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research: A Practical Guide.* London: Sage.

Cassell, C. and Symon, G. (1994) "Qualitative research methods in work contexts" in C. Cassell and G. Symon (eds.), *Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research: A Practical Guide.* London: Sage. pp. 1-13.

Chambers English Dictionary (1989) Cambridge: Chambers and Cambridge University Press.

Charmaz, K (2005) "Grounded Theory in the 21st Century: Applications for Advancing Social Justice Studies" in N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research: Third Edition.* London: Sage. pp. 506-535.

Chell, E. (1999) "Critical Incident Technique" in G. Symon and C. Cassell (eds.), *Qualitative Methods and Analysis in Organizational Research: A Practical Guide.* London: Sage. pp. 51-72.

Cirourel, A. (1970) "The acquisition of social structure: Towards a developmental sociology of language and meaning" in J. D. Douglas (ed.), *Understanding everyday life: Towards a reconstruction of social knowledge.* Chicago: Aldine. pp. 136-168.

Clark, C. (1990) "Emotions and micropolitics in everyday life: some patterns and paradoxes of "place"" in T. D. Kemper (ed.), *Research Agendas in the Sociology of Emotions.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Crotty, M. (1998) *The Foundations of Social Research.* London: Sage.

Dalton, M. (1964) "Preconceptions and methods in *Men Who Manage",* in P. E. Hammond, *Sociologists at Work. Essays on the Craft of Social Research.* New York: Basic Books Inc.

Darwin, J., Johnson, P. and McAuley, J. (2002) *Developing Strategies for Change*. Harlow, England: Prentice Hall.

Davidson, D. (1980) *Essays on Action and Events*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Davis, F. (1979) *Yearning for Yesterday: A Sociology of Nostalgia*. London: Mamillan.

Deetz, S. (1995) "The social production of knowledge and the commercial artefact" in L Cummings and P Frost (eds.), *Publishing in the Organizational Sciences: 2nd Edition*. Homewood, IL: Irwin.

Delanty, G. (1997) *Social Science: Beyond Constructivism and Relativism*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Denzin, N. K. (1989) *Interpretive Biography*. London: Sage.

Denzin, N. K. (1998) "The art and politics of interpretation" in N. K. Denzil and Y. S. Lincoln (eds.) *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (1998) *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dilthey, W. (1976) *Selected Writings* (ed. and trans. H. P. Rickman) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Donaldson, L. (1995) *American AntiManagement Theories of Organizations: A Critique of Paradigm Proliferation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Donaldson, L. (1996) *For Positivist Organization Theory*. London: Sage.

Donaldson, L. (1997) "A Positivist Alternative to the structure action approach", *Organisation Studies*. Vol. 18. No. 1. pp. 77-92.

Douglas, J. D. and Johnson, J. M. (eds.) (1977) *Existential Sociology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dutton, J. E., Frost, P. J., Worline, M. C., Lilius, J. M. and Kanov, J. M. (2002) Leading in Times of Trauma. *Harvard Business Review*. January. pp. 54-61.

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. and Lowe, A. (1997) *Management Research: An Introduction*. London: Sage.

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989) Building Theories form Case Study Research. *Academy of Management Review*. Vol. 14. No. 4. pp.532-550.

Ekman, P. and Friesen, W. (1975) *Unmasking the Face*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Feldman, S. (1998) Playing with the Pieces: deconstruction and the loss of moral culture. *Journal of Management Studies*. Vol. 35. No. 1. pp. 59-79.

Feldman, D. C. (2000) "Down but not out: career trajectories of middle-aged and older workers after downsizing" in R. J. Burke and C. Cooper (eds.) *Organizations in Crisis*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Fineman, S. (1983) *White Collar Unemployment: Impact and Stress*. Chichester: Wiley.

Fineman, S. (1987) *Unemployment: Personal and Social Consequences*. London: Tavistock.

Fineman, S. (ed.) (1993) *Emotion in Organizations*. London: Sage.

Fineman, S. (1999) "Emotion and organizing" in S. Clegg, C. Hardy and W, Nord (eds.), *Studying Organizations*. London: Sage.

Fineman, S. (ed.) (2000) *Emotion in Organizations*, 2nd edition. London: Sage.

Fineman, S. (2000) "Emotion Areas Revisited" in S. Fineman (ed.) *Emotion in Organizations*, 2nd edition. London: Sage. pp. 1-24.

Fineman, S. (2005) *Understanding Emotion at Work*. London: Sage.

Fineman, S., Sims, D., Gabriel, Y. (2006) *Organizing and Organizations*. London: Sage.

Fineman, S. and Sturdy, A. (1999) The Emotions of Control: A Qualitative Exploration of Environmental Regulation. *Human Relations*. Vol. 52, No. 5. pp. 631-663.

Foster, N. (1994) "The analysis of company documentation" in C. Cassell and G. Symon (eds.), *Qualitative Methods in Organisational Research: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage. pp. 147-166.

Foucault, M. (1970) *The Order of Things*. London: Tavistock.

Foucault, M. (1977) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Frisby, D. and Featherstone, M. (1997) *Simmel on Culture*. London: Sage.

Frost, P. (1999) Why compassion counts! *Journal of Management Inquiry*. Vol. 8. No. 2. pp. 127-133.

Frost, P. J., Dutton, J. E., Worline, M. C. and Wilson, A. (2000) "Narratives of Compassion in Organizations" in S. Fineman (ed.) *Emotion in Organizations*, 2nd edition. London: Sage. pp. 25-45.

Frost, P. and Robinson, S. (1999) The Toxic Handler: Organizational Hero and Casualty. *Harvard Business Review*. July - August. pp. 96-106.

Gaarder, J. (1996) *Sophie's World: A Novel about the History of Philosophy.* London: Phoenix House.

Gabriel, Y. (1995) The Unmanaged Organization: Stories, Fantasies, Subjectivity. *Organization Studies*. Vol. 16. No. 3. pp. 477-501.

Gabriel, Y. (1999) *Organizations in Depth: The Psychoanalysis of Organizations.* London: Sage.

Gabriel, Y. (2000) *Storytelling in Organizations: Facts, Fictions, and Fantasies.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gabriel, Y. (ed.) (2004) *Myths, Stories, and Organizations: Premodern Narratives for Our Times.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gabriel, Y. (2004) "The Narrative Veil: Truth and Untruths in Storytelling" in Y. Gabriel (ed.) *Myths, Stories, and Organizations: Premodern Narratives for Our Times.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 17-31.

Gadamer, H.-G. (1975/2006) *Truth and Method.* London: Continuum.

Gadamer, H.-G. (1976/2004) *Philosophical Hermeneutics.* London: University of California Press.

Garfinkel, H. (1967/2004) *Studies in Ethnomethodology.* Cambridge: Polity.

Geertz, C. (1973/1993) *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays.* London: Fontana Press.

George, J. M. (2000) Emotions and leadership: The role of emotional intelligence. *Human Relations*. Vol. 53. No. 8. pp. 1027-1055.

George, J. M. and Jones, G. R. (2001) Towards a process model of individual change in organizations. *Human Relations*. Vol. 54. No. 4. pp. 419-444.

Gergen, K. (1992) "Organization theory in the postmodern era" in M. Reed and M. Hughes (eds.), *Rethinking Organizations"* London: Sage.

Gill, J. and Johnson, P. (1991) *Research Methods for Managers.* London: Paul Chapman.

Gill, J. and Johnson, P. (1997) *Research Methods for Managers: Second Edition.* London: Paul Chapman.

Glaser, B. G. (1978) *Theoretical Sensitivity: Advances in the Methodology of Grounded Theory.* Mill Valley, CA: The Sociological Press.

Glaser, B. G. (1992) *Basics of Grounded Theory Research.* Mill Valley, CA: The Sociological Press.

Glaser, B. G. and Strauss, A. L. (1967/2006) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: strategies for qualitative research.* London: Aldine.

Goffman, E. (1959/1990) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.* London: Penguin Books.

Goleman, D. (1996) *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ.* London: Bloomsbury.

Goleman, D. (1998) What Makes a Leader? *Harvard Business Review.* Vol. 76. No. 6. November – December. pp. 93-102.

Goleman, D. (1999) *Working with Emotional Intelligence.* London: Bloomsbury.

Goleman, D. (2003) *Destructive Emotions and How We Can Overcome Them: A dialogue with the Dalai Lama.* London: Bloomsbury.

Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R., McKee, A., (2002) *The New Leaders: Emotional Intelligence at Work.* London: Little, Brown.

Grant, R. M. (1995) *Contemporary strategy analysis.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Gregg, R. (1994) "Explorations of Pregnancy and Choice in a High-Tech Age" in Riessman, C. K. (eds.), *Qualitative Studies in Social Work Research.* Thousand Oaks: Sage. pp. 49-66.

Greenspan, S. I. (1997) *The Growth of the Mind.* Reading, MA: Addison Wesley.

Gribbin, J. (2002) Schrödinger's Kittens and the search for reality. London: Phoenix.

Grint, K. (ed.), (1997) *Leadership: Classical, Contemporary and Critical Approaches.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 83–88.

Gummesson, E. (1991) *Qualitative Methods in Management Research.* London: Sage.

Gummesson, E. (2000) *Qualitative Methods in Management Research: 2nd Edition.* London: Sage.

Habermas, J. (1970a) "On systematically distorted communication", *Inquiry*. Vol. 13. pp. 205-218.

Habermas, J. (1970b) "Towards a theory of communicative competence", *Inquiry*. Vol. 13. pp. 360-375.

Habermas, J. (1974) *Theory and Practice*. London: Heinemann.

Halfpenny, P. (1982) *Positivism and Sociology: Explaining Social Life*. London: Allen and Unwin.

Hammersely, M. (1989) *The Dilemma of Qualitative Method. Herbert Blumer and the Chicago Tradition*. London: Routledge.

Handy, C. B. (1989) *The Age of Unreason*. London: London Business Books.

Harding, S. (1987) "Is there a feminist method" in S. Harding, *Feminist Methodology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Harlos, K. P. and Pinder, C. C. (2000) "Emotion and Injustice in the Workplace" in S. Fineman (ed.), *Emotion in Organizations*, 2nd edition. London: Sage. pp. 255-276.

Hartley, J. F. (1994) "Case studies in organisational research" in C. Cassell and G. Symon (eds.), *Qualitative methods in organisational research*. London: Sage. pp. 208-229.

Heidegger, M. (1927/ trans. 1962) *Being and Time*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Helling, I. K. (1988) "The Life History: A Survey and a Discussion with Norman K. Denzin." *Studies in Symbolic Interaction*. Vol. 9. pp. 211-243.

Holland, R. (1999) "Reflexivity" *Human Relations*. Vol. 52. No. 4. pp. 463-483.

Honderich, T. (ed.), (1995) *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hochschild, A. (1983/2003) *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. California: University of California Press.

Hussey, J. and Hussey, R. (1997) *Business Research: A practical guide for undergraduates and postgraduate students*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Huy, Q. N. (1999) "Emotional Capability, Emotional Intelligence, and Radical Change." *Academy of Management Review*. Vol. 24. No. 2. pp. 325-345.

Huy, Q. N. (2002) Emotional balancing of organizational continuity and radical change: the contribution of middle managers. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. Vol. 47. No.1. pp. 31-70.

Hyde, C. (1994) "Reflections on a Journey: A Research Story", in Riessman, C. K. (ed.), *Qualitative Studies in Social Work Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage. pp. 169-189.

James, N. (1993) "Divisions of emotional labour: disclosure and cancer" in S. Fineman (ed.), *Emotions in Organizations*. London: Sage.

Jermier, J. M. (1998) Introduction: Critical Perspectives on Organizational Control. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. Vol. 43. No. 2. pp. 235-256.

Johnson, P. (2000) Lecture notes, DBA course, Sheffield Hallam University.

Johnson, P., Buehring, A., Cassell, C. and Symon G. (2006) "Evaluating qualitative management research: Towards a contingent criteriology" *International Journal of Management Reviews*. Vol. 8. No. 3. pp. 131-156.

Johnson, P. and Duberley, J. (2000) *Understanding Management Research*. London. Sage.

Johnson, P. and Duberley, J. (2003) "Reflexivity in Management Research" *Journal of Management Studies*. Vol. 40. No. 5. pp. 1279-1303.

Jones, E. (1938) "The Theory of Symbolism", in E. Jones (ed.), *Papers on Psychoanalysis*. London: Baillière. Tindall and Cox. (also in Gabriel, Y. (2000) *Storytelling in Organizations: Facts, Fictions, and Fantasies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 92.)

Jones, G. R. (1983) "Life history methodology" in G. Morgan (ed.), *Beyond Method: Strategies for Social Research*. Beverley Hills, CA: Sage.

Jörgensen, D. L. (1989) *Participant Observation: a Methodology for Human Studies*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Kahn, W. A. (1993) Caring for the Caregivers: Patterns of Organizational Caregiving. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. Vol. 38. pp. 539-563.

Kahn, W. A. (1998) "Relational systems at work" in B. M. Staw and L. L. Cummings (eds.), *Research in Organizational Behaviour*. Vol. 20. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press. pp.39-76.

Kant, I. (1781) "Critique of Pure Reason" in Honderich, T. (ed.), (1995) *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kanter, R. M. (1994) *When Giants Learn to Dance: Mastering Challenges of Strategy, Management and Careers in the 1990's*. London: Routledge.

Kanter, R. M. (1997) *The Change Masters: Corporate Entrepreneurs at Work*. London: International Thompson Business Press.

Kaplan, H. A. (1987) "The Psychopathology of Nostalgia", *Psychoanalytic Review.* Vol. 74. No. 4. pp. 463-486.

Kiefer, T. (2002) "Understanding the emotional experiences of organizational change: evidence from a merger" *Advances in Developing Human Resources.* Vol. 4. No. 1. pp. 39-61.

Kincheloe, J. L. and McLaren, P. L. (2005) "Rethinking critical theory and qualitative research" in N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research: Third Edition.* London: Sage. pp. 303-342.

Kolb, D. A., Rubin, I. M. and McIntyre, J. M. (1979) *Organizational Psychology: An Experimental Approach.* London: Prentice Hall.

Kotter, J. P (1995) Leading change: why transformation efforts fail. *Harvard Business Review.* Vol. 73. No. 2. pp. 59-67.

Krippendorf, K. (1980) *Content Analysis: an Introduction to its Methodology.* London: Sage.

Kuhn, T. S. (1970) "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions" University of Chicago Press

Lasch, C. (1984) *The Minimal Self: Psychic Survival in Troubled Times.* London: Pan Books.

Lewin, K. (1946) Action research and minority problems. *Journal of Social Issues.* Vol. 2. No. 4. pp. 34-46. (also in Gill, J. and Johnson, P. (1991) *Research Methods for Managers.* London: Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd. pp. 57-59.)

Lincoln, Y. and Guba, E. (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry.* London. Sage.

Lindlof, T. R. (1995) "Qualitative Communication Research Methods. Thousand Oaks; Sage.

MacIntyre, A. (1981) *After virtue: A study in moral theory.* London: Duckworth

Magee, B. (1988) *The Great Philosophers: An Introduction to Western Philosophy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Magee, B. (2001) *The Story of Philosophy.* London: Dorling Kindersley.

Marris, P. (1986) *Loss and Change.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Marshall, H. (1994) "Discourse analysis in an occupational context" in C. Cassell and G. Symon (eds.), *Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research: A Practical Guide.* London: Sage. pp. 91-106.

Martin, J. (1990) "Deconstructing Organizational Taboos: The Suppression of Gender Conflict in Organizations", *Organization Science.* Vol. 1. pp. 1-22.

Martin, J., Knopoff, K. and Beckman, C. (2000) "Bounded Emotionality at the Body Shop" in S. Fineman (ed.), *Emotion in Organizations,* 2nd edition. London: Sage. pp. 115-139.

Mayer, J. D. and Salovey, P. (1995) Emotional intelligence and the construction and regulation of feelings. *Applied and Preventive Psychology.* Vol. 4. pp. 197-208.

Mayer, J. D. and Salovey, P. (1997) "What is emotional intelligence?" in P. Salovey and D. J. Sluyter (eds.), *Emotional Development and Emotional Intelligence.* New York: Basic Books.

McAuley, J. (1985) Hermeneutics as a Practical Research Methodology in Management, *Management Education and Development,* Vol. 16, Pt. 3, pp. 292-299.

McAuley, J (1997) Book Review of "Work, Death, and Life Itself: Essays on Management and Organisation: By Burkard Sievers". *Human Relations.* Vol. 50. No. 4. pp. 469-482.

McAuley, J. (2001) Lecture notes, DBA course, Sheffield Hallam University.

McAuley, J. (2004) "Hermeneutic Understanding" in C. Cassell, and G. Symon (eds.), *Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organziational Research.* London: Sage. pp. 192-202.

McAuley, J., Duberley, J. and Cohen, L. (2000) "The meaning professionals give to management and strategy", *Human Relations.* Vol. 53. No. 1. pp. 87-117.

McAuley, J., Duberley, J. and Johnson, P. (2007) *Organization Theory: Challenges and Perspectives.* Harlow, England: Prentice Hall

Melucci, A. (1996) *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Meyerson, D. E. (1998) Feeling stressed and burned out: a feminist reading and re-visioning of stress-based emotions within medicine and organizational science. *Organizational Science.* Vol. 8. No. 1. pp. 103-118.

Meyerson, D. E. (2000) "If Emotions Were Honoured: A Cultural Analysis" in S. Fineman (ed.), *Emotion in Organizations,* 2nd edition. London: Sage. pp. 167-183.

Miller, J. B. and Stiver, I. (1997) The Healing Connection. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Mulkay, M. (1992) *Science and the Sociology of knowledge.* Aldershot: Gregg Revivals.

Musson, G. (1994) "Organizational responses to an environmental disturbance: case studies of change in general medical practice". PhD Thesis. University of Sheffield.

Musson, G. (1999) "Life Histories" in G. Symon and C. Cassell (eds.), *Qualitative Methods and Analysis in Organizational Research: A Practical Guide.* London: Sage. pp. 10-27.

Nevis, E. C. (1987) *Organizational Consulting: A Gestalt approach.* New York: Gardner Press.

Palmer, R. E. (1969) Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer. Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press. (also in Blaikie, N. (1995) *Approaches to Social Enquiry.* Cambridge: Polity Press.)

Parker, M. (1992) Post-modern organizations or postmodern organization theory. *Organization Studies.* Vol. 13. No. 1. pp. 1-17.

Parker, M. (1993) "Life after Jean-Francois" in J. Hassard and M. Parker (eds.), *Postmodernism and Organizations.* London. Sage.

Parkes, C. M. (1986) *Bereavement: Studies of Grief in Adult Life.* London: Penguin.

Partington, A. (ed.), (1996) *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Penrose, R. (1989) *The Emperor's New Mind.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Peters, T. (1989) *Thriving on Chaos.* London: Pan Books.

Peters, T. J. and Waterman, R. H. (1982) *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best Run Companies.* New York: Harper & Row.

Pinder, C. C. (1998) *Work Motivation in Organizational Behaviour.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Popper, K. R. (1967) *Conjectures and Refutations.* London: Routledge.

Potter, J. and Wetherell, M. (1987) *Discourse and Social Psychology: Beyond Attitudes and Behaviour.* London: Sage.

Radnitzky, G. (1970) *Contemporary Schools of Metascience.* Vol 1-2. Göteborg: Akademiförlaget. (also in Alvesson, M. and Sköldberg, K. (2001) *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research.* London: Sage. pp. 53.)

Rapoport, R. N. (1970) Three dilemmas in action research. *Human Relations.* Vol. 23. No. 6. pp. 499-513.

Ricoeur, P. (1977) "The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as a Text" in Dallmayr, F. R. and McCarthy, T. A. (eds.), *Understanding and Social Inquiry.* Notre Dame. University of Notre Dame Press. pp 316-334.

Ricoeur, P. (1978) *The Rule of Metaphor: Multidisciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Riordan, P. (1995) The Philosophy of Action Science. *Journal of Managerial Psychology.* Vol. 10. No. 6. pp. 6-13.

Robson, C. (1993) *Real World Research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner researchers.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Rosenau, P. M. (1992) *Post-modernism and the Social Sciences. Insights, Inroads, and Intrusions.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Rousseau, D. (1995) *Psychological Contracts in Organizations.* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Sachs, J. and Blackmore, J. (1998) "You never show you can't cope: women in school leadership roles managing their emotions" *Gender and Education.* Vol. 10. No. 3. pp. 265-279.

Säljö, R. (1990) "Språk och institution: Den institutionaliserade inlärningens metaforer" in Alvesson, M. and Sköldberg, K. (2001) *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research.* London: Sage. pp. 202.

Sandywell, B. (1996) *Reflexivity and the Crisis of Western Reason: Logological Investigations Volume 1.* London: Routledge.

Schein, E. H. (1988) *Organizational Psychology: 3rd Edition.* Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall.

Schein, E. H. (1992) *Organizational Culture and Leadership: Second Edition.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Schein, E. H. (2002) in Coutu, D. L. (2002) The Anxiety of Learning. *Harvard Business Review.* Vol. 80. No. 3. pp. 100-106.

Schütz, A. (1967) *Collected Papers. 1. The Problem of Social Reality.* The Hague: Nijhoff. (also in Alvesson, M. and Sköldberg, K. (2001) *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research.* London: Sage.)

Schwartz, H. S. (1987) Anti-Social Actions of Committed Organizational Participants: An Existential Psychoanalytic Perspective. *Organization Studies.* Vol. 8. No. 4. pp. 327-340.

Schwartz, H. S. (1993) "Narcissistic emotion and university administration: An analysis of political correctness" in S. Fineman (ed.), *Emotion in Organizations*. London: Sage. pp. 190-215.

Seale, C. (1999) *The quality of qualitative research*. London: Sage.

Seligman, M. E. P. (1975) *Helplessness: On Depression, Development and Death*. San Francisco: Freeman.

Selznick, P. (1943) "An Approach to a Theory of Bureaucracy", *American Sociological Review*. Vol. 8. No. 1. pp. 47-54. (also in Gabriel, Y. (2000) *Storytelling in Organizations: Facts, Fictions, and Fantasies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 95.)

Shipman, M. (1988) *The Limitations of Social Research: 3rd Edition*. Harlow: Longman.

Sievers, B. (1994) Work, death and life itself: Essays on management and organization. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Silverman, D. (1993) *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction*. London: Sage.

Silverman, D. (1994) "On throwing away ladders: rewriting the theory of organisations" in J. Hassard and M. Parker (eds.), *Towards a New Theory of Organizations*. London: Routledge.

Sokal, A. D. (1996) "Transgressing the boundaries: toward a transformative hermeneutics of quantum gravity". *Social Text*. Vol. 46/47. pp. 217-252.

Sosik, J. J. and Megerian, L. E. (1999) Understanding Leader Emotional Intelligence and Performance: The Role of Self-Other Agreement on Transformational Leadership Perceptions. *Group & Organization Management*. Vol. 24. No. 3. pp. 367-390.

Smircich, L. and Morgan, G. (1982) Leadership: the management of meaning. *Journal of Applied Behavioural Science Quarterly*. Vol. 28. No. 3. pp. 339-359.

Stapley, L. (1996) *The personality of the organization: A psychodynamic exploration of culture and change*. London: Free Association Books.

Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1990) *Basics of Qualitative Research: grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1994) "Grounded theory methodology: an overview" in N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stiles, D. R. (1999) "Pictorial Representation" in G. Symon, and C. Cassell, (eds.) *Qualitative Methods and Analysis in Organizational Research: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage. pp. 190-210.

Stuart, R. (1995) "Experiencing organizational change: triggers, processes and outcomes of change journey", *Personnel Review*. Vol. 24. No. 2. pp. 3-88.

Symon, G. and Cassell, C. (1999) *Qualitative Methods and Analysis in Organizational Research: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage.

Taylor, D. S. (1990) "Making the Most of Your Matrices: Hermeneutics, Statistics, and the Repertory Grid", *International Journal of Personal Construct Psychology*. Vol. 3. pp. 105-119.

Thomas, W. I. (1966) in M. Janowitz (ed.), *Organisation and Social Personality: Selected Papers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (also in Musson, G. (1999) "Life Histories" in G. Symon and C. Cassell (eds.), *Qualitative Methods and Analysis in Organizational Research: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage. pp. 10.)

Thomas, R. and Dunkerley, D. (1999) "Plus ca change...? Restructuring and the realities of "new managerial work"" 5th Critical Perspectives on Accounting Conference. *Ethical Dimensions of Accounting Change*. April. New York: Baruch College. pp. 6-8.

Thompson, C. J., Locander, W. B. and Pollio, H. R. (1990) "The lived meaning of free choice: an existential-phenomenological description of everyday customer experiences of contemporary married women" *Journal of Consumer Research*. Vol. 17. pp. 346-361.

Toffler, A. (1970) *Future Shock*. London: Pan Books.

Tossman, D. (1999) "EQ – Vogue or Value?" *New Zealand Management*. Vol. 46. No. 5. pp. 34-36.

Van Maanen, J. (1979) The fact of fiction in organizational ethnography. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. Vol. 24. pp. 539-550.

Van Maanen, J. (1991) "The smile factory: work at Disneyland" in P. J. Frost, L. F. Moore, M. R. Louis, C. C. Lundberg and J. Martin (eds.), *Reframing Organizational Culture*. Newbury Park: Sage. pp. 75.

Waddington, D. (1994) "Participant observation" in C. Cassell and G. Symon (eds.), *Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage. pp. 107-122.

Waldron, V. R. (1994) "Once more with feeling: reconsidering the role of emotion in work", in S. A. Deetz (ed.), *Communication Yearbook 17*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. pp. 388-416.

Waldron, V. R. (2000) "Relational Experiences and Emotions at Work" in S. Fineman (ed.), *Emotion in Organizations,* 2nd edition. London: Sage. pp. 64-82.

Waldron, V. R. and Krone, K. J. (1991) "The experience and expression of emotion in the workplace. A study of a corrections organization" *Management Communication Quarterly.* Vol. 4. pp. 287-309.

Wallace, W. (1971) *The Logic of Science in Sociology.* Chicago, Ill: Aldine.

Weber, M. (1922/1967) *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization.* New York: Free Press. (also in Alvesson, M. and Sköldberg, K. (2001) *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research.* London: Sage.)

Wharton, A. (1999) The psychosocial consequences of emotional labor. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.* Vol. 561, January. pp. 158-176.

Wheeler, J. and Zurek, W. (1983) *Quantum Theory and Measurement.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Winch, P. (1958) *The Idea of a Social Science and its Relation to Philosophy.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Wilhelm, R. (1989) *Tao Te Ching: Lao Tzu.* London: Penguin Books.

Wittgenstein, L. (1953) *Philosophical Investigations.* London: Blackwell.

Wright, B. (1998) ""The executioner's song": listening to downsizers reflect on their experiences", *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences.* Vol. 15. No. 4. pp. 339-357.
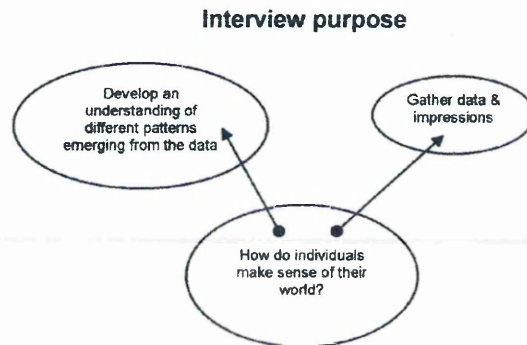
Appendix A: Semi-structured interviews

Briefing notes; thoughts on how the early research hunches might be demonstrated; schedule of open questions

Interviews 2003 - 2005

Overall objective of the interviews

To explore the emotions of individuals who have experienced organisational change.
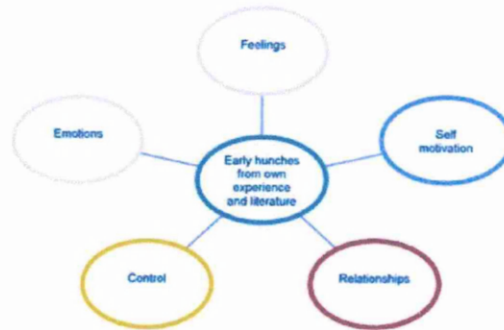
Interview purpose

Key notes

- 5 years ago a command and control environment existed within HGAA. This statement is based on anecdotal evidence, organisational stories and organisational documentation.

- Following the appointment of a new Chief Executive 5 years ago, and a change in other senior members of the executive management team, there was an attempt to move away from the historical command and control environment to a structure aimed at encouraging initiative, individual thought and empowerment.

- The organisation is currently going through strategic and organisational change following the appointment of a new Chief Executive.

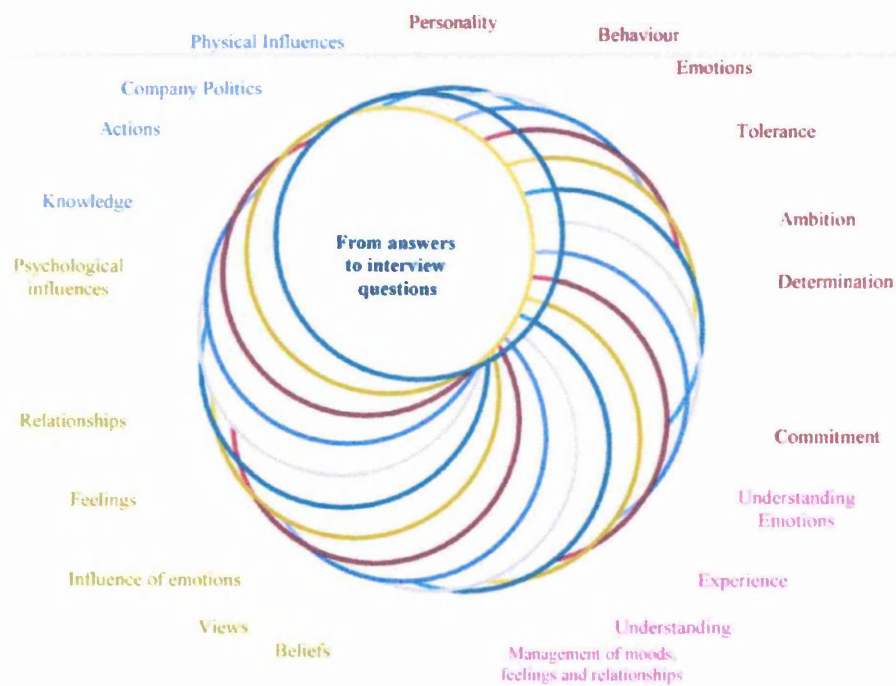- The people involved in my interview programme are affected directly to varying degrees by the current changes.

Early hunches

- Feelings
- Emotions
- Self motivation
- Relationships
- Control

Thoughts on how I might see these demonstrated

Caroline S G Cole / DBA research programme / interviews: 2003-2005

Interview

- Introduce purpose of study and interview process.

- Interview will be recorded.

- All information treated in the strictest confidence with no reference to names and specific positions.

- Okay for interviewee to pass on some questions if they feel unable to share details, or to stop the tape and speak "off the record" should they wish to do so.

Guide questions

- Tell me a bit about what you do and your areas of responsibility.

- How long have you worked for the organisation?

- Tell me, how you feel about change in general?

- Tell me about your personal experience of organisational change during your time with the organisation over the last 5 years.

- What were the circumstances and why did they arise?

- Tell me, how would you describe the change event?

- To what extent were you aware of your feelings during the change event?

- Tell me about these feelings.

- To what extent did your feelings impinge on your life out of work?

- Looking back and with reflection, would you have described your feelings differently if someone had asked you to do so during the change event itself?

- What would be different?

- Did you feel the need to go to someone else for support or advice during the change event or was it something you felt able to deal with on your own?

- How would you say you managed your feelings?

- During the change event, what did you personally find most difficult.

- How did you deal with this?

- What do you feel gave you the most satisfaction?

- What was the dominant management style during this change period?

- How did the change event affect others you were working with?

- How did you manage your relationship with others during this period?

- To what extent was this different to how you would usually manage your relationships with colleagues?

- What sorts of things in work make you really angry?

- To what extent would you describe yourself as being self motivated?

- What would you say motivates you most?

- That's the end of my questions, do you have anything else you would like to share with me or are there any questions you would like to ask me?

Appendix B: Merging the Spiders' Webs
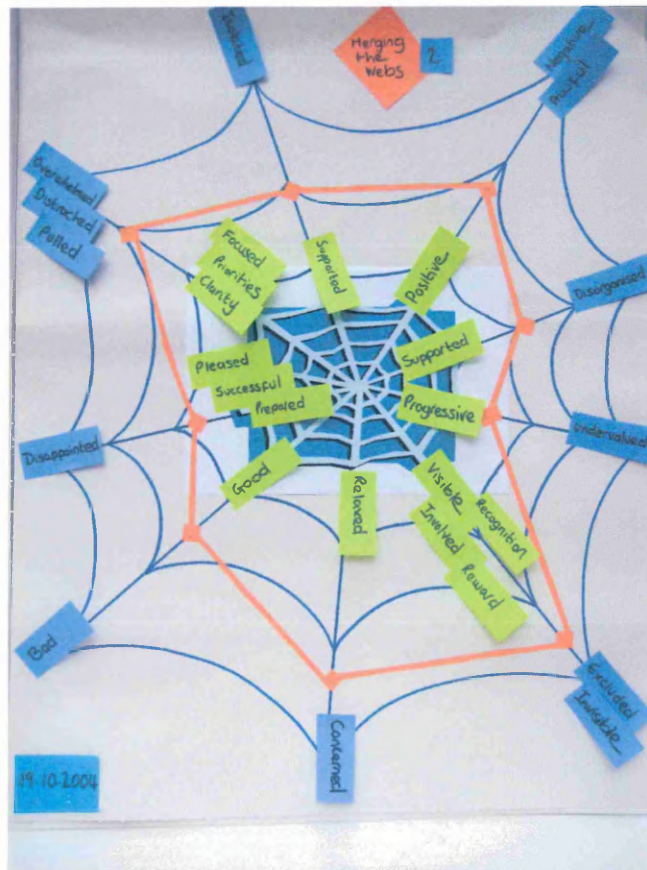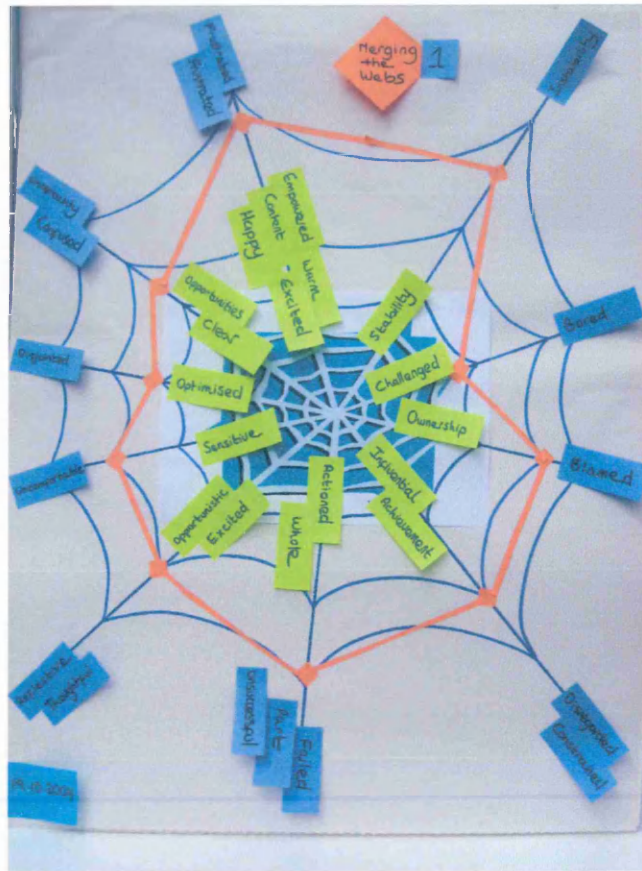
communication that there would be a job for everyone wishing to remain with the company, the message was still about roles that were being placed at risk of redundancy, practically an unknown situation in the organisation concerned, a skills selection event for new roles, also a new development within the organisation and a period of uncertainty for the individuals affected until this had been completed. The impact was expected to be emotionally significant for those directly affected to the extent that one to one discussions to offer support and advice had been scheduled to start immediately after the communication event for those in need of this, following which, 24 hour support was also available. Without exception, the extent of the three managers' concerns was their own performance in not "flunking" their part in the communication proceedings in front of each other, myself and other senior personnel present. Their motivation was to make a good impression. Their individual and collective consideration for the people affected by the changes was mechanical and superficial at best, a trait I have disappointingly encountered many times. I found myself attempting to transfer my own sense of empathy for the audience to these three individuals, an exercise I hoped was not as futile as I sensed it might be.

At a superficial level, I believe that organisational life collectively reflects a pseudo world, beneath which, a microcosm of real life motivations exist. I am not persuaded that we really understand or care enough to do anything about this and looking back I find myself guilty of this naivety.

From my reflections, designing, planning for and managing change in the organisations I have worked for has largely been process driven. To serve a number of purposes, be they legislative, commercial, or company policy, due care and diligence for individuals affected by change is now generally built into the change process to ensure delivery of the end goal. Within this though there remains a clear expectation of individual cultural competence and of cultural fit. Time and time again I have encountered change strategies that have faced resistance with the change event being more painful for some individuals involved than others, in part due to the programmes or management of them having only given superficial consideration to the people involved. My own development and competence I attribute equally to my experience of this type of change. I vividly remember the communication of one restructure which was reducing by half the number of manager roles, the message being reportedly delivered to